

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Tuesday 4 September 2018
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Town Hall, High Street, Maidstone

Membership: Councillors Cuming, Fermor, Fort, Harper (Chairman), Hastie, Hinder, Mrs Hinder, Lewins and Mrs Wilson (Vice-Chairman)

The Chairman will assume that all Members will read the reports before attending the meeting. Officers are asked to assume the same when introducing reports.

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2. Notification of Substitute Members	
3. Urgent Items	
4. Notification of Visiting Members	
5. Disclosures by Members and Officers	
6. Disclosures of Lobbying	
7. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information	
8. Minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2018	1 - 6
9. Presentation of Petitions (if any)	
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Issued on Thursday 23 August 2018

Continued Over/:

Alison Broom

Alison Broom, Chief Executive

PUBLIC SPEAKING AND ALTERNATIVE FORMATS

If you require this information in an alternative format please contact us, call **01622 602899** or email committee@maidstone.gov.uk.

In order to speak at this meeting, please contact Democratic Services using the contact details above, by 5 p.m. one clear working day before the meeting (31 August). If asking a question, you will need to provide the full text in writing. If making a statement, you will need to tell us which agenda item you wish to speak on. Please note that slots will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

To find out more about the work of the Committee, please visit www.maidstone.gov.uk.

Should you wish to refer any decisions contained in these minutes to the **Policy and Resources Committee**, please submit a Decision Referral Form, signed by **three** Councillors, to the **Head of Policy and Communications** by: **17 July 2018**

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 3 JULY 2018

Present: Councillor Harper (Chairman), Councillors Cuming, Fermor, Fort, Hastie, Lewins, Perry and Mrs Wilson

Also Present: Councillor Newton

20. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

It was noted that apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Mrs Hinder.

21. **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

It was noted that Councillor Perry was substituting for Councillor Mrs Hinder.

22. **URGENT ITEMS**

The Chairman indicated that he wished to raise the issue of the underspend following the Reference sent to Policy and Resources Committee by this Committee at the end of the agenda.

The reason for urgency was that this Committee's refined bid needed to be submitted before the Policy and Resources Committee met on 24th July.

23. **NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS**

Councillor Newton was present as a Visiting Member.

24. **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

Councillor Cuming disclosed an interest in Agenda Item 13 – Nominations to Outside Bodies as he was a nominee. He advised that he would leave the room when that particular outside body was being discussed.

25. **DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING**

All Members stated that they had been lobbied on Agenda Item 15 – MBC Outdoor Sports Facilities Booking Process.

26. **EXEMPT ITEMS**

RESOLVED: That the items on the agenda be taken in public as proposed.

27. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 MAY 2018

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed.

28. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 JUNE 2018

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 June 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed.

29. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

30. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public. However, Mrs Pauline Bowdrey, representing Boxley Parish Council, had been invited by the Chairman to make a Statement on Agenda Item 14 – Disposal of Open Space at Franklin Drive.

31. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the Committee Work Programme for 2018/19.

The following changes were made to the Work Programme:-

- Museums 20 Year Plan Update – moved to October
- Festivals and Events Update – moved to October
- Nature Reserves - September

The following additions were made to the Work Programme:-

- 400th Anniversary of the Charter to Maidstone Borough Council for the ownership of the Swans – to come to Committee January/February 2019. This could also coincide with an exhibition on the Charters that Maidstone Borough Council have been given over the years through Officers working with the Kent History Centre
- Nature Reserves – following an email from Councillor Harwood for a report to be brought to the September meeting
- Long Term Maintenance of our Heritage Buildings – This should be looked at in terms of the budgets allocated to them.
- That the Cemetery Improvements report coming to the September meeting should include reference to the wellbeing facilities for staff.

In response to questions from Members, Ms Hudd advised that:-

- That a separate report would come to the November meeting (or at the latest January/February 2019) looking forward to key dates in the calendar, the potential for a Pride event will be included

although to date Officers have not been able to find any groups to liaise with that would be willing to take this forward. The report would include an outline 5 year rolling programme of key dates and events.

- That an email was sent to Members of the Committee shortly after the last meeting which provided an update on the Banning of Sky Lanterns – this confirmed that the Parish Liaison Meeting had not taken place but it was on the agenda for the next meeting. The Communications Team had also produced a light touch campaign on this.

It also advised that the £31,350 underspend on green spaces was related to a Health and Wellbeing Museum's Project that was being rolled out to schools in areas of deprivation, with the first activity having been held on 6 June.

- That the Committee had agreed last year to keep a watching brief on developments related to Headcorn Aerodrome's desire to have a Transport Museum. It was noted that the Museum's Director was on the Working Group to ensure she was kept fully informed.

It was suggested that when the Play Area Grant Scheme Update report is presented to the September meeting it should include all the play areas and should also provide some information to dispel the disquiet felt by Members that play areas would only come back to Committee when they are at the end of their usefulness.

RESOLVED: That the Committee Work Programme be noted with the additions made by the Committee.

32. NOMINATIONS TO OUTSIDE BODIES - HCL

Mrs Caroline Matthews, the Democratic Services Officer presented a report on the nominations received from Members relating to outside bodies that are appointed by the Committee.

Councillor Cuming left the room when the nominations for the Maidstone Sea Cadets appointment was considered.

When considering the issue related to the Maidstone Sea Cadets outside body appointment, the Committee requested that Officers speak with the organisation to see if the Council could have a representative and a substitute.

The Committee also requested that consideration should be given to the terms of office in general so that there is a maximum term that a Member could be appointed for.

RESOLVED:

1. That Councillor English be appointed as the Council's representative on the Collis Millennium Green Trust for a period of one year.

Voting: Unanimous

2. That Councillor Harper be automatically appointed as Chairman of Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee and the other two vacancies be re-advertised.

Voting: Unanimous

3. That Councillor Cuming be appointed as the Council's representative on the Maidstone Sea Cadets for a 4 year period and that Officers make enquiries to the Organisation to see if they would accept a Substitute Member or another Full Member.

Voting: Unanimous

4. That Councillor B Hinder be appointed as the Council's representative on the Maidstone Beauvais Twinning Association for a period of 3 years.

Voting: Unanimous

33. DISPOSAL OF OPEN SPACE AT FRANKLIN DRIVE

The Committee considered the report of Mrs Jennifer Shepherd, the Head of Environment and Public Realm in regard to the disposal of Franklin Drive Open Space by long lease to Boxley Parish Council.

It was noted that the Maidstone Play Area Policy was brought to this Committee in October last year. In that report it was agreed that non-strategic play areas would not be maintained in the future using the Council's resources but instead they would be offered to Parish Councils, Housing Associations and other Community Groups to take over the maintenance and running of them. Franklin Drive was one of the play areas considered to be non-strategic as there were two other play areas in the area.

Mrs Pauline Bowdrey addressed the Committee on behalf of Boxley Parish Council and stated that this was a good example of localism and partnership working to provide what was best for the community. She also emphasised that the Parish Council had secured external funding to replace and add equipment to the play area and were willing and able to take over the maintenance of this site.

The Chairman read out a statement on behalf of Councillor Mrs Hinder who was a Ward Member for Boxley who stated that the Franklin Drive open space was greatly used by local children due to its close proximity to the houses on Grove Green. It was also noted that the closest play area was a good 12 minutes walk away. Its loss to the local community would

have had a detrimental effect on the local community.

In response to questions from Members, Mrs Claudette Valmond, the Team Leader Property and Regeneration (Solicitor) advised that if as was being advised that the land in question was of relative low value (as it could not be used as anything other than a public open space) then it just needed a valuer to confirm that the rent of a peppercorn was the best consideration that could reasonably be obtained.

The Council was of the view that Boxley Parish Council taking over the maintenance of the open space would be the best outcome for all concerned. The reason the Council had leased it rather than handed over the freehold was due to a change in policy that was adopted by Policy and Resources Committee and it would ensure that it is used as a public open space.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That agreement be given to the disposal of Franklin Drive open space to Boxley Parish Council by a long lease (99 years) and that the land be declared surplus to operational requirements.
- 2) That the proposed disposal be advertised for two consecutive weeks in a local newspaper and consideration be given by the Committee to any objections that may be received in response.
- 3) That the Director of Finance and Business Improvement be authorised to negotiate, agree and complete the Lease and such other documents and to undertake such steps as are necessary and incidental to the recommendations in this report.

Voting: Unanimous

34. **MBC OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES BOOKING PROCESS**

Ms Hudd, the Head of Regeneration and Economic Development presented a report which set out the process for the booking of council sports pitches.

The Committee was informed by Ms Hudd that she was hopeful that a new electronic booking system would be put in within two weeks and would be in place for the new season.

In response to a question from a Member Ms Hudd undertook to speak to the Leisure Centre about extending the Wednesday cancellation rule to a later day in the week.

Ms Hudd informed the Committee that Maidstone Leisure Centre (MLC) would receive a management charge but the income from the booking of the pitches would still come to the Council and that a separate signed agreement would be used and would not form part of the main Maidstone Leisure Centre Contract. It was also noted that the agreement with the

Leisure Centre would be reviewed annually and did not commit the Council to anything long term should it decide to either reduce or increase the number of pitches provided.

Members requested that the data on the usage of sports pitches by type and park be sent to Members of the Committee by email.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and that a separate signed agreement would be made with Maidstone Leisure Centre and would not form part of the Leisure Centre Contract.

Voting: Unanimous

35. HCL COMMITTEE UNDERSPEND

The Chairman advised that following the Reference to Policy and Resources Committee by this Committee on the underspend, Policy and Resources Committee decided to take an overall Council wide approach to the allocation of the underspend and would be asking the other Service Committees if they wanted to make any proposals for the underspend. All the proposals would be considered by Policy and Resources Committee on 24 July.

The Committee reaffirmed its request to retain some of its 2017/18 underspend and details would be delegated to the Chairman and Vice Chairman.

RESOLVED: That the Committee give delegated authority to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to provide the details to Policy and Resources Committee.

Voting: Unanimous

36. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

2018/19 WORK PROGRAMME

Report Title	Committee	Month	Lead	Report Author
Play Area Grant Scheme Update	HCL	Oct-18	Jennifer Shepherd	Andrew Williams
Joint Heritage Bid - All Saints Church (requested by Cllr Joy)	HCL	Oct-18	William Cornall	Laura Dickson
Details of Significant Anniversaries	HCL	Oct-18	William Cornall	Laura Dickson
Museums 20 Year Plan Update	HCL	Oct-18	Dawn Hudd	Victoria Barlow
Festivals and Events Update	HCL	Oct-18	Dawn Hudd	Laura Dickson
Strategic Plan 2019/20 - 2023/24 - Draft Strategic Plan Themes	HCL	Oct-18	Alison Broom	Angela Woodhouse
Designation of Greensand Ridge as AONB	HCL	Oct-18	William Cornall	Deanne Cunningham
Expansion of and Addition to Maidstone Local Nature Reserves	HCL	Oct-18	William Cornall	Deanne Cunningham
Strategic Plan 2019/20 - 2023/24 - Draft Strategic Plan Themes	HCL	Oct-18	Alison Broom	Angela Woodhouse
Tourism Destination Management Plan Progress Update	HCL	Nov-18	Dawn Hudd	Laura Dickson
Q2 Budget Monitoring 2018/19	HCL	Nov-18	Ellie Dunnet	Paul Holland
Q2 Performance Report 2018/19	HCL	Nov-18	Angela Woodhouse	Anna Collier
Draft Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019/20 - 2023/24	HCL	Nov-18	Mark Green	Ellie Dunnet
Fees & Charges 2019/20	HCL	Jan-19	Mark Green	Ellie Dunnet
Strategic Plan 2019/20 - 2023/24 - Final	HCL	Jan-19	Alison Broom	Angela Woodhouse
Medium Term Financial Strategy - Budget Proposals 2019/20	HCL	Jan-19	Mark Green	Ellie Dunnet
Q3 Budget Monitoring 2018/19	HCL	Feb-19	Ellie Dunnet	Paul Holland
Q3 Performance Report 2018/19	HCL	Feb-19	Angela Woodhouse	Anna Collier
Museums Future Governance Options Update	HCL	Mar-19	Dawn Hudd	Victoria Barlow
Biodiversity Action Plan	HCL	Mar-19	Jennifer Shepherd	Andrew Williams
New Market on Jubilee Square	HCL	TBC	Dawn Hudd	Fran Wallis
400th Anniversary of the Charter of the Swans to Maidstone Borough Council	HCL	TBC	Dawn Hudd	(at the request of Cllr Harper)
Long Term Maintenance of Assets	HCL	TBC	TBC	TBC (at the request of HCL Committee)
Sport Position Statement	HCL	TBC	Dawn Hudd	

Agenda Item 12

NOMINATION FORM TO OUTSIDE BODY

Date 12/8/18

NAME:	CLLR ASHLEIGH KIMMANCE
ADDRESS:	4 NICHOLAS CLOSE BARMING MAIDSTONE ME16 9PN.
TELEPHONE NO:	07709143597.
NAME OF ORGANISATION APPLYING FOR:	MAIDSTONE BEAUVAIS TWINNING ASSOCIATION.
REASON FOR APPLYING:	TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR TWIN TOWN AND HELP WHERE I CAN
WHAT BENEFITS COULD YOU BRING TO THE ORGANISATION?:	I AM A VERY GOOD TALKER AND I CAN HELP RAISE FUNDS

Please attach further sheet if required

HCL COMMITTEE

04 September 18

External Board/Outside Body

External Board/Outside Body	Maidstone Twinning Ass (formally Maidstone Beauvais Twinning Ass)
Councillor(s) represented on the Outside Body/External Board	Cllr Wendy Hinder
Report Author	
Date of External Board/Outside Body Meeting Attended	In 2018 we met in January. March, May, June. As Chairperson I attend every Meeting. We meet Every other month and the last meeting was on 19/07/2018.

Purpose of the External Board/Outside Body:

The primary objects of the group is to foster friendship between the people of Beauvais and the people of Maidstone through civic, commercial, educational, family, cultural, social and sporting links.

To visit Beauvais to attend their Jeanne Hatchett festival held each year in June.

To entertain the delegation from Beauvais when they accept the Mayors Invitation to the Garden Party.

To hold fund raising events.

To forge links with choirs and sport.

The Ass is reinventing itself since the withdrawal of funding from MBC when sadly its links with sporting organisations had to be dropped. We are slowly trying to rebuild some of these with our fund raising events.

Update:

This year I led a delegation of ten members to Beauvais in June to attend their Annual festival.

We have welcomed three new members

We have decided that we will go out to other Towns In Europe to endeavour to forge greater links with them. We feel that this could be an advantage to Maidstone in Terms of Tourism, business and schools. Hence the change of Name.

We held our first fund raising event which was extremely successful.

External Board/Outside Body

External Board/Outside Body	Maidstone Twinning Association
Councillor(s) represented on the Outside Body/External Board	Cllr Bob Hinder
Report Author	
Date of External Board/Outside Body Meeting Attended	AGM on 20 th July 2018

Purpose of the External Board/Outside Body:

Continue to foster relationships with Beauvais (France).

Note title changed at AGM (Beauvais) now not in title.

Update:

1. AGM on 20/7/2018 – first meeting I attended since May.
2. Visit to Beauvais for Joanne Hatchett weekend to foster relationships.
3. Reviewed and discussed future activities and fund raising.

External Board/Outside Body

External Board/Outside Body	Maidstone Sea Cadets Charity Number 302793
Councillor(s) represented on the Outside Body/External Board	Cllr Mike Cuming
Report Author	Mike Cuming
Date of External Board/Outside Body Meeting Attended	2 nd July 2018

Purpose of the External Board/Outside Body:

A national youth organisation for 10 – 18 year olds to equip them with life skills of teamwork, discipline, self-respect and social responsibility (core qualities of good citizenship).

Update:

The Cadets regularly support the Mayor at his civic duties.

Our current Mayor (Cllr David Naghi) is also the Chairman of the Maidstone Sea Cadets.

A milestone in the history of the Maidstone Sea Cadets was finally reached on 7th July with the official opening of their own mooring pontoon on the River Medway, adjacent to their headquarters, T.S. Scott, situated at the Masters Tower, College Road, Maidstone. This enables a significant enhancement to their activities, as they can now take to the water directly from their base. About 100 guests attended the event. Grateful thanks are owed to former Mayor, Cllr Malcolm Greer, who provided a significant amount towards the cost of completion of the mooring, both by raising funds, and by payment in kind via long-standing business colleagues and friends. Additional funding has been ongoing by the cadets and staff of the unit.

Earlier this year the unit strength was 27 cadets, 6 uniformed officers and 6 civilian staff/management team.

Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee

4 September 2018

1st Quarter Budget Monitoring 2018/19

Final Decision-Maker	Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee
Lead Head of Service/Lead Director	Mark Green, Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Lead Officer and Report Author	Ellie Dunnet, Head of Finance
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

This report sets out the financial position for this Committee at the end of Quarter 1 2018/19 against the revenue and capital budgets.

For this Committee, there is an underspend against the revenue budget of £124,000, but this is expected to change to an overspend of £37,000 by the end of this financial year.

Capital expenditure totalling £848,000 has been incurred between 1 April and 30 June, for the projects which sit within this Committee's remit. This represents slippage of £3.679m.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the revenue position at the end of the first quarter and the actions being taken or proposed to improve the position, where significant variances have been identified, be noted.

2. That the capital position at the end of the first quarter is noted.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee	4 September 2018

1st Quarter Budget Monitoring 2018/19

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2018/19 onwards was agreed by full Council on 7 March 2018. This report advises and updates the Committee on how each service has performed in regards to revenue and capital expenditure against the approved budgets within its remit.
 - 1.2 The Director of Finance & Business Improvement is the Responsible Financial Officer, and has overall responsibility for budgetary control and financial management. However in practice, day to day budgetary control is delegated to service managers, with assistance and advice from their director and the finance section.
 - 1.3 Attached at **Appendix 1** is a report detailing the position for the revenue and capital budgets at the end of the June 2018. This is a new format from that used in previous years, designed to bring together all the relevant information in a single report that can also be used as a stand-alone document. It includes all the information that Members have previously seen in budget monitoring reports.
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2. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 2.1 There are no matters for decision in this report. The Committee is asked to note the contents but may choose to take further action depending on the matters reported here.
-

3. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 In considering the current position on the revenue budget and the capital programme at the end of June 2018 the committee can choose to note this information or it could choose to take further action.
 - 3.2 The committee is requested to note the content of the report and agree on any necessary action to be taken in relation to the budget position.
-

4. RISK

- 4.1 This report is presented for information only and has no risk management implications.
- 4.2 The Council has produced a balanced budget for both capital and revenue expenditure and income for 2018/19. This budget is set against a backdrop of limited resources and a difficult economic climate. Regular and comprehensive monitoring of the type included in this report ensures early warning of significant issues that may place the Council at financial risk. This gives this committee the best opportunity to take actions to mitigate

such risks.

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

5.1 No consultation has been undertaken in relation to this report.

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

6.1 The first quarter budget monitoring reports are being considered by the relevant Service Committees throughout September, including a full report to Policy & Resources Committee on 19 September 2018.

6.2 Details of the discussions which take place at service committees regarding budget management will be reported to Policy and Resources Committee where appropriate.

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	This report monitors actual activity against the revenue budget and other financial matters set by Council for the financial year. The budget is set in accordance with the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy which is linked to the strategic plan and corporate priorities.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Risk Management	This has been addressed in section 4 of the report.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Financial	Financial implications are the focus of this report through high level budget monitoring. The process of budget monitoring ensures that services can react quickly to potential resource problems. The process ensures that the Council is not faced by corporate financial problems that may prejudice the delivery of strategic priorities.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement

Staffing	The budget for staffing represents a significant proportion of the direct spend of the council and is carefully monitored. Any issues in relation to employee costs will be raised in this and future monitoring reports.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Legal	The Council has a statutory obligation to maintain a balanced budget and this monitoring process enables the committee to remain aware of issues and the process to be taken to maintain a balanced budget for the year.	Mid Kent Legal
Privacy and Data Protection	No specific issues arise.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Equalities	The budget ensures the focus of resources into areas of need as identified in the Council's strategic priorities. This monitoring report ensures that the budget is delivering services to meet those needs.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Crime and Disorder	No specific issues arise.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Procurement	No specific issues arise.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement

8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix 1: Fourth Quarter 2017/18 Revenue and Capital Monitoring – Heritage, Culture & Leisure

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

First Quarter Budget Monitoring 2018/19

Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee
4 September 2018
Lead Officer: Mark Green
Report Author: Ellie Dunnet / Paul Holland

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Executive Summary

This report is intended to provide Members with an overview of performance against revenue and capital budgets and outturn during the first quarter of 2018/19 for the services within this Committee's remit.

Robust budget monitoring is a key part of effective internal financial control, and therefore is one of the elements underpinning good corporate governance.

The aim of reporting financial information to service committees at quarterly intervals is to ensure that underlying trends can be identified at an early stage, and that action is taken to combat adverse developments or seize opportunities.

It is advisable for these reports to be considered in conjunction with quarterly performance monitoring reports, as this may provide the context for variances identified with the budget and general progress towards delivery of the Council's strategic priorities.

Headline messages for this quarter are as follows:

- For this Committee, there is an underspend against the revenue budget of £124,000, but this is expected to change to an overspend of £37,000 by the end of this financial year.
- The position for the Council as a whole at the end of the first quarter is an underspend against the revenue budgets of £831,000. At this stage we expect to remain within budget for the year.
- Capital expenditure totaling £848,000 has been incurred between 1 April and 30 June, for the projects which sit within this Committee's remit. This represents slippage of £3.679m.
- Overall capital expenditure totaling £1.671m has been incurred during the first quarter, against a budget of £28.754m.

Revenue Budget

1st Quarter 2018/19



Revenue Spending

At the end of the first quarter, there is an overall positive variance of £124,000 against the revenue budget for this Committee. Based on current information, we are forecasting that this will decrease to an overspend of £37,000 by the end of the year.

As illustrated by the chart below, all committees have kept expenditure within the agreed budget, or have achieved/exceeded their agreed income target this quarter.

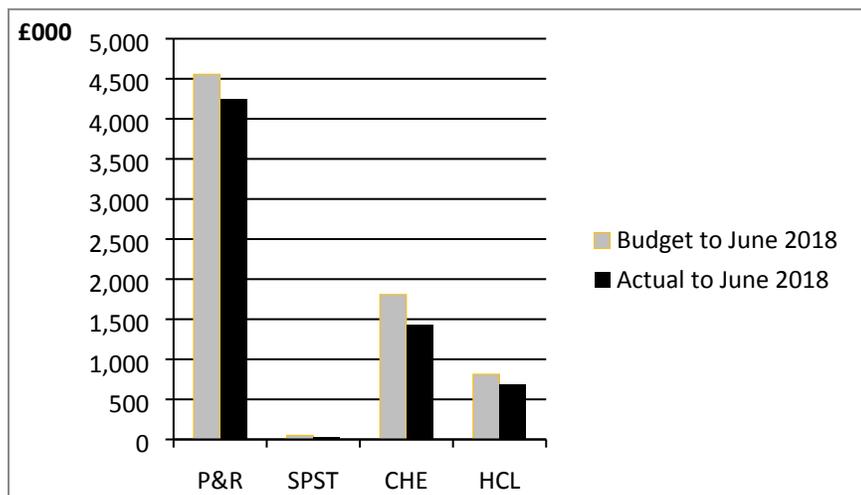


Chart 1 Performance against budget analysed by service committee

The table on the following page details the budget and expenditure position for this Committee's services during the first quarter. These figures represent the net budget for each cost centre. The actual position includes expenditure for goods and services which we have received but not yet paid for.

The columns of the table show the following detail:

- The cost centre description;
- The value of the total budget for the year;
- The amount of the budget expected to be spent by the end of June 2018;
- The actual spend to that date;
- The variance between expected and actual spend;
- The forecast spend to year end; and
- The expected significant variances at 31 March 2019.

The table shows that of a net annual expenditure budget of £4.837m it was expected that £1.226m would be spent up until the end of June. At this point in time the budget is reporting an underspend of £124,000, and the current forecast indicates that the year-end position for this committee will decrease to an over spend of £37,000.

Revenue Budget Summary Q1 2018/19

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)
Cost Centre(T)	Budget for Year £000	Budget to 30 June 2018 £000	Actual £000	Variance £000	Forecast 31 March 2019 £000	Forecast Variance 31 March 2019 £000
Cultural Development Arts	18	5	3	1	18	0
Museum	1,575	327	334	-7	1,575	0
Carriage Museum	83	21	16	4	83	0
Museum-Grant Funded Activities	58	17	8	10	58	0
Museum Cafe	-2	-3	3	-6	-2	0
Hazlitt Arts Centre	388	87	87	1	388	0
Festivals and Events	12	11	-16	26	12	0
Lettable Halls	15	2	1	1	15	0
Community Halls	229	26	30	-3	229	0
Cultural Development Sports	0	0	0	0	0	0
Leisure Centre	334	115	115	0	334	0
Mote Park Adventure Zone	-57	0	0	0	0	-57
Cobtree Golf Course	-35	-32	-32	-0	-35	0
Parks & Open Spaces	1,367	345	310	35	1,367	0
Playground Maintenance & Improvements	418	42	38	3	418	0
Parks Pavilions	54	10	8	1	54	0
Mote Park	339	79	81	-2	339	0
Mote Park Cafe	-31	3	7	-5	-31	0
Allotments	13	3	3	0	13	0
Tourism	130	37	36	1	130	0
Museum Shop	58	14	17	-2	58	0
Leisure Services Other Activities	37	1	1	0	37	0
Cemetery	167	70	64	7	167	0
National Assistance Act	1	0	-1	1	1	0
Crematorium	-460	2	-49	51	-480	20
Maintenance of Closed Churchyards	9	2	4	-2	9	0
Market	66	30	38	-9	66	0
Leisure Services Section	18	5	-1	6	18	0
Cultural Services Section	0	-1	-8	7	0	0
Visitor Economy Section	8	2	2	-0	8	0
Bereavement Services Section	23	7	4	2	23	0
Market Section	0	-0	-0	0	0	0
Total	4,837	1,226	1,102	124	4,874	-37

Table 1 Revenue Budget Position, Q1 2018/19 – Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee (Including recharges)

Significant Variances

Within these headline figures, there are a number of adverse and favourable variances for individual service areas. This report draws attention to the most significant variances, i.e. those exceeding £30,000 or expected to do so by the end of the year. The table below provides further detail regarding these variances, and the actions being taken to address them.

It is important that the potential implications of variances are considered at this stage, so that contingency plans can be put in place and if necessary, this can be used to inform future financial planning.

	Positive Variance Q1	Adverse Variance Q1	Year End Forecast Variance
Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee	£000		
Mote Park Adventure Zone – This was due to open in Summer 2018, however due to the flooding incident that occurred earlier this year the project has been substantially delayed and will not now open until Spring 2019. This means that the estimated income of £57,000 will not now be realised this year.			-57
Parks & Open Spaces – Although this area is currently showing a positive variance there are urgent tree works required that mean that by year-end it is forecast to be on budget.	35		0
Crematorium – Income has been higher than forecast for the year to date, but maintenance works are required to the cremator, and there are also reinstatement works to the car park to be undertaken, so this will reduce the forecast year-end surplus.	51		20

Table 2 Significant Variances – Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee

Capital Budget

1st Quarter 2018/19

Capital Spending

The five year capital programme for 2018/19 onwards was approved by Council on 7 March 2018. Funding for the programme remains consistent with previous decisions of Council in that the majority of capital resources come from New Homes Bonus along with a small grants budget.

Progress made towards delivery of planned projects for 2018/19 is set out in the table below. The budget figure includes resources which have been brought forward from 2017/18, and these have been added to the agreed budget for the current year.

To date, expenditure totaling £0.848m has been incurred against a budget of £4.527m. At this stage, it is anticipated that there will be slippage of £1.953m, although this position will be reviewed at the end of the year when the Committee will be asked to approve/note the carry forward of resources into the next financial year.

Capital Budget Summary Q1 2018/19

Capital Programme Heading	Adjusted	Actual to June 2017 £000	Budget Remaining £000	Projected			Total Expenditure £000
	Estimate 2018/19 £000			Q2 Profile £000	Q3 Profile £000	Q4 Profile £000	
Heritage, Culture & Leisure							
Mote Park Dam Works	1,230	13	1,217	15	15	15	58
Mote Park Visitor Centre	583	30	553	25	25	368	448
Mote Park Adventure Zone and Other Improvements	1,455	687	768	225	225	195	1,332
Continued Improvements to Play Areas	589	29	560	50		200	279
Museum Development Plan	154	1	153	50	50	53	154
Crematorium Development Plan	416	88	328	115			203
Other Parks Improvements	100		100			100	100
Total	4,527	848	3,679	480	315	931	2,574

Table 3 Capital Expenditure, Q1 2018/19

- At this stage it is not anticipated that there will be any significant spend on the Mote Park Dam Works project during 2018/19.
- As referenced in the revenue section of this report there has been a delay in completing the Adventure Zone project. The costs above do not include an estimated £0.4m of costs that have been incurred to date as a result of the flooding incident that are currently the subject of an insurance claim. There will be a further update on the position in the second quarter budget monitoring report.
- The play area improvements scheme is now substantially complete, but the budget does include funding for ongoing maintenance and replacements which is unlikely to be needed this year so this will be slipped into 2019/20.
- The Crematorium Development Plan included improvement works to the Car Park. The estimated costs of this were £0.236m, but the final cost of the project was £0.320m. (The scheme commenced during 2017/18, so the total cost is spread over two financial years) During the course of the works being undertaken a number of

issues were identified. Additional drainage works and a retaining wall were required, and the cost of resurfacing of the car park was not included in the tender documents that were issued for this contract. The remaining budget has been earmarked for future projects as per the Bereavement Services report elsewhere on this agenda.

Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee

4 September 2018

Key Performance Indicator Update Quarter 1 2018/19

Final Decision-Maker	Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee
Lead Head of Service	Angela Woodhouse, Head of Policy, Communications, and Governance
Lead Officer and Report Author	Anna Collier, Policy and Information Manager and Ashley Sabo, Performance and Business Information Officer
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee is asked to review the progress of Key Performance Indicators that relate to the delivery of the Strategic Plan 2015-2020. The Committee is also asked to consider the comments and actions against performance to ensure they are robust.

This report makes the following recommendations to Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee:

1. That the summary of performance for Quarter 1 of 2018/19 for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) be noted.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee	4 September 2018

Key Performance Indicator Update Quarter 1 18/19

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Having a comprehensive set of actions and performance indicators ensures that the Council delivers against the priorities and actions set in the Strategic Plan.
- 1.2 Performance indicators are judged in two ways. Firstly on whether performance has improved, sustained or declined, compared to the same period in the previous year. This is known as direction. Where there is no previous data, no assessment of direction can be made.
- 1.3 The second way is to look at whether an indicator has achieved the target set and is known as PI status. If an indicator has achieved or exceeded the annual target they are rated green. If the target has been missed but is within 10% of the target it will be rated amber, and if the target has been missed by more than 10% it will be rated red.
- 1.4 Some indicators will show an asterisk (*) after the figure. These are provisional values that are awaiting confirmation. Data for some of the indicators were not available at the time of reporting. In these cases a date has been provided for when the information is expected.
- 1.5 Contextual indicators are not targeted but are given a direction. Indicators that are not due for reporting or where there is delay in data collection are not rated against targets or given a direction.

2. Quarter 1 Performance Summary

- 2.1 There are 27 key performance indicators (KPIs) which were developed with Heads of Service and unit managers, and agreed by the four Service Committees for 2017/18. 4 are reported to the Committee for this quarter.
- 2.2 Overall, 100% (5) of targeted KPIs reported this quarter achieved their target compared to 60% (3) in quarter 4 of 2017/18 and 20% (1) in the same quarter last year.

RAG Rating	Green	Amber	Red	N/A	Total
KPIs	5	0	0	0	5
Direction	Up	No Change	Down	N/A	Total
Last Year	5	0	0	0	5
Last Quarter	5	0	0	0	5

3. Performance by Priority

Priority 1: Keeping Maidstone borough an attractive place for all, & Priority 2: Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough

- 3.1 The Hazlitt Theatre sold 71.2% of all available tickets during quarter 1, against a target of 50% (as stated in the contract). The Hazlitt team have maintained the focus and marketing drive geared towards attracting a very wide range of customers. As a result they have continued to exceed their target for seats sold.
- 3.2 The number of students benefitting from the museum's educational service was 3,052 against a target of 2,074. Overall, the trend for school visits outside the classroom is decreasing, with a range of reasons reported from cost to bureaucracy and the decline of arts subjects in the national curriculum. However, during June, The Green Spaces, Natural Faces project attracted 1,698 pupils to explore issues around health and wellbeing, mental health and the impact of outdoor activity on those things. This project has been sponsored by Arts Council England, which allowed for provision of transport but also the backfilling of teachers in the classroom which greatly helped uptake of places.
- 3.3 Footfall at the Museum and Visitor Information Centre was 16,387 against a target of 16,250. Footfall in this quarter rose by 4,701 on the same quarter last year. Some 900+ of these extra visits are due to the increase in school use but Easter holidays activities also attracted many visitors. The importance of the Ancient Lives gallery should also be recognised. In quarter 1 2017/18, the old Egyptian gallery was closed for refurbishment. Ancient Lives has exceeded its previous level of visitation.
- 3.4 The number of contacts to the Visitor Information Centre (VIC) was 819 against a target of 782. In quarter 1, 331 contacts were made by telephone, 571 in person and 22 by email.
- 3.5 There were 209,230 users at the leisure centre during quarter 1. The team at the Leisure Centre have continued to put a lot of effort towards attracting more users to the centre. Swimming course attendance has grown by 17,700 while health and gym numbers are up by 7,200 compared to the same quarter last year. The events at the centre have also attracted more visitors this year.

4. RISK

- 4.1 This report is presented for information only, committees, managers and heads of service can use performance data to identify service performance and this data can contribute to risk management.

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 The Key Performance Indicator Update is reported quarterly to the Service Committees; Communities Housing and Environment Committee, Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee, and Heritage Culture and Leisure Committee. Each Committee will receive a report on the

relevant priority action areas. The report is also presented to the Policy & Resources Committee, reporting only on the priority areas of: A clean and safe environment, regenerating the Town Centre, and a home for everyone.

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 The Council could choose not to monitor the Strategic Plan and/or make alternative performance management arrangements, such as frequency of reporting. This is not recommended as it could lead to action not being taken against performance during the year, and the Council failing to deliver its priorities.

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The key performance indicators and strategic actions are part of the Council's overarching Strategic Plan 2015-20 and play an important role in the achievement of corporate objectives. They also cover a wide range of services and priority areas, for example waste and recycling.	Head of Policy, Communications & Governance
Risk Management	The production of robust performance reports ensures that the view of the Council's approach to the management of risk and use of resources is not undermined and allows early action to be taken in order to mitigate the risk of not achieving targets and outcomes.	Head of Policy, Communications & Governance
Financial	Performance indicators and targets are closely linked to the allocation of resources and determining good value for money. The financial implications of any proposed changes are also identified and taken into account in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and associated annual budget setting process. Performance issues are highlighted as part of the budget monitoring reporting process.	Finance Manager (Client)
Staffing	Having a clear set of targets enables staff outcomes/objectives to be set and effective action plans to be put in place	Head of Policy, Communications & Governance
Legal	There is no statutory duty to report regularly on the Council's performance. However, under Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 (as amended) a best value authority has a statutory duty to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its	Keith Trowell, Interim Team Leader (Corporate Governance)

	functions are exercised having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. One of the purposes of the Key Performance Indicators is to facilitate the improvement of the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of Council Services. Regular reports on the Council's performance assist in demonstrating best value and compliance with the statutory duty.	
Privacy and Data Protection	We will hold data in line with the Data Quality Policy, which sets out the requirement for ensuring data quality. There is a program for undertaking data quality audits of performance indicators.	Keith Trowell, Interim Team Leader (Corporate Governance)
Equalities	The Performance Indicators reported on in this quarterly update measure the ongoing performance of the strategies in place. If there has been a change to the way in which a service delivers a strategy, i.e. a policy change, an Equalities Impact Assessment is undertaken to ensure that there is no detrimental impact on individuals with a protected characteristic.	Equalities & Corporate Policy Officer
Crime and Disorder	None Identified	Policy & Information Manager
Procurement	Performance Indicators and Strategic Milestones monitor any procurement needed to achieve the outcomes of the Strategic Plan.	Head of Policy, Communications & Governance, & Section 151 Officer

8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix 1: Key Performance Indicator Update Quarter 1 18/19

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

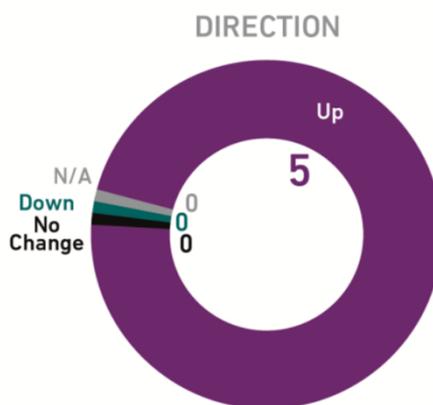
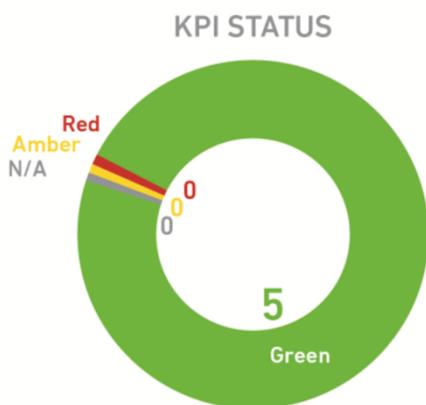
Performance Summary

This is the quarter 1 performance update on Maidstone Borough Council's Strategic Plan 2015-20. It sets out how we are performing against Key Performance Indicators that directly contribute to the achievement of our priorities. Performance indicators are judged in two ways; firstly, whether an indicator has achieved the target set, known as PI status. Secondly, we assess whether performance has improved, been sustained or declined, compared to the same period in the previous year, known as direction.

Key to performance ratings

RAG Rating	
	Target not achieved
	Target slightly missed (within 10%)
	Target met
	Data Only

Direction	
	Performance has improved
	Performance has been sustained
	Performance has declined
N/A	No previous data to compare



RAG Rating	Green	Amber	Red	N/A	Total
KPIs	5	0	0	0	5
Direction	Up	No Change	Down	N/A	Total
Last Year	5	0	0	0	5
Last Quarter	5	0	0	0	5

Priority 1: Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all, & Priority 2: Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough

Ensuring there are good leisure and culture attractions

Performance Indicator	Value	Target	Status	Last Year	Last Quarter
Percentage of all available tickets sold at the Hazlitt	71.19%	50%			
Number of students benefiting from the Museum's educational service	3,052	2,074			
Footfall at the Museum and Visitors Information Centre	16,387	16,250			
Contacts to the Visitor Information Centre (visits, calls and emails)	819	782			
Number of users at the Leisure Centre	209,230	181,094			

Bereavement Services Future Development Plan

Final Decision-Maker	Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee
Lead Head of Service/Lead Director	William Cornall, Director of Regeneration and Place
Lead Officer and Report Author	Sharon Smith, Bereavement Services Manager Lesley O'Reilly, Senior Bereavement Services Assistant Jennifer Shepherd, Head of Environment and Public Realm
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All but specifically Boxley Ward & Shepway North

Executive Summary

In 2013, Bereavement Services created its first five year plan for development of the business. Many of the items listed that could be funded from revenue have been completed along with a large capital investment in the Crematorium car park. However a number of capital improvements proposed at that time have yet to be realised which will have an impact on the future development and revenue streams of the business.

This report outlines the opportunities for improvement at Maidstone Cemetery, some of which, if not completed will have a detrimental impact on the business, environment and staff. The report summarises the costs for each of the projects and potential revenue that can be gained.

The report sets out a two phase delivery plan for improvements at the Cemetery.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the Cemetery business case, including the two phased approach, is agreed.
2. That the capital budget previously set aside for a pet crematorium is used to fund Phase 1 of the cemetery business plan instead.
3. That delegated authority is granted to the Director of Regeneration and Place to determine the most appropriate and cost effective method to deliver the staff welfare facility within the existing capital budget.

4. That further funding is requested from the Policy and Resources Committee for the Phase 2 improvements outlined in the cemetery business plan.

Timetable	
Meeting	Date
Corporate Leadership Team	7 th August 2018
Heritage, Culture & Leisure	4 th September 2018

Bereavement Services Future Development Plan

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

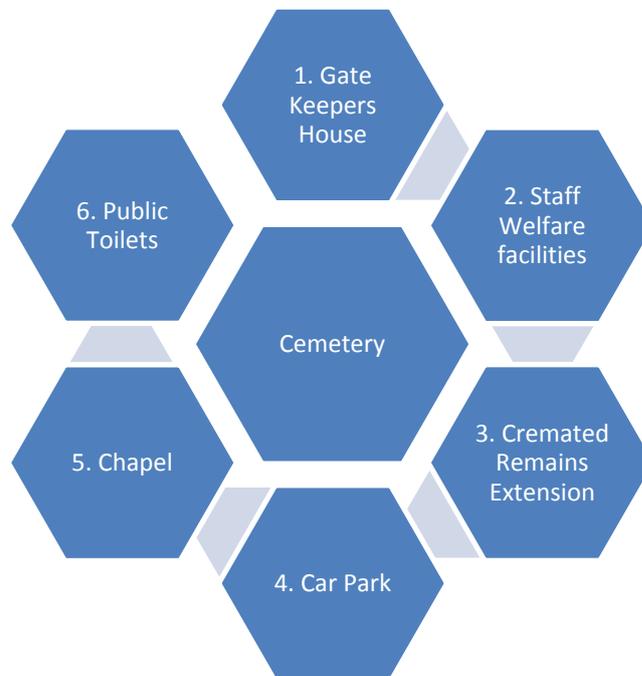
- 1.1 Maidstone Borough Council's Bereavement Services Team manages Vinters Park Crematorium and Maidstone Cemetery. This is a £1.2M business that delivers over £380k net income per year for the Council which supports the other services it delivers. It also offers an invaluable service to Maidstone residents and local bereaved families.
- 1.2 Maidstone Cemetery carries out approximately 130 burials per year and generates over £169k in Exclusive Rights, Interments and Memorial sales. The cemetery covers an area of 26 hectares and has approximately 25 years capacity of new graves for full burials; however, re-opening of graves for further burials will continue. There is only 6 years for the burial of cremated remains, which is why additional graves are required.
- 1.3 Vinters Park Crematorium undertakes over 1,600 cremations per year which is a £1.2m business that generates over £352k income for the Council which includes £80k in new memorial sales per year. The Crematorium operates at around 75% capacity, although the popular service times i.e. during the middle of the day are at 100% capacity. The service receives exceptionally high levels of customer satisfaction and is endorsed by all local funeral directors. The service's mission statement is "*We exist to relieve the distress of persons suffering from bereavement.*"
- 1.4 In April 2013, Bereavement Services produced its first five year business plan. This was an ambitious plan which set out developing the existing services and introducing new services such as a pet crematorium. The plan was reviewed regularly in light of the changing financial situation and the Council's commercial strategy. In 2017 this resulted in focus being realigned with the existing income streams and although planning permission was achieved for a pet crematorium, the Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee supported the delivery of this being deferred until a more compelling business case could be identified. However permission was obtained for the expansion of the Crematorium car park which has now been successfully completed.
- 1.5 There have also been a number of smaller improvements at the Crematorium, including refurbishment of the public toilets, purchase of fire-

proof cabinets, energy recovery for heating, visual tributes and web-casting.

- 1.6 Unfortunately no improvements were completed at Maidstone Cemetery during this time, although the Committee agreed that the business case for a number of improvements at the Cemetery should be developed.
- 1.7 The purpose of this report is to update the Bereavement Services Development Plan and to outline the business case for a two phase approach to improvements at Maidstone Cemetery.

BUSINESS CASE

- 1.8 A full review of the Cemetery highlighted six opportunities for development which would deliver significant improvements to the local community, bereaved families, staff as well as the business. These options are shown in the diagram below.



- 1.9 The diagram above highlights the proposed order of work starting with the dismantling of the Gate Keepers House, given that some aspects require further funding and greater urgency for welfare improvements.
- 1.10 A map of the Cemetery highlighting all the key locations and buildings is included in Appendix A.

Dismantling of the Gate Keeper's House and new Staff Welfare Facility

- 1.11 There is no doubt that the initial visual appearance of the Cemetery is impacted by the presence of the 1970's prefab house at the far end of the car park (see Appendix A) and the dilapidated shed used as staff welfare facilities. The potential deterioration of the Cemetery Lodge at the

entrance, which is currently in private ownership is also likely to impact the initial perception of the Cemetery.

- 1.12 The Gate Keepers House and its garden takes a significant amount of room at the front of the Cemetery and due to the presence of asbestos throughout and previous flooding is inhabitable. The building is currently boarded up as it poses a health and safety risk and therefore needs to be professionally dismantled to ensure the hazardous material is removed and disposed of appropriately. The removal of this building also offers a number of opportunities for the land. In 2012 consideration was given to the sale of the land to developers, however the restricted access and low capital receipt resulted in this being unfeasible and the land handed back to Bereavement Services.
- 1.13 Therefore a more viable use for the land would be the extension of the Cremated Remain Section, which is covered in 1.20 and the potential siting of new staff welfare facility. The pre-existing utilities and building foundations on site would reduce the cost for the staff welfare facility. This would also enable the existing car park which can only accommodate 10 cars to be extended.
- 1.14 The current staff welfare facilities are recognised as inadequate and in poor condition. It is possible for the staff to be relocated to the Park Wood Depot, however this would reduce their productive time on site. Whilst this alone would not generate a return on the capital investment, it would support the ongoing development of the service through greater engagement with customers and investment in the staff. There is a further opportunity for income generation if the new facility incorporated accommodation which could be rented out.
- 1.15 It is anticipated that the cost to dismantle the gate keeper's house would be £15,500 including the safe removal and disposal of asbestos. Expansion of the car park is estimated to cost in the region of £40,000 which would deliver approximately 16 additional spaces.
- 1.16 The staff welfare facility could be delivered through a prefabricated temporary cabin at a cost of £35,500. However this would need to be replaced in 15 years and therefore the full life cost is likely to be greater than a purpose-built facility using standard construction. Initial quotes for this build have suggested a cost in the region of £125,000.
- 1.17 An alternative option for the staff welfare facility could be the Cemetery Lodge should the Council be able to re-acquire the property at a suitable price to reflect the level of work required to make it habitable. There are a number of structural concerns regarding the property and it is likely to require underpinning. At present the cost to purchase and repair this property is unknown, however if this was found to be a cost effective option it could be pursued.
- 1.18 Should it not be deemed affordable to purchase and repair the building for use as a staff welfare facility, it could still be explored further as a commercial opportunity at the Cemetery. Its key location at the entrance

to the Cemetery would make the building ideal to house a retail unit for the sale of refreshments, flowers or for a stone masons.

- 1.19 The return on the capital investment for this work is covered in 1.22 as income from the extension of the Cremated Remains Section.

Extension of Cremated Remain Section

- 1.20 Within Maidstone Cemetery there is a section where families can bury the cremated remains of their loved ones. It is anticipated that this will be full in 6 years, although it could be sooner given recent changes to the Roman Catholic view on cremation.
- 1.21 Use of the garden around the gate keeper's house would enable between 926 and 1,178 new plots to be created. The maps below show the potential areas for the new cremated remains section.



- 1.22 The cost to carry out this work will be in the region of £15,000, however could generate significantly more revenue through the sale of exclusive rights, permits and inscriptions. It is important to note however that this may take in the region of 60 years given the current rate of uptake. Therefore a conservative income projection would be £15,000 per year from the sale of exclusive rights of burial.

Reopening of the Cemetery Chapel

- 1.23 The Grade II listed Chapel at Maidstone Cemetery held its last service on the 27th January 2006. It has been closed off due to the urgent need for repairs to the spire and roof. It is not known why the decision was taken at that time not to carry out the repair work, but it is likely that it was financial due to the level of investment required.
- 1.24 Since its closure there has been regular interest from the public about the Chapel, with over 75% saying they would have used the service if it had been available and it regularly features in customer feedback:

"Chapel should never have been closed, its not right to make people travel half way round Maidstone to lay loved ones to rest."

"Buried Wife's ashes in family grave...would have been nice to spend time in Chapel as it was mid-November...had to go straight to graveside and it was over in minutes."

"It would be lovely to have such a beautiful building in use again, to help families at such a difficult time in their lives." – Funeral Director

1.25 Since 2004, five surveys have been carried out on the Cemetery Chapel. The first two of these carried out in 2004 and 2005 by St Blasé resulted in the closure of the Chapel due to a significant risk identified to the public and staff at the Cemetery. The main areas of concern were the stability of the spire due to rusting ironworks and potential for stonework to become detached and fall onto the footpath, posing a significant risk to visitors and staff.

1.26 A further condition survey was undertaken on the Cemetery Chapel in October 2011 by Humphries & Jones. This report suggested that the work was prioritised as:

- Structural works to Spire
- Overhaul/repairs to roofs
- Overhaul rainwater goods
- Eradicate wet rot
- Re-pointing elevations and repair of sculptural detail

1.27 Two further surveys were completed in 2012 and 2018 by Torcel Ltd. The first suggested that by addressing the issue of water ingress and the condition of the spire, the Chapel could be reopened. Following the 2011 report work was undertaken to make the building water tight however funding could not be secured to repair the spire. The report earlier this year confirmed that water ingress had ceased and had arrested the progression of wet rot affecting the roof timbers. However the spire condition had remained unchanged. One positive report was that the condition of the Chapel had remained relatively stable since its closure in 2006 and had not demonstrated any significant deterioration which could suggest imminent danger to the building.

1.28 Based on the reports and discussion with the Conservation Officer due to the building Grade II listing, it is understood that the building could be recommissioned following work on the spire, protection of the roof tiles and interior repair. Improvements to the public toilets have also been included in this as the current facility would not be sufficient once services recommenced. The approximate cost for this work has been identified from the surveyors and through obtaining quotations:

Work required	Approx. cost
Replacement of cast iron girdle around steeple	£100,000
Tile guards around eaves	£20,000
Asbestos removal floor tiles	£2,000
Decoration internal & external	£27,000
Electrical works (including a full rewire of the building)	£33,000
Music system	£15,000

Furniture deep clean & replacement where necessary	£5,000
Refurbish public toilets	£20,000
TOTAL:	£222,000

1.29 In order for the Chapel to remain open a further investment of around £160,000 would be required to repair the roof and repoint the external stone work. However it is anticipated that this work would not be required for 8-10 years.

1.30 Based on the anticipated chapel fee for the Crematorium in 2019/20, £265 per service, the anticipated income per year would be £30,000 for the Chapel alone. This is based on 87% of burials using the Chapel for their service.

Chapel cost (at 2019/20 prices)	Single interment	X 130 services Chapel & Interment
£265	£565	
£30,000	£73,400	£103,400

However research has indicated that church fees are in the region of £500-£800 per service, therefore the actual fee needs to be considered to ensure that the full cost of the service and repairs to the Chapel is recovered, yet remains affordable for families.

Further Bereavement Service Improvements

1.31 Unlike the Cemetery, there has been investment at the Vinters Park Crematorium over the past few years, however there remains a number of improvements which if delivered could generate additional income or improve the existing offer to customers. These include the conversion of the Gardener's Store to create a retail unit for refreshments, flowers and potentially a showcase for a stone mason, as well as extension of the office, additional covering for the Cloisters and Chapel air conditioning. It is recommended that the potential developments are fully explored following completion of the Cemetery projects.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

1.32 In conclusion, the table below shows the total costs for Phase 1 of the work at the Cemetery and projected annual income. The majority of the work outlines in Phase 1 is not designed to bring a capital return, however is necessary work to bring the service up to standard.

MAIDSTONE CEMETERY – Phase 1	£
Demolishing gate keeper's house	15,500
New staff welfare facility	125,000
Extension of Cremated Remains Section	15,000
CCTV / Security	10,000
Car park expansion	40,000

TOTAL Cost	205,500
Annual Income from Cremated Remains plots	15,000
TOTAL Annual Income	15,000

1.33 There is currently £213,000 within the Capital budget for development of Bereavement Services. This was originally set aside for the delivery of a pet crematorium at Vinters Park. Given the business case identified for the work at the Cemetery, it is proposed that this funding is allocated for this work and no longer held for the Pet Crematorium project. Should a more compelling business case for a pet crematorium be identified, new funding would have to be sought through the Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee and Policy and Resources Committee.

1.34 It is appreciated that the available capital funding will not cover all improvements and that there are a number of options for delivery which is likely to have an impact on the cost. Therefore it is proposed that a phased approach is used for the delivery of improvements to enable the method of delivery and costs to be considered at each stage.

DELIVERY SCHEDULE

1.35 The projects highlighted with this report fit within a two phase delivery model:

Phase	Activity	Cost	Timeframe (Oct 18 – Sept 19)											
			O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S
1	Demolish Gate Keepers House	£15,500		■										
	New Staff Welfare Facility	£125,000		■	■	■	■	■	■	■				
	CCTV	£10,000					■							
	Extend Cremated Remains	£15,000								■	■			
	Car Park	£40,000								■	■	■	■	■
2	Chapel reopening	£222,000								■	■	■	■	■
TOTAL		£427,500												

1.36 Appendix B shows the full timetable of work.

1.37 It is recognised that there is sufficient funding with the Capital Programme to fund Phase 1 of the proposed improvements.

1.38 However Phase 2 cannot be delivered within the existing capital budget therefore it is recommended that a further report is taken to Policy and Resources Committee requesting further capital funding to complete the work.

2. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 2.1 The Committee could decide that the business case presented in this report for the Cemetery demonstrates a viable opportunity for the Council and that a two phase approach is used for its delivery. The Committee can agree to delegated authority to the Director of Regeneration and Place to determine the best delivery option for welfare facilities within the existing capital budget.
 - 2.2 Alternatively the Committee could decide that only selected aspects of the development plan are agreed and prioritised for delivery from the existing capital funding.
 - 2.3 However the Committee could also decide that no further investment is carried out at the Cemetery and that the Chapel remains closed.
-

3. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee agrees with the option set out in 2.1 and approves the business case to fund improvements at Maidstone Cemetery from the existing Capital Programme budget for Bereavement Services.
 - 3.2 As set out in 1.24 and 1.25, it is recommended that the Committee approves the provision of new staff welfare facilities through the most cost effective means, and delegating to the Director of Regeneration and Place the authority to determine how this is delivered within the budget available.
-

4. RISK

- 4.1 The risks associated with this proposal, including the risks if the Council does not act as recommended, have been considered in line with the Council's Risk Management Framework. The Risk Register is attached as Appendix C.
 - 4.2 Such a significant investment at the Cemetery is not without risk as the business case is based on a number of assumptions relating to uptake of the service and the level of work required in the short and medium term. However these assumptions are based on reliable data from the service and five condition surveys.
 - 4.3 There is also a risk to the Council if the work is not undertaken as the buildings will continue to deteriorate putting greater risk and financial burden on the Council. The Chapel is Grade II listed and as a local authority, the Council has a duty under the planning regulations to be an "exemplary owner" and therefore the building should be preserved and not allowed to decay further.
-

5. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 5.1 Once approved, a project team will be set up to move this forward, with representatives from Property Services, the Conservation Officer, the Procurement Team where necessary, Communications and eventually the contractors.
- 5.2 Engagement with Ward Members, Heritage Culture and Leisure Committee and local residents surrounding the Cemetery will be very important, and we will require the Communications team to help with that. The team will also need to ensure that the Funeral Directors and Arrangers are kept abreast of proposals and works we shall be undertaking.

6. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The recommendations support the Council's priority for a <i>Respecting the character and heritage of our Borough</i> through preserving and enhancing Maidstone Cemetery for future generations.	Head of Environment and Public Realm
Risk Management	See Appendix C	Head of Environment and Public Realm
Financial	The proposals set out in the recommendation can be partly funded from Capital money already set aside from the pet crematorium project. Other funds could be invest to save from the projected revenue or to seek the possibility of additional capital funding.	S 151 Officer and Finance Manager
Staffing	The recommendations will be delivered with existing staff resources.	Head of Environment and Public Realm
Legal	We will work with Procurement and Property to ensure the contractors we use fit within the Borough Councils guidelines	Legal Team
Privacy and Data Protection		

Equalities	An EIA will be completed for the proposal agreed. More than one EIA may be required, dependent on the decision made and development plan that follows.	Equalities and Corporate Policy Officer
Crime and Disorder	By making the proposed changes at the Cemetery it is expected that the amount of burglaries and loss of MBC equipment will decrease	
Procurement	Should the value of the works require it, we shall use procurement to find suitable contractors.	

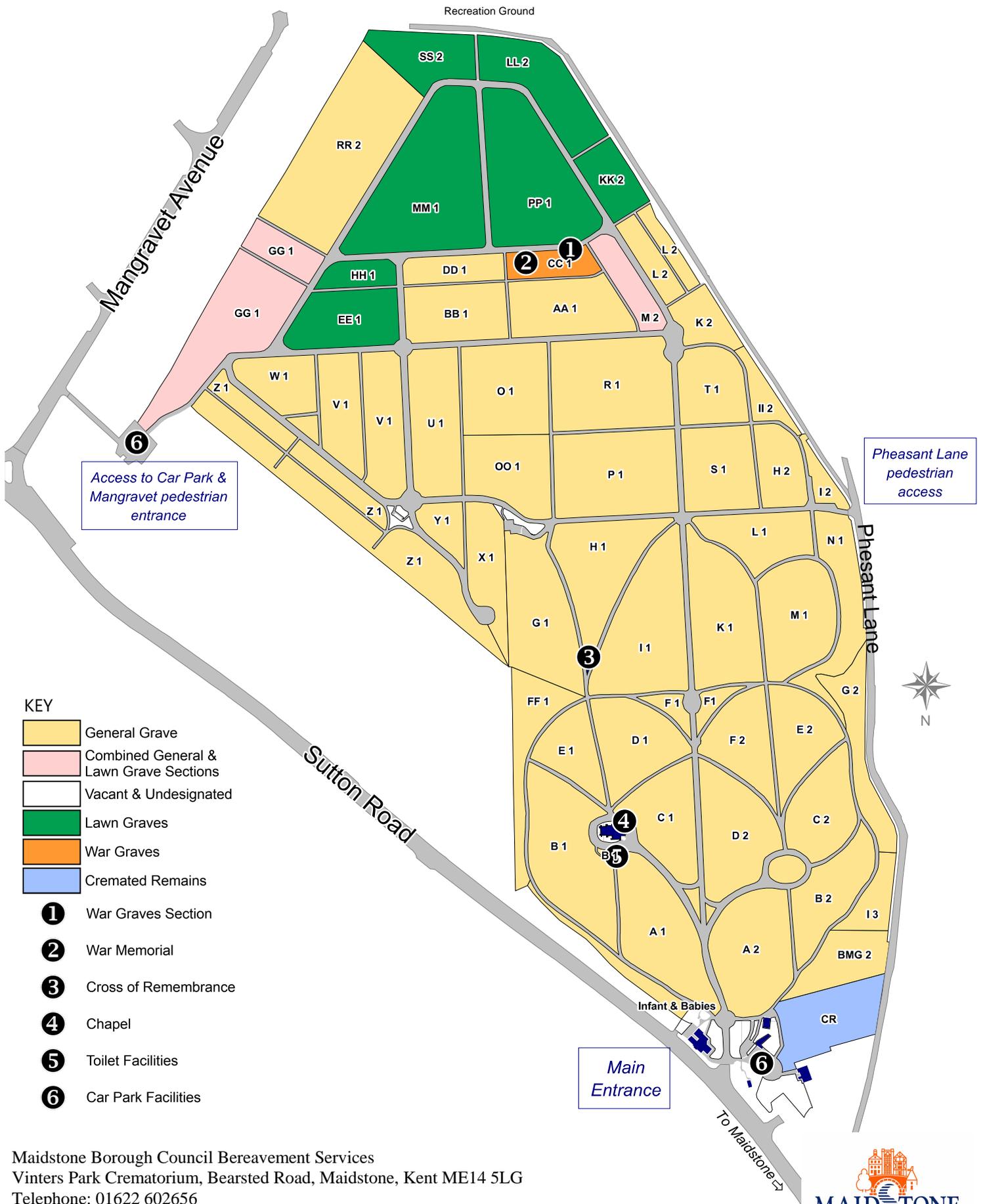
7. REPORT APPENDICES

- Appendix A – Map of Maidstone Cemetery
- Appendix B – Timetable
- Appendix C - Risk Register

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

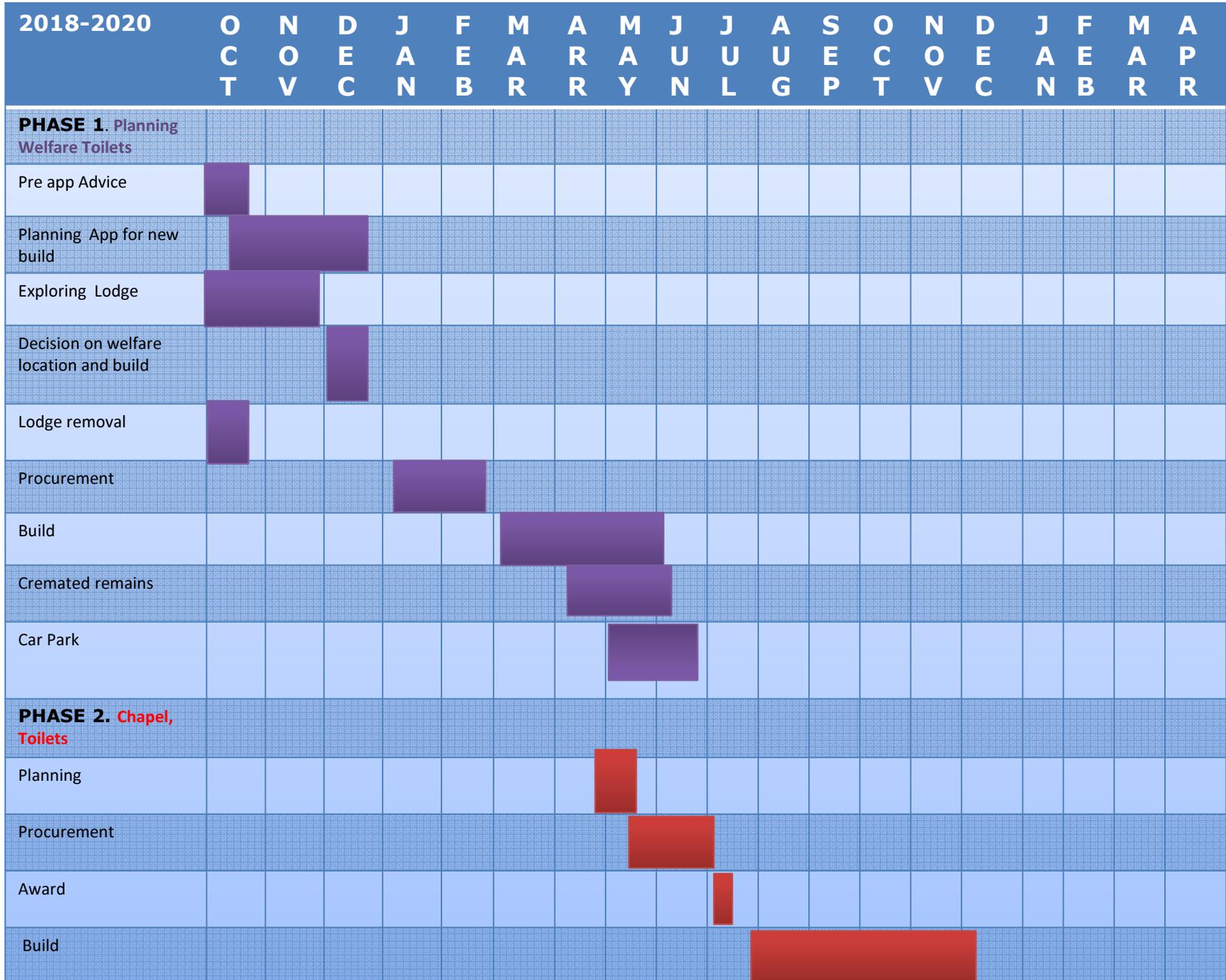
N/A

Maidstone Cemetery



- KEY**
- General Grave
 - Combined General & Lawn Grave Sections
 - Vacant & Undesignated
 - Lawn Graves
 - War Graves
 - Cremated Remains
- 1** War Graves Section
 - 2** War Memorial
 - 3** Cross of Remembrance
 - 4** Chapel
 - 5** Toilet Facilities
 - 6** Car Park Facilities

Maidstone Borough Council Bereavement Services
 Vinters Park Crematorium, Bearsted Road, Maidstone, Kent ME14 5LG
 Telephone: 01622 602656
 E-mail: bereavementservices@maidstone.gov.uk
 Web: www.maidstone.gov.uk



Appendix C – Risk Register

Bereavement Services Future Development Plan Risk Register

Service	Date Last Reviewed	Ref	Risk (short title)	Risk (full description)	Risk Owner	Key Existing Controls	Inherent rating			Treat?	Controls planned	Effective Date	Residual rating			Further Action
							Impact	L'hood	Grade				Impact	L'hood	Grade	
Bereavement Services	-		Not receiving full funding for development plan	Bereavement Services are striving to re-instate full burial services at the Cemetery, which means funding is required to bring the Chapel back into use. There are also other plans to expand our cremated remains section. Although significant funds are required for these projects, and other smaller projects at the Crematorium, we can show that income we will receive will fund the Cemetery project	Head of Environment of Public Realm	£360k Capital money set aside for for the Pet Crematorium that could be put towards these projects	4	2	8		Presenting to CLT and Heritage Culture and Leisure (HCL) Committee with full details so an informed decision can be made	07/08/2018 for CLT 04/09/2018 for HCL	2	2	4	
Bereavement Services	-		Failure to implement changes	By not implementing these changes, certainly at the Cemetery, we continue to lose revenue from Chapel use; we have land sitting unused that could house 900 cremated remains graves; we do not improve the working conditions for the staff, or have a secure compound for equipment. The car park bereaved visitors use will still be total inadequate	Head of Environment of Public Realm	Working with internal and external providers to gain full information on how to implement these changes using best value	4	3	12		Regular meetings to chart progress and deal with issues as they arise		2	2	4	
Bereavement Services			Planning and Conservation agreements	As the Chapel and the Municipal Gate Lodge are Grade II listed buildings, we will need to ensure that the Conservation Officer is involved - engagement and site visits have already occurred. Planning will need to be sought for the removal of the gate keepers house and the building of a single or double storey building	Head of Environment of Public Realm	Working with internal and external providers to gain full information on how to implement these changes using best value	3	3	9		Regular meetings to chart progress and deal with issues as they arise		2	2	4	

Agenda Item 17

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

4 September 2018

Draft Sports Facilities and Playing Pitch Strategies

Final Decision-Maker	Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee
Lead Head of Service/Lead Director	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Mark Egerton, Strategic Planning Manager, and Sue Whiteside, Principal Planning Officer
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All wards

Executive Summary

The Sports Facilities and Playing Pitch Strategies will form part of the Council's evidence base for the review of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan, and will inform development management decisions. They will also provide the Council with an evidence base for future budgetary needs or grant funding applications. The strategies assess the quantity, quality, accessibility and availability of Maidstone Borough's indoor and outdoor sports facilities and playing pitches. They forecast the borough's needs for new and improved sports facilities and pitches to 2031, and set out options for how needs may be delivered. The strategies are at a stage where input from SPST and HCL Committees is required, to consider the implications arising from recommendations and action plans.

This report makes the following recommendation to this Committee:

1. That the Committee notes that the strategies will form part of the Council's evidence base, and that comments on the documents be referred to Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee for consideration prior to re-engagement with key stakeholders and all ward Councillors.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Heritage Culture and Leisure Committee	04 September 2018
Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee	11 September 2018
Policy and Resources Committee	21 November 2018
Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee	8 January 2019

Draft Sports Facilities and Playing Pitch Strategies

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Background

- 1.1 At its meeting held on 10 July 2018, Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee (SPST) resolved to refer the Draft Sports facilities and Playing Pitch Strategies report to Heritage Culture and Leisure Committee for consideration, prior to re-engagement with stakeholders. SPST further resolved to refer the Draft Sports Facilities and Playing Pitch Strategies to Policy and Resources Committee for its November meeting, so that future capital budget allocations can be considered.
- 1.2 In its consideration of the strategies, SPST Committee noted that:
- These strategies, once agreed would form an evidence base for the local plan review.
 - The methodology followed to bring the evidence together to form these strategies had been developed by Sport England.
 - The sporting infrastructure outlined as required by the Borough could be funded through Section 106 contributions, Community Infrastructure Levy, Capital Budgets, private organisations or grant funding.
 - Sport England recognised that not all need could be met, and that although District Councils were responsible for Leisure Services this was a discretionary function and as such was a choice for each Council as to how much demand could be met.
 - The strategies should be referred to the Heritage Culture and Leisure (HCL) Committee for comment as although these documents were evidence for the Local Plan Review, HCL Committee was responsible for Sport and Leisure in the Borough.
 - Once this draft strategy had been approved by the Committee and comments made by HCL, a wider consultation was due to take place on the strategy.
- 1.3 SPST Committee made the following comments:
- There were a number of factual inaccuracies in the document which ward members would be able to assist the strategy authors to correct.
 - It was not clear whether the Council's Health and Wellbeing team had been involved in the writing of these strategies.
 - Concerns were raised about the cost of the list of potential infrastructure projects and upgrades, and it was suggested that some prioritisation should take place if the Borough Council was to commit to funding these projects.
- 1.4 Factual inaccuracies in the document will be addressed through re-engagement with the key stakeholders who assisted in developing the strategies, and through consultation with ward Councillors. The Council's Health and Wellbeing Team was aware of the work being undertaken on the

strategies, but the Team’s role in the strategies is one of an end user rather than a contributor. The identified needs for new facilities are not prioritised in the strategies because these will be considered as part of the review of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan. Priorities for improvements to existing facilities will be considered by the Council’s relevant committees in due course.

Introduction

- 1.5 The National Planning Policy Framework requires local authorities to deliver the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs (NPPF, paragraph 70). Planning policies and decisions should provide for new and improved sports venues, and also guard against the loss of facilities.
- 1.6 The strategies will form part of the Council’s evidence base for the review of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan, and will inform development management decisions. They will also provide the Council with an evidence base for future budgetary needs or grant funding applications.
- 1.7 Consultants PLC¹ were appointed to prepare a Sports Facilities Strategy and a Playing Pitch Strategy for the borough.
- 1.8 The strategies are at a stage where input from SPST and HCL Committees is required, to consider the implications arising from recommendations and action plans. The timetable proposed is set out in Table 1.

Date	Committee	Purpose
10.07.2018	SPST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial consideration of recommendations and action plans arising from the strategies • Referral to HCL Committee for comments
04.09.2018	HCL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial consideration of recommendations and action plans arising from the strategies • Refer recommendations to SPST Committee
11.09.2018	SPST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of HCL recommendations prior to re-engagement with key stakeholders
21.11.2018	P&R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be made aware of the strategies so that future capital budget allocations can be considered
08.01.2019	SPST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval of the final strategies, including recommendations and action plans

Table 1: Committee programme for reports

Methodology

- 1.9 The strategies have been prepared following Sport England guidance², gathering information on:
 - Supply and demand
 - The local population profile

¹ Ploszajski Lynch Consulting Ltd.

² Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance (2014), Sport England

- Sports participation
- Unmet, latent, dispersed and future demand
- Local activity priorities
- Sports specific priorities.

1.10 The strategies also take account of spare capacity on sites, and examine rising or falling trends in demand for individual sporting activities. The data has helped to build a picture of the level of provision, looking at four key elements: **the quantity, quality, accessibility and availability of Maidstone Borough's indoor and outdoor sports facilities and playing pitches**. The key findings and implications arising from the assessments were developed around a framework of 'protect, enhance and provide', resulting in recommendations and actions for new and improved facilities. Nonetheless, overall, Maidstone Borough is currently well provided for in terms of its sports provision.

1.11 A base date of mid-2016 is used to calculate the quantitative need for additional new facilities arising from the borough's population growth to 2031, as set out in the Maidstone Borough Local Plan. The mid-2016 data can be used as a base for future updates of the strategies, for example, to reflect growth beyond 2031 that may arise as a result of the review of the Local Plan. The strategies should also be regularly reviewed to reflect rising and falling trends in demand for sports facilities.

1.12 The qualitative assessment identifies actions that are needed to bring existing facilities up to an acceptable standard and, where appropriate, estimated costs for improvements to facilities or feasibility studies are included. Lead organisations and partners, including Maidstone Borough Council as a landowner and provider of sports facilities, are identified as the delivery agents for actions.

1.13 GIS accessibility mapping was used to identify the spatial distribution of existing facilities and catchment areas, taking account of access to cross-boundary sports provision.

1.14 The availability of facilities also formed part of the assessment, reviewing potential spare capacity, opening times, and pricing levels.

1.15 The documents have been prepared in consultation with key stakeholders, and in accordance with Sport England guidance. These include:

- Sport England
- Maidstone Leisure Trust
- Local sports facilities providers
- Neighbouring local authorities
- Kent Sport
- The governing bodies of sport
- Local sports clubs
- Parish councils
- Schools
- Maidstone Borough Council's Strategic Planning and Leisure teams.

Outputs: Quantitative Needs and Provision of New Facilities

1.16 One of the main themes throughout the strategies is a need to protect the loss of existing sports provision. Policy DM19 of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan sets out the standards expected for the provision of open space and recreation as part of proposals for new development. Policy DM20 is clear that proposals which would lead to a loss of community facilities will not be permitted unless demand within the locality no longer exists or a replacement facility acceptable to the council is provided.

1.17 A breakdown of the quantitative needs for new sports facilities and sports pitches for the borough is set out in Table 2.

Facility or Pitch	Needs
Sports Halls	1.6 x 4-badminton sized sports halls
Swimming Pools	1 x 25m 4-lane pool
Health & Fitness Facilities	187 equipment stations
Squash Courts	No projected additional needs
Indoor & Outdoor Tennis	No projected additional needs
Indoor & outdoor Bowls	No projected additional needs
Athletic Tracks	No projected additional needs
Football	4 x Adult pitches
	4 x Youth 11v11 pitches
	4 x Youth 9v9 pitches
	2 x Mini-soccer 7v7 pitches
	2 x Mini-soccer 5v5 pitches
	0.77 x 3G turf pitch
Cricket	3 x grass pitches or 3 x artificial turf wickets
Rugby Union	1.5 x pitches
Rugby League	1.5 x pitches
Hockey	0.6 x artificial grass pitches
American Football	No projected additional needs
Lacrosse	0.5 x pitch and 0.1 artificial grass pitch

Table 2: Quantitative needs for new sports facilities and sports pitches

1.18 The capital and revenue costs of new facilities can be provided through a number of means, including S106/CIL contributions from new development. A common theme throughout the strategies is the need to ensure that larger sports projects are included under the CIL Regulation 123 List, which identifies infrastructure types or projects that will be, or may be, entirely funded through CIL. The Council's CIL Regulation 123 List includes social and community infrastructure, which covers sports provision. There may also be opportunities for grant funding new facilities.

1.19 The needs identified under each sport's category do not necessarily all have to be provided through allocations in the local plan or the development management process. The strategies explain how needs may be met, for example, by improving access or upgrading existing facilities to extend play time through:

- Replacing grass pitches with 3G or 4G artificial pitches
- Use of spare capacity at under-used facilities
- Providing additional artificial cricket wickets on existing sites

- Expansion of existing sports sites
- Commercial provision of fitness stations in gyms
- Improving and extending community access to school facilities.

Outputs: Qualitative Needs and Action Plans

- 1.20 Action plans in the strategies are broken down into key strategic actions, such as protection of existing facilities or funding for future needs, but also include site-specific actions for each facility within the sports categories. The action tables highlight the issues associated with each facility including the need for qualitative improvements, but also where weekend community access or the use of formal community use agreements would improve facilities. The tables list what actions (if any) are needed for each facility, and identify lead organisations and partners for the delivery of the actions. Where relevant, estimated costs are included in tables. Actions are also prioritised: high, medium or low.
- 1.21 The lead organisation for delivering actions varies according to land ownership and the type of action. Many clubs operate without security of tenure so the use of the facility can be stopped at any time – liaison with the providers of sports facilities to establish security of tenure can overcome this difficulty. Other actions may include the need for improvements to facilities or a requirement to undertake feasibility studies, which are the responsibility of the landowner.
- 1.22 Consideration must be given to the recommendations and action plans set out in the strategies, which may have staffing and budgetary implications for the Council as one of the providers of sports facilities and pitches, and as a landowner.
- 1.23 The Committee will be aware that, given the condition of the Maidstone Leisure Centre and the short length of time remaining on the lease, measures are already in place to review its future. The Council may wish to take a wider 'first principles' approach to the review, and to potentially use the opportunity to undertake a joint review of the needs of Maidstone Rugby Club and Mote Cricket Club. Reports will be presented to relevant committees in due course.
- 1.24 The Council is identified as lead organisation for the actions set out in Table 3.

Facility or Pitch	Location	Action	Priority	Estimated Costs
Various	Various	Liaison with providers of sports venues in respect of securing formal Community Use Agreements for local clubs (priorities vary according to individual facilities)	Various	[Staffing]
Various sports activities	Maidstone Leisure Centre	Feasibility study to establish the case for replacement or refurbishment of all on-site facilities	Medium	£20k
Tennis	Clare Park	Resurface tennis courts (with external partnership funding)	Medium	£20k

Facility or Pitch	Location	Action	Priority	Estimated Costs
Football	Elmscroft Park	Feasibility study for pitch improvements	High	£5k
Football	Gatland Recreation Ground	Feasibility study for pitch improvements	High	£5k
Football	Mallards Way	Feasibility study for pitch improvements	High	£5k
Football	Shepway Green	Feasibility study for pitch improvements	High	£5k
Hockey	South Park	Resurface South Park hockey pitch and review options for making additional pitch provision	High	£100k
American Football	Shepway Green	Improve pitch quality and resurface MUGA	Medium	£10k [pitch drainage] £20k [MUGA]
All Sports	Various	Feasibility study to establish the options for expanding local pitch capacity, including an option of providing artificial grass pitches shared with more than one sport.	High	£20k

Table 3: Qualitative needs and actions for which the Council is identified as the Lead Organisation

1.25 Similar actions are to be delivered by other lead organisations, predominantly key stakeholders who have helped to develop the strategies. These organisations may require support to investigate security of tenure and/or to seek external funding for new/improved provision.

Delivery and Review

1.26 The strategies will be delivered by a variety of means and by a number of organisations that have contributed to the development of the strategies. New and improved sports provision may be funded through CIL or S106 contributions from new development, but it will also be important to consider alternative means of providing for the borough's needs. A proportion of needs may be met through an upgrade or expansion of existing sites to extend play time, by providing for alternative secure access arrangements to schools to extend opening times, or by applying for grant funding that may be available for the delivery of new and improved facilities.

1.27 Monitoring and reviewing the strategies will be an important part of delivery, particularly given the range of organisations involved.

1.28 The recommendations and actions set out in the Sports Facilities and Playing Pitch Strategies will have an impact on staff resources and budgets, but the strategies provide a sound up-to-date evidence base to support the review of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan and provide the Council with an evidence base for future budgetary needs or grant funding applications.

2. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 2.1 Option A: The Committee could recommend to SPST Committee that the Sports Facilities and Playing Pitch Strategies are not taken forward. The risks associated with Option A at this point are low, but these will increase over time as the review of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan progresses through its preparation and consultation stages to examination, when the Inspector will consider whether the evidence supporting the local plan is adequate and up-to-date. Further, Option A does not provide the Council with an evidence base for future budgetary needs or grant funding applications.
- 2.2 Option B: The Committee could note the strategies and refer comments to SPST Committee for consideration prior to re-engagement with key stakeholders and consultation with ward Councillors.
-

3. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Option B is the preferred Option. The Sports Facilities and Playing Pitch Strategies provide a sound up-to-date evidence base to support the review of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan. The strategies also provide the evidence for future budgetary needs or grant funding bids.
-

4. RISK

- 4.1 The risks associated with this proposal, including the risks if the Council does not act as recommended, have been considered in line with the Council's Risk Management Framework. That consideration is shown in this report at paragraph 2.1. We are satisfied that the risks associated are within the Council's risk appetite and will be managed as per the Policy.

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 The key stakeholders listed in paragraph 1.15 have contributed to the preparation of the Sports Facilities and Playing Pitch Strategies.
- 5.2 If the recommendation in this report is approved, HCL Committee's comments will be considered by SPST Committee at its meeting on 11 September 2018. Subsequently, following re-engagement with key stakeholders and consultation with ward Councillors, a report seeking approval of the final strategies will be presented at a meeting of SPST Committee on 8 January 2019.
-

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 The timetable for communication and implementation of the decision is set out in paragraph 1.8.
-

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	Accepting the recommendations will materially improve the Council's ability to achieve corporate priorities by encouraging good health and wellbeing, and by ensuring the borough has good leisure facilities to meet the needs of residents and attract visitors. We set out the reasons other choices will be less effective in section 2.	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development
Risk Management	Risks are already covered in the risk section 4.	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development
Financial	<p>The report identifies potential new spending of up to £210,000. This includes (with priorities):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feasibility studies for pitch improvements 4x£5k (high) - Feasibility study to look at options for expanding existing pitch capacities for all sports £20k (high) - Resurface South Park hockey pitch £100k (high) - Drain and resurface MUGA at Shepway Green £30k (medium) - Resurface Clare Park tennis courts £20k (medium) - Feasibility study for Maidstone Leisure Centre £20k (medium). <p>The Council has made no budgetary provision for these amounts but there may be potential for obtaining contributions through S 106 agreements or CIL.</p> <p>This list does not include identified needs for new</p>	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team

	facilities that are likely to be allocated as part of the Local Plan Review, and which may be provided through improvement/expansion of existing facilities, or funded by S106/CIL contributions. Certain facilities may also be eligible for grant funding.	
Staffing	We will need access to extra expertise to deliver the recommendations, as set out in section 3. The strategies contain actions to liaise with current sports providers to secure tenure for sports clubs. The Council is not the only lead organisation for delivering actions, and some support may be needed. Monitoring of the actions will be important as part of the delivery of the strategies.	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development
Legal	There are no specific legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.	Cheryl Parks, Mid Kent Legal Services (Planning)
Privacy and Data Protection	Accepting the recommendations will increase the volume of data held by the Council. We will hold that data in line with the General Data Protection Regulations and locally adopted policies.	Cheryl Parks, Mid Kent Legal Services (Planning)
Equalities	The recommendations do not propose a change in service so will not require an equalities impact assessment.	[Policy & Information Manager]
Crime and Disorder	There are no specific implications for a negative impact on crime and disorder arising from the recommendation in this report.	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development

Procurement	The procurement of consultants has followed the Council's financial procedures rules.	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development [Section 151 Officer]
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8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix 1: Draft Sports Facilities Strategy
- Appendix 2: Draft Playing Pitch Strategy

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are no background papers to this report.

**Ploszajski Lynch
Consulting Ltd.**



Maidstone Borough Council

***Sports Facilities Strategy
Final Draft***

June 2018

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In Spring 2016 Ploszajski Lynch Consulting Ltd. (PLC) was commissioned by the Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) to produce a Sports Facilities Strategy (SFS) for the borough. This is part of a wider assessment of sport and leisure provision in the borough which also includes a playing pitch assessment.

1.2 Strategic drivers

The primary purpose of the SFS is to provide a strategic framework which ensures that the provision of indoor and outdoor sports facilities meets the local needs of existing and future residents within Maidstone Borough. Development in the Borough has brought an increase in sports provision which is able to meet some of the needs of the area. However future development is likely to put a strain on the sporting infrastructure of Maidstone. The SFS will help to secure and safeguard sport in Maidstone now and in the future.

1.3 The aim and objectives of the strategy

1.3.1 Aim

The aim of the SFS is to provide Maidstone Borough Council with an assessment of all relevant indoor and outdoor built sport facilities in the Borough. This will provide a baseline for current and future supply and demand assessments and also set out a vision with a strategic approach to sport and recreation provision in the Borough in the short, medium and long term (to 2031).

The strategy will also establish the principles to help inform where future resources should be focussed to ensure that proposed provision of indoor and outdoor sport facilities will meet future demand and reflect sustainable development objectives.

1.3.2 Objectives

The objectives of the SFS are to:

- Provide an evidence base for use in planning, investment and sports development decisions.
- Refer to, and be in general accordance with, relevant national (including the National Planning Policy Framework), regional, sub-regional and local policies and priorities.
- Provide a clear picture of existing supply, surpluses, deficits and anticipated future demand for sports facilities.
- Assess the current supply of indoor and outdoor sports facilities, with insight into the quality of these facilities and services, identifying possible future supply, including broad location and opportunities for opening up private sites for community use.

- Make reference to provision of facilities immediately adjacent to the Borough to ensure a full picture of local provision is available.
- Identify ways to increase opportunities for participation in sport and physical activity.
- Consult with key established user groups such as local teams, the local Sport and Physical Activity Alliance, the governing bodies of sport (NGB's), schools and education establishments and local key partners to apply local feedback to contextualise the results.

1.4 The scope of the strategy

1.4.1 The facilities

The sports facilities included in the Strategy are:

- Sports halls.
- Swimming pools.
- Health and fitness facilities.
- Squash courts.
- Indoor and outdoor tennis facilities.
- Indoor and outdoor bowls facilities.
- Athletics tracks.

1.5 The study methodology

The methodology for the study follows the '*Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance*' (2014) approach (ANOG), developed by Sport England. The process involves two parts and three stages as follows:

- **Part One** - Undertaking the assessment.
 - **Stage A:** Prepare and tailor the assessment.
 - **Stage B:** Gather information on supply and demand.
 - **Stage B:** Bring the information together.
- **Part Two - Stage C:** Applying the assessment.

1.6 Strategy format

The structure of the Strategy document is as follows:

- Assessing sports facilities needs in Maidstone.
- The local context for facilities provision.
- Strategic influences on facilities provision.
- Sports halls.
- Swimming pools.
- Health and fitness facilities.
- Squash courts.
- Indoor and outdoor tennis facilities.
- Indoor and outdoor bowls facilities.
- Athletics tracks.
- Policies and recommendations.
- Applying and reviewing the strategy.

2 ASSESSING SPORTS FACILITIES NEEDS IN MAIDSTONE

2.1 Introduction

This section explains the basis upon which the current sports facilities needs in Maidstone have been identified, along with the approach for identifying the additional provision that will be needed as a result of population growth.

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

2.2 Preparing and tailoring the approach

MBC convened a project steering group led by officers from the Planning and Development department and involving officers from Culture and Leisure and Grounds Maintenance and the Maidstone Leisure Trust, to devise:

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

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

2.3 Assessing sports facilities supply

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

- **Quantity:** Establishing what facilities there are in the borough, with details of their dimensions, technical information like playing surfaces and floodlighting. This included consideration of facilities not currently in use, not available to the community and significant provision in neighbouring areas that serves some needs of Maidstone residents.
- **Quality:** Auditing the quality of all aspects of all facilities. This involved assessing each facility in terms of its condition (its age, appeal, fabric and ancillary provision like changing and car parking - factors that will influence its attractiveness to users) and fitness for purpose (its technical specifications and ability to accommodate an appropriate standard of play).

- **Accessibility:** Determining spatial distribution of provision in the borough by GIS mapping of each facility type, including catchment analysis appropriate to the scale and role of each facility.
- **Availability:** Identifying how much each facility is used, whether there is any existing spare capacity and if there is any scope to increase capacity. This involved consideration of programming and usage data, opening times and pricing levels, which was secured through consultation with facility providers and operators.

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

2.4 Assessing sports facilities demand

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

- **Local population profile:** Establishing the local demography, including the size, age profile, affluence/deprivation, health indices and growth projections.
- **Sports participation:** Identifying local sports participation characteristics, through analysing the results of Sport England's 'Active People' survey, market segmentation data, local facilities usage figures and a survey of local clubs to establish membership patterns and trends.
- **Unmet, displaced and future demand:** In addition to current expressed demand, analysis of unmet (demand which exists but cannot currently be satisfied), displaced (demand from within the borough that is satisfied elsewhere) and future demand (based on projected population and participation increases) was identified.
- **Local participation priorities:** Establishing and local priorities for the use of sports facilities, such as those relating to corporate health and well-being policies.
- **Sport-specific priorities:** Determining through consultation with Kent Sport, the governing bodies of sport and a local sports clubs survey, whether there are any sport-specific priorities for Maidstone.

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

2.5 Assessing the balance between sports facilities supply and demand

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

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

Where appropriate for some types of facility, the assessment included the use of Sport England planning tools, in particular:

- **Facilities Planning Model:** The Facilities Planning Model (FPM) comprises a spatial assessment of sports hall and swimming pool provision based on the nature of demand within an area and the available supply, taking into account issues such as capacity (hours of availability in the peak period) and accessibility.
- **Sports Facilities Calculator:** The Sports Facility Calculator (SFC) has been developed by Sport England to help local planning authorities quantify how much additional demand for the key community sports facilities (swimming pools, sports halls, indoor bowls and artificial grass pitches) is generated as a result of new growth linked to specific development locations

The information was collated and analysed in a supply and demand assessment report, which was evaluated, approved and signed-off by the project steering group to complete Stage B of the process.

2.6 Applying the assessment - Developing the strategy

The results of the assessment were applied to produce a Sports Facilities Strategy for the borough, which included:

- **Options for provision:** The options for meeting current and future facilities needs were identified under Sport England's recommended headings of 'Protect', 'Provide' and 'Enhance'.
- **Policy recommendations:** Arranged under the headings of 'Protect', 'Provide' and 'Enhance', planning policy recommendations were developed to ensure that the implementation of the strategy will be supported by the provisions of the Local Plan.
- **Action plan:** An action plan was developed for each type of sports facility, linking identified issues with specific actions, including the organisations responsible for lead and support roles, the resource implications and the respective priorities.
- **Delivery:** Mechanisms for securing developer contributions towards the costs of meeting additional facilities arising from housing growth in the borough were developed.
- **Monitoring and review:** The arrangements for ensuring that the SFS remains robust and up-to-date were specified.

2.7 Sources of information

Information was gathered throughout the process from a wide range of consultees including:

- **Sport England:** Guidance on the assessment methodology.

- **Maidstone Borough Council:** Consultation with officers from Leisure, Planning and Grounds Maintenance on their respective areas of responsibility.
- **Maidstone Leisure Trust:** Data on usage of the key facilities at Maidstone Leisure Centre.
- **Other local sports facilities providers:** Consultation with organisations such as the YMCA and commercial health and fitness operators on usage levels and spare capacity.
- **Neighbouring local authorities:** Information on their sports facilities assessments and the impact of any cross-border issues was obtained from Ashford Borough Council, Medway Council, Swale District Council, Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.
- **Kent Sport:** Information on local and wider strategic priorities.
- **Governing bodies of sport:** Information on local and wider strategic priorities and local supply and demand information.
- **Sports clubs:** Information on sports facilities provision and use, current and future needs and opinions on quality.
- **Parish Councils:** Information on the quantity and quality of facilities that they provide.
- **Schools:** Information on sports facilities provision and use, plus attitudes towards community use.

2.8 Summary

Assessing sports facilities needs in Maidstone borough using the approach advocated by Sport England in its *'Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance'* has ensured that the exercise is both robust and evidence-based and as a result complies with the provisions of the Government's planning policy framework.

3 THE LOCAL CONTEXT FOR FACILITIES PROVISION

Key findings:

- **Overall sports participation rates:** Sports participation rates in Maidstone are higher than the respective county and regional averages.
- **Geographical variations in participation:** There are significant differences in sports participation between the urban (where rates are lower) and rural (where rates are higher) parts of the borough, which will impact upon demand patterns.
- **Population growth:** The borough's population is projected to increase by 22,380 people by 2031. This will create significant additional demand for sports facilities.
- **'Dominant' market segments:** Swimming and fitness activities feature highly in the sporting preferences of the 'dominant' market segments in Maidstone, which will inflate local demand for facilities that provide for these sports.
- **Facilities supply:** Sports facilities are provided by a mosaic of owners and operators from the public, voluntary and commercial sectors, which highlights the need for and benefits of a strategic approach to co-ordinating provision.

3.1 Introduction

This section identifies the context within which sports facilities provision is made in Maidstone.

3.2 Background

Maidstone is the county town of Kent and occupies a central location in the county. It stands on the River Medway which links the town to the Thames estuary. The Borough of Maidstone is one of the most attractive areas in the country in which to live, work or to visit, lying between the North Downs and the Weald. The borough's easy access to both the attractions of rural Kent and of London means that Maidstone itself and the nearby towns and villages are highly desirable locations. Maidstone is at the centre of a good transport network with good rail and motorway access to London, the Channel ports and thence to Europe.

3.3 Population

The key population statistics are as follows:

3.3.1 Current population

Maidstone is the most populous of the Kent districts. The 2011 census measured the population as 155,143. 107,627 people live in the town of Maidstone, with the remainder located in surrounding villages. According to Kent County Council's *'Business Intelligence Statistical Bulletin'* (2017) the population of the borough increased to 166,400 by the middle of 2016, an increase of 11,257 (7%).

3.3.2 Age structure

Maidstone has a relatively elderly age structure. The borough has a slightly lower proportion of people aged under 25 years (29.4%) compared with Kent as a whole (29.8%).

3.3.3 Ethnicity

Maidstone's population is comparatively ethnically homogeneous with 94% of residents classifying themselves as White. 3.2% classify themselves as Asian with 0.9% being Black African or Black Caribbean.

3.3.4 Population growth

MBC's *'Strategic Housing Market Assessment'* (2015) confirmed the objectively assessed housing need for the borough over the period 2011 to 2031 as 17,660 dwellings. Of these 8,335 have already been built or granted planning permission. This scale of development will increase the borough's population by 22,380 to 177,523 people by 2031. This will represent an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.

3.4 Deprivation

According to the Government's 2015 Indices of Multiple Deprivation, Maidstone is a comparatively prosperous area. It ranks 206th out of 326 English local authorities in terms of overall deprivation. However, this overall rating does hide some local inequalities. Public Health England estimates that 4,100 children (14.3%) in the borough live in poverty.

3.5 Health

Local health indices are recorded in Public Health England's *'Health Profile for Maidstone'* (2015). These show that in general the health of people in Maidstone is better than in England as a whole:

- Life expectancy at birth is higher than the national averages by 0.8 years for men and 0.5 years for women. However, there is a life expectancy gap of 5.4 years for men and 3.8 years for women between the most and least deprived parts of the Borough.
- 17.3% of year 6 children in Maidstone are obese, compared with a national average of 19.1%.
- Only 18.9% of adults in the Borough are obese, compared with a national average of 23%.

3.6 Local sports facilities demand

Sport England's 'Active People' surveys 9 and 10 have identified the following key measures of adult (16+) participation in sport and physical activity in Maidstone:

3.6.1 Overall participation

Overall rates of regular adult participation in sport and physical activity (at least one session of 30 minutes of moderate intensity exercise per week) in Maidstone in 2015/16 were 39.3%, which is above the Kent average of 35.4% and above the 38.3% figure for the south-east as a whole.

3.6.2 Volunteering

The percentage of the population volunteering to support sport for at least one hour a week in Maidstone is 11.5% which is below both the south-east average of 13.6% and the national average of 12.6%.

3.6.3 Club membership

The percentage of the population belonging to a sports club in Maidstone is 26.9% above the south-east average of 24.5% and the national average of 22%

3.6.4 Coaching

The percentage of the Maidstone population receiving sports coaching in the last twelve months was 13.1% in 2015/16, below the south-east average of 18.1% and the England average of 15.6%.

3.6.5 Organised competition

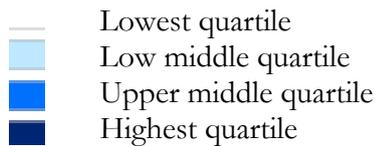
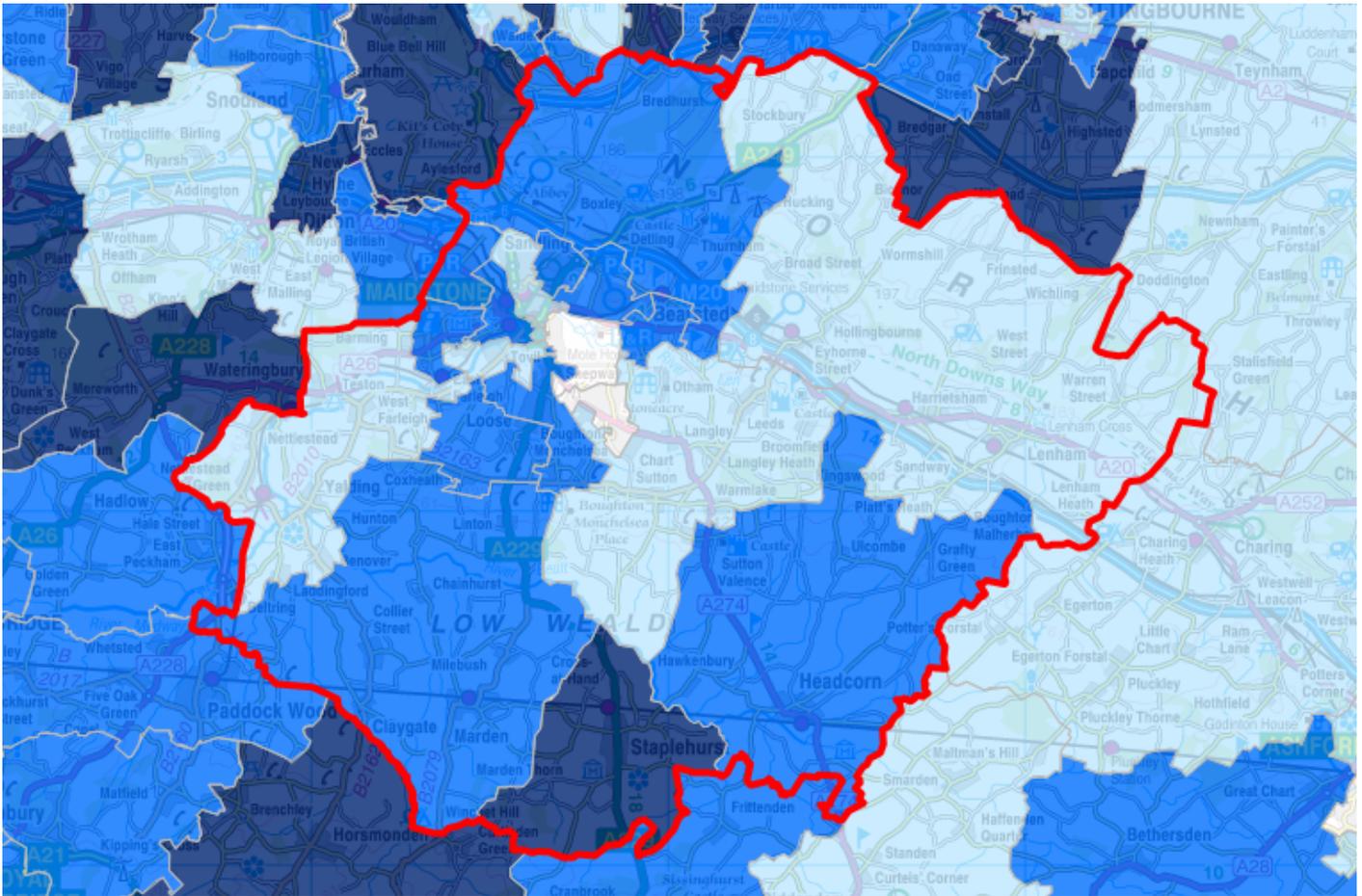
The percentage of the Maidstone population taking part in a sporting competition in the last twelve months was 16.1% in 2015/16, above the south-east figure of 15.6% and the national average of 13.3%.

3.6.6 Satisfaction

The percentage of adults who are very or fairly satisfied with sports provision in Maidstone in 2015/16 was 62.2%, below the south-east figure of 64.3% and in line with the England average of 62.2%.

3.6.7 Geographical variations

Whilst overall rates of participation in the borough are relatively high, as the map overleaf identifies, there are large variations at Middle Super Output Area (MSOA) level, with two areas in the south of Maidstone town in the lowest quartile nationally and one around Staplehurst in the highest quartile.



3.6.8 Individual sports

The ‘Active People’ survey also measures levels of participation in individual sports at local authority level and the results for Maidstone, compared with the figures for the South East and England are tabulated below

<i>Sport</i>	<i>Maidstone</i>	<i>South East</i>	<i>England</i>
Swimming	11.7%	12.2%	11.5%
Gym	9.9%	10.9%	10.9%
Health and fitness	7.2%	6.6%	6.7%
Cycling	7.0%	9.5%	8.1%
Running	6.2%	6.7%	6.5%

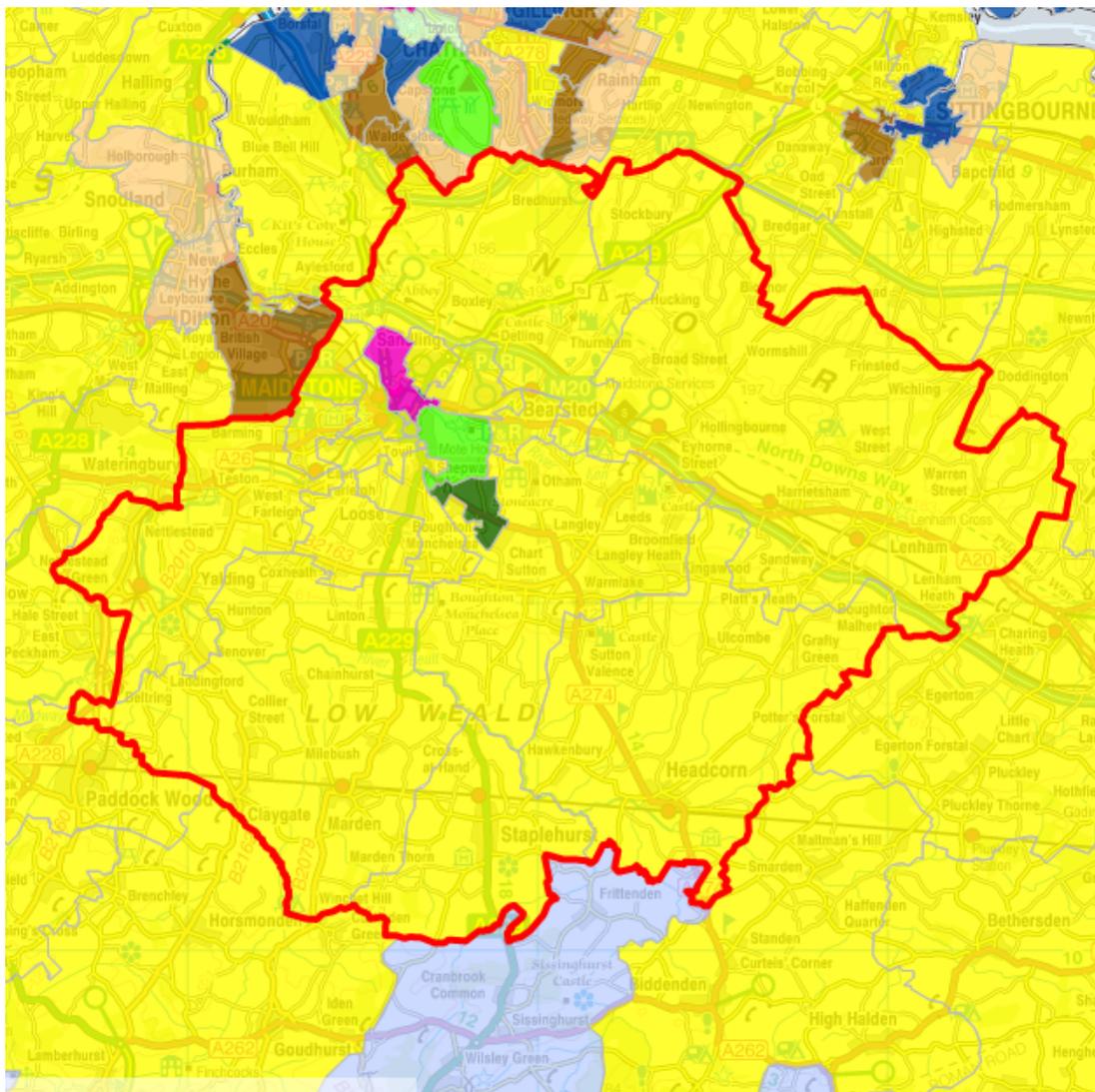
3.6.9 Market segmentation

Sport England has analysed 19 adult sporting market segments, to better understand specific motivations for sports participation and barriers to doing more sport and physical activity. The data provides a useful way of anticipating demand for individual types of activity, based upon the extent to which each segment is over or under represented in the local population.

Sport England classifies all market segments with more than 7% of the adult population as 'dominant' and their sporting preferences therefore influence facilities demand in the area. The 'dominant' market segments in Maidstone are listed below:

<i>Segment name</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Sports that appeal</i>
Settling down males	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age 26-45 • Married • Owner-occupied • Employed full-time • 50% have children • Social class ABC1 • 32% do 3x30 minutes exercise per week • 27% do no exercise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canoeing • Skiing • Cricket • Golf • Cycling • Squash • Football
Stay at home mums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age 26-45 • Married • Owner-occupied • Employed part-time/at home • Children • Social class ABC1 • 25% do 3x30 minutes exercise per week • 33% do no exercise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swimming • Tennis • Badminton • Cycling • Aerobics • Horse riding • Pilates • Exercise bike
Comfortable mid-life males	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age 36-65 • Married • Owner-occupied • Employed full-time • 50% have children • Social class ABC1 • 26% do 3x30 minutes exercise per week • 39% do no exercise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sailing • Gym • Football • Jogging • Badminton • Golf • Cycling • Cricket
Empty nest career ladies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age 46-55 • Married • Owner-occupied • Employed full-time • No dependent children • Social class ABC1 • 25% do 3x30 minutes exercise per week • 44% do no exercise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swimming • Yoga • Walking • Horse riding • Aqua aerobics • Pilates • Step machine • Gym
Early retirement couples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age 56-65 • Married • Owner-occupied • Retired/employed full-time • No dependent children • Social class ABC1 • 19% do 3x30 minutes exercise per week • 54% do no exercise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swimming • Sailing • Walking • Golf • Aqua aerobics • Shooting • Bowls • Fishing

- **Geographical variations:** The ‘dominant’ market segment in each Middle Super Output Area in Maidstone is mapped below. ‘Settling Down Males’ (marked in yellow) are the ‘dominant’ segment in all but three areas of Maidstone town.



3.7 The local sports facilities supply network

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

- **Maidstone Leisure Trust:** The Leisure Trust manages the major community leisure facility in the borough at Maidstone Leisure Centre.
- **YMCA:** The YMCA provides a community-focussed sports centre in Maidstone with a range of indoor and outdoor facilities.
- **Schools:** Schools in the public and private sectors are major sports facilities providers in the borough, although not all provision is community accessible.

- **Sports clubs:** Voluntary sector sports clubs provide and run a range of mostly smaller facilities, in particular tennis courts and bowls greens.
- **Commercial providers:** The commercial sector is very active in Maidstone, from major national operators like David Lloyd, though to small local businesses. Health and fitness facilities comprise the main form of commercial provision, but some facilities also include tennis courts.
- **Parish councils:** Parish councils make some limited provision in the rural parts of the borough, principally tennis courts.

3.8 The implications for sports facilities provision

The implications of the local context for sports facilities provision in Maidstone are as follows:

- **Relative affluence:** Maidstone is a relatively affluent area and this is typically associated with higher rates of participation in sport and physical activity.
- **Population growth:** The borough's population is projected to increase by 22,380 people by 2031. This will create significant additional demand for sports facilities.
- **Overall sports participation rates:** General participation rates in sport and physical activity are higher than the respective county and regional averages.
- **Geographical variations in participation:** Analysis of participation rates at Middle Super Output Area level reveal significant differences between the urban and rural parts of the borough, which will impact upon demand patterns.
- **'Dominant' market segments:** Swimming and fitness activities feature highly in the sporting preferences of the 'dominant' market segments in Maidstone, which will inflate local demand for facilities that provide for these sports.
- **Facilities supply:** Sports facilities are provided by a mosaic of owners and operators from the public, voluntary and commercial sectors, which highlights the need for and benefits of a strategic approach to co-ordinating provision.

4 STRATEGIC INFLUENCES ON FACILITIES PROVISION

Key findings:

- ***Maidstone Strategic Plan:*** Encouraging the good health and well-being of Maidstone residents is a key action area. The key challenge for all sports facilities providers is to ensure that their ‘offer’ is sufficiently relevant and attractive to engage a wider participation base, including people who are currently inactive.
- ***Maidstone Planning policy:*** A robust, evidence-based assessment of sports facilities needs in the borough is required to inform planning policy, including the Local Plan Review and this SFS will provide this.
- ***County priorities:*** Kent Sport’s Strategic Framework includes a priority for improving sports facilities provision based on strategic and community need, including those on school sites.
- ***National sports policy shifts:*** The move in national sports policy towards prioritising new participants will create a challenge for sport to ensure that the traditional facilities ‘offer’ is sufficiently relevant and attractive to engage a wider participation base, including people who are currently inactive.
- ***Governing body of sport priorities:*** There are no major identified strategic facilities needs or opportunities in Maidstone, but some potential to link with funding programmes that might enhance local provision.

4.1 Introduction

This section examines the influence of relevant policies and priorities on sports facilities provision in Maidstone, including the impact of national strategies.

4.2 Maidstone Council’s Strategic Plan

The Council’s work is guided by ‘*The Strategic Plan 2015-2020*’. The 2017/8 refresh of the plan sets out the vision for the area ‘that our residents live in decent homes, enjoy good health and a pleasant environment, with a successful economy that is supported by reliable transport networks’. The vision is being delivered through several Action Areas of which the most relevant to the SFS are:

- Ensuring there are good leisure and cultural attractions.
- Encouraging the good health and wellbeing

Success in these areas will be measured by customer satisfaction with the council’s leisure and cultural attractions and some, unspecified health indicators.

4.3 Maidstone Local Plan

The Local Plan sets out local planning policies and identifies how land is used, determining what will be built where. Adopted local plans provide the framework for development and must be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy. The Maidstone Borough Local Plan was adopted in October 2017 and sets out the spatial vision for the future as supporting the wider vision of the borough:

- The council's vision for the borough is set out in the Strategic Plan (2015) and its 2017/18 refresh. The Maidstone Borough Local Plan is the spatial expression of the council's vision.
- Policy DM20 deals with Community Facilities, including sports provision and states that:
 - 'Residential development which would generate a need for new community facilities or for which spare capacity in such facilities does not exist, will not be permitted unless the provision of new, extended or improved facilities (or a contribution towards such provision) is secured as appropriate by planning conditions, through legal agreements or through the Community Infrastructure Levy'.
 - 'Proposals which would lead to a loss of community facilities will not be permitted unless demand within the locality no longer exists or a replacement facility acceptable to the council is provided'.
 - 'The council will seek to ensure, where appropriate, that providers of education facilities make provision for dual use of facilities in the design of new schools, and will encourage the dual use of education facilities (new and existing) for recreation and other purposes'.

4.4 Kent Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Maidstone Borough Council is a member of the West Kent CCG Health and Wellbeing Board. This board is responsible for delivery in that area of the wider *Kent Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2014-2017* (2014). The health vision as set out in the strategy is 'to improve health and wellbeing outcomes, deliver better coordinated quality care, improve the public's experience of integrated health and social care services, and ensure that the individual is involved and at the heart of everything we do'.

The strategy makes no mention of sport and physical activity is promoted only as a way of decreasing obesity. No specific targets for participation are set out.

4.5 Kent Sport's Strategic Framework

Kent Sport (the Kent and Medway County Sports Partnership) produced a *Strategic Framework for Sport and Physical Activity* (2012), with ten key priorities for sport and physical activity in the county to 2021:

- ***Increasing participation in sport and physical activity:*** Provide a range of informal fun and social physical activity opportunities, as well as more formalised competitive sporting opportunities for all people across the county.

- ***Using sport and physical activity to contribute to other social agendas:*** Ensure sport and physical activity are key factors in improving health, community safety, community cohesion, community pride, educational attainment and quality of life in the county.
- ***Supporting the voluntary sector and volunteering:*** Ensure national governing bodies of sport, clubs, coaches, leaders, health trainers and volunteers in sport and physical activity are supported and developed.
- ***Attracting funding and investment:*** Attract funding and investment for sport and physical activity from a wide range of sources and co-ordinate work to make best use of limited resources available.
- ***Improving facilities for sport and physical activity:*** Ensure facility development proposals are based on strategic and community need and there are a mix of multi-use and sport specific facilities, including on school sites, that are accessible, affordable and welcoming.
- ***Ensuring sport and physical activity is recognised and supported by local policy and decision makers:*** Ensure the value of sport to other social agendas is recognised by key decision and policy makers and features as a contributor within other appropriate key policies and strategies.
- ***Improving information, co-ordination and partnership working:*** Ensure information is readily available to residents in the county and that partners work together to provide co-ordination across sport and physical activity networks.
- ***Supporting and developing talented performers:*** Identified talented sports performers should be supported to reach their full potential through a range of mechanisms to support their training and development.
- ***Attracting major events to the County:*** Seek to attract major sporting events to the county and use these, along with other high profile international sporting events coming to the UK, to promote sport and physical activity.
- ***Researching and planning for sport and physical activity:*** Sport and physical activity opportunities should be underpinned by research using existing data tools and community need. Programmes should be monitored for effectiveness and to share good practice amongst partners.

4.6 The Government's Planning Policies

In March 2012, the Government published the 'National Planning Policy Framework' (2012), setting out its economic, environmental and social planning policies for England. Taken together, these policies articulate the Government's vision of sustainable development, which should be interpreted and applied locally to meet local aspirations. The policies of greatest relevance to sports facilities provision and retention are as follows:

- **S**

- ***sustainable development:*** ‘The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Sustainable development means development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’.
- ***Health and well-being:*** ‘Local planning authorities should work with public health leads and health organisations to understand and take account of the health status and needs of the local population, including expected future changes, and any information about relevant barriers to improving health and well-being’.
- ***Open space, sports and recreational facilities:*** ‘Access to good quality opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities. The planning system has a role in helping to create an environment where activities are made easier and public health can be improved. Planning policies should identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of sports and recreational facilities in the local area. The information gained from this assessment of needs and opportunities should be used to set locally derived standards for the provision of sports and recreational facilities’.
- ‘Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land should not be built on unless:
 - An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
 - The need for and benefits of the development clearly outweigh the loss’.

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

- ***Sport and recreation provision:*** ‘Open space should be taken into account in planning for new development and considering proposals that may affect existing open space. It can provide health and recreation benefits to people living and working nearby’.
 - ‘Authorities and developers may refer to Sport England’s guidance on how to assess the need for sports and recreation facilities’.
 - ‘Local planning authorities are required to consult Sport England in certain cases where development affects the use of land as playing fields. Where there is no requirement to consult, local planning authorities are advised to consult Sport England in cases where development might lead to loss of, or loss of use for sport, of any major sports facility, the creation of a site for one or more playing pitches, artificial lighting of a major outdoor sports facility or a residential development of 300 dwellings or more’.

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

4.7 The Government’s Sports Strategy

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

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

4.8 Sport England Strategy

Sport England’s strategy ‘*Towards an Active Nation*’ (2016) contains a significant policy shift to encourage more currently inactive people to become active, with a relative move away from support for programmes aimed at existing participants. Elements of particular relevance to sports facilities provision in Maidstone are as follows:

- More money and resources will be focused on tackling inactivity because this is where the gains for the individual and for society are greatest.
- There will be greater investment in children and young people from the age of five to build positive attitudes to sport and activity as the foundations of an active life.
- Sport England will work with those parts of the sector that serve existing participants to help them identify ways in which they can become more sustainable and self-sufficient.

4.9 Governing Bodies of Sport Strategies

The governing bodies of sport funded by Sport England each produce a ‘*Whole Sport Plan*’ containing their sports development and related facilities priorities. The facilities elements of the Whole Sport Plans using facility types included in this assessment are summarised below, to assess their implications for provision in Maidstone borough:

<i>Sport</i>	<i>Facilities priorities</i>	<i>Implications for Maidstone</i>
Athletics	<p>A hierarchy of facilities is proposed in UK Athletics <i>Facilities Strategy 2014 - 2019</i> (2014) with district and local levels of provision comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Club Training Venue - Track and field facilities (indoor and outdoor) that have a strong anchor club with 100+ track and field members. To support site sustainability, Club Venues should have excellent social and ancillary provision and facilities that actively encourage multi-sport usage. • Compact Athletics Facility - A new generation of affordable and sustainable indoor and outdoor athletics satellite facilities that provide a stepping stone into Club Venues. They are designed to fit available spaces and budgets and provide functional, inspiring, facilities at which people of all ages and abilities can improve their fitness and confidence and develop the fundamental athletics movement skills. 	Existing athletics track provision means that there are no immediate needs for smaller-scale facilities.
Badminton	<p>Badminton England's <i>Whole Sport Plan 2013 - 2017</i> (2012) includes provision for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investing in facilities to underpin the operations of county badminton associations, performance centres and community badminton networks. • Investing in leisure facilities to underpin the <i>Play Badminton</i> programme. 	Potential for funding to upgrade sports halls to accommodate additional badminton activity.
Basketball	England Basketball's <i>Whole Sport Plan 2013 - 2017</i> (2012) contains no facilities priorities, but priority areas for club development are focused on major urban areas.	Maidstone not identified as a priority area.
Bowls	The Bowls Development Alliance <i>Whole Sport Plan 2013 - 2017</i> (2012) confirms that efforts will focus on support packages promoting participation amongst the over 55's and disabled participants aged 16+, using the existing clubs network. No capital funding is involved.	Opportunities for clubs to expand their memberships with support packages.
Gymnastics	<p>British Gymnastics' <i>Facility Strategy 2013 - 2017</i> (2012) includes provision for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locally accessible facilities - Increasing access to facilities and new spaces resulting from local authority and business austerity measures. • Dedicated Facilities - Funding for dedicated gymnastics centres. • Freestyle Equipment - Funding for freestyle gymnastics equipment packs for clubs and other delivery partners. • Trampoline Equipment - Funding for trampolines in clubs or leisure centres. 	<p>Opportunities to create or enhance local gymnastics provision.</p> <p>There is a dedicated gymnastic centre in Maidstone run by the highly regarded Pegasus Gymnastic Club. http://www.pegasusgc.org/</p>
Netball	England Netball's <i>Whole Sport Plan 2013 - 2017</i> (2012) has no facilities priorities, but capital funding is available to develop facilities to support the work of Development Community Coaches, based in areas of high population.	Maidstone not identified as a priority area.

<i>Sport</i>	<i>Facilities priorities 2013 - 2017</i>	<i>Implications for Maidstone</i>
Squash	England Squash and Racketball's <i>Whole Sport Plan 2013 - 2017</i> (2012) has no facilities priorities, but capital funding is available to develop facilities in 'Hub and Spoke' areas, which do not include Maidstone.	Maidstone not identified as a priority area.
Swimming	The Amateur Swimming Association's <i>Whole Sport Plan 2013 - 2017</i> (2012) has no facilities priorities, but proposals to establish 'Local Aquatic Networks' comprising a 'local area partnership bringing together relevant partners to maximise the amount of usable water space in an area based by producing an 'Aquatic Improvement Plan'.	There is potential to optimise and rationalise the use of local pools through co-ordinated programming.
Table tennis	No facilities priorities, but small grants are available to provide an equipment package to allow community organisations to deliver non-traditional participation opportunities.	Equipment packages may enhance local participation opportunities.
Tennis	Facilities investment will support the delivery of the tennis programmes, largely focused in priority areas to address gaps or improve provision where critical to park or community programmes	Maidstone not identified as a priority area.

4.10 The implications for sports facilities provision

The implications of the key strategic influences on sports facilities provision in Maidstone are:

- **Maidstone Strategic Plan:** Encouraging the good health and well-being of Maidstone residents is a key action area. The key challenge for many sports is to ensure that their 'offer' is sufficiently relevant and attractive to engage a wider participation base, including people who are currently inactive.
- **Maidstone Planning policy:** A robust, evidence-based assessment of sports facilities needs in the borough is required to inform planning policy, including the Local Plan review and this SFS will provide this to help ensure good future provision.
- **County priorities:** It is an identified priority to ensure that appropriate facilities provision is made to support an increase in sport and physical activity.
- **National sports policy shifts:** The move in national sports policy towards prioritising new participants will create a challenge for sport to ensure that the traditional facilities 'offer' is sufficiently relevant and attractive to engage a wider participation base, including people who are currently inactive.
- **Governing body of sport priorities:** There are no major identified strategic facilities needs or opportunities in Maidstone, but some potential to link with funding programmes that might enhance local provision.

5 SPORTS HALLS

Key findings:

- **Quantity:** There are nine community-accessible sports halls in Maidstone, plus one other facility without public access. There is no current spare peak-time sports hall capacity in the borough. Additional demand by 2031 will amount to the equivalent of 2.4 four-badminton court sized sports halls with full community access.
- **Quality:** The quality of most aspects of most sports halls is rated as ‘average’ or better. Only two sports halls comply with (or exceed) the dimensions recommended by Sport England for halls that can cater for a full range of multi-sports use.
- **Accessibility:** All the main populated areas of the borough are within 15-minutes driving time of a community-accessible sports hall with ‘pay-and-play’ access.
- **Availability:** Seven of the nine sports halls in the borough are on school sites, with limited midweek daytime access and only four halls offer regular weekend availability. None of the school facilities has secured community use.

5.1 Introduction

This section examines the provision of sports halls in Maidstone. Sports halls are defined as indoor halls with multi-sport markings and minimum dimensions equivalent to three badminton courts (27m x 18m).

5.2 Quantity

5.2.1 Sports halls with community use

The location and dimensions of sports halls with community use in Maidstone is as follows:

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Year built</i>
Cornwallis Academy	Hubbard Lane, Coxheath ME17 4HX	33m x 18m	2011
Lenham School	Ham Lane, Lenham ME17 2LL	33m x 17m	1972
Maidstone Grammar School	Barton Road, Maidstone ME15 7BT	33m x 17m	1965
Maidstone Leisure Centre	Mote Park, Maidstone ME15 8NQ	32m x 26m	1991
New Line Learning Academy	Ham Lane, Lenham ME17 2LL	31m x 26m	2010
St Augustine Academy	Boughton Lane, Maidstone ME15 9QL	36.6m. x 18.3m	2007
Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre	North Street, Sutton Valence ME17 3HN	45m x 23m	2005
The Maplesden Noakes School	Buckland Road, Maidstone ME16 0TJ	33m x 18m	2008
YMCA	Melrose Close, Maidstone ME15 6BD	34.5m x 20m	2011

5.2.2 Sports halls without community use

The location and dimensions of the sports hall without community use in Maidstone is as follows:

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Year built</i>
St. Simon Stock School	Oakwood Park, Maidstone ME16 0JP	34.5m x 20m	2005

5.3 Quality

5.3.1 The criteria assessed

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

- **Playing area:** The overall condition, playing surface, clear span roof height, lighting, spectator provision, equipment and fitness for purpose.
- **Changing facilities:** The capacity, condition and fitness for purpose.
- **Disability access:** The extent of full disabled access to the facility, including the provision of access ramps, dedicated changing, toilets and car parking.
- **Maintenance and cleanliness:** The quality of maintenance and cleanliness standards.
- **General access:** Including car parking, signposting, external lighting and proximity to public transport.

5.3.2 The basis of the ratings

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

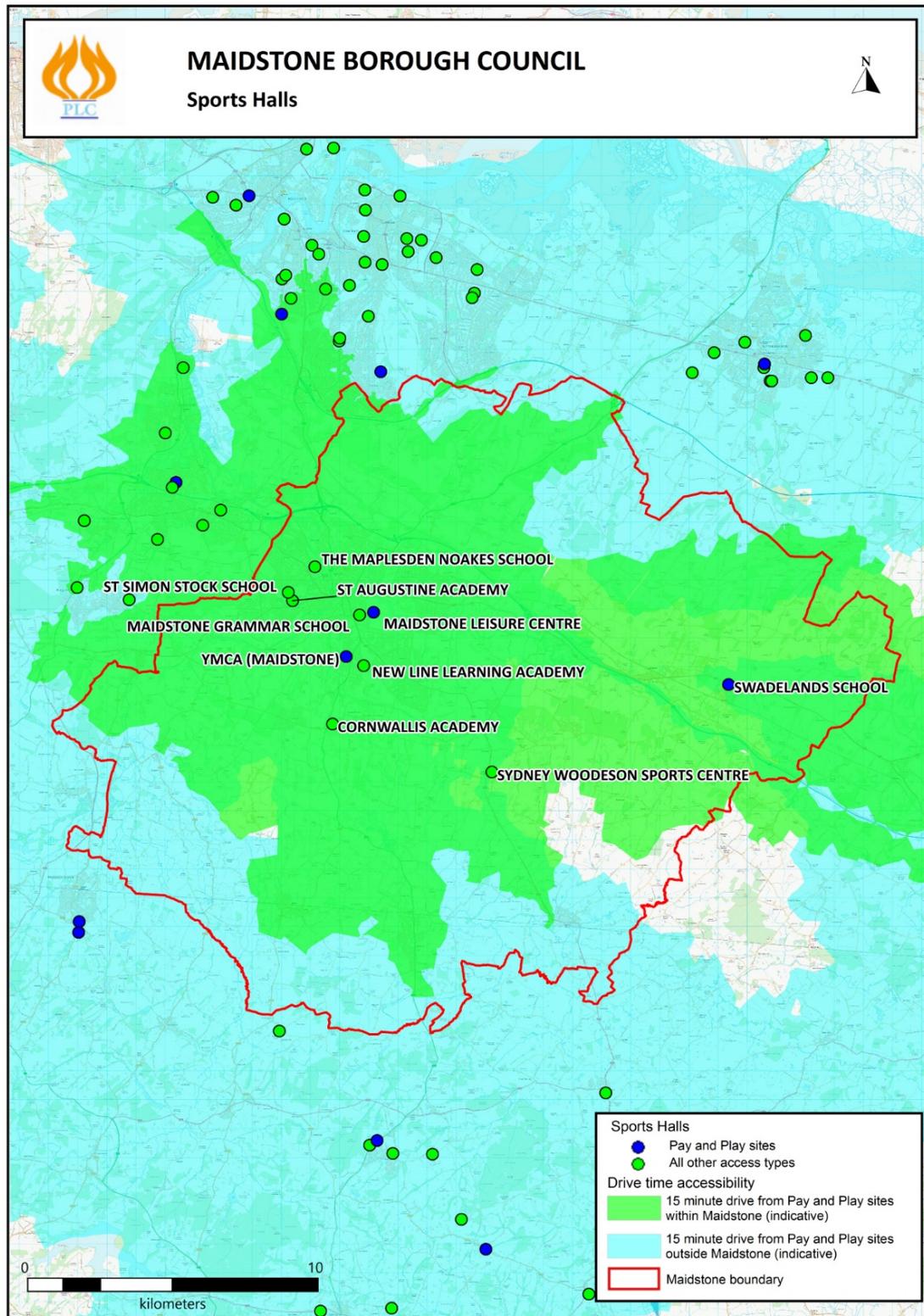
<i>Facility</i>	<i>Playing area</i>	<i>Changing</i>	<i>Disability Access</i>	<i>Maintenance</i>	<i>General access</i>
Cornwallis Academy	4	3	3	5	5
Lenham School	4	3	3	4	3
Maidstone Grammar School	4	4	4	5	4
Maidstone Leisure Centre	4	4	5	3	3
New Line Learning Academy	4	3	4	4	4
St Augustine Academy	4	2	2	3	4
Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre	5	4	3	5	2
The Maplesden Noakes School	3	3	2	4	3
YMCA	4	4	3	4	3

5.4 Accessibility

The map overleaf shows the location of all sports halls in Maidstone:

- Based on Sport England research, the ‘effective catchment’ for sports halls (defined as the time/distance travelled and the prevailing mode of transport used by up to 90% of facility users) is 15 minutes driving time.

- Sports halls with ‘pay and play’ access are marked in blue, with their 15-minute drive time catchments, which are denoted in green for facilities within the borough and in pale blue for those in neighbouring areas with catchments that overlap the borough boundary.
- Sports halls with only block-booked access are marked in green.



5.5 Availability

The table below identifies the opening hours, usage arrangements, pricing, booking arrangements and used capacity in the peak periods.

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Opening hours and basis of use</i>	<i>Pricing and booking arrangements</i>	<i>Peak period usage levels</i>
Cornwallis Academy	Mon-Fri 6pm -10pm Block bookings only	Whole hall £30 Badminton court £7.50 Bookings by phone.	75%
Lenham School	Mon-Fri 5pm - 9pm Sat 8am - 4pm Sun 10am - 4pm	Whole hall £30 Badminton Court £7.50 Bookings in person, on-line or by phone.	90% Mon - Thurs 50% other times
Maidstone Grammar School	Mon-Fri 6pm - 10pm Weekends by arrangement 'Pay-and-play' and block bookings	Whole hall £35 Badminton court £10 Bookings in person, or by phone after enquires on-line.	80%
Maidstone Leisure Centre	Mon-Fri 6.30am -10pm Sat-Sun 8am - 8pm 'Pay-and-play' and block bookings	Whole hall (peak) £105 Badminton court £13.50 Bookings in person, on-line or by phone.	85%
New Line Learning Academy	Mon-Fri 6pm - 10pm Block bookings only	Whole hall £40 Badminton court £7.50 Bookings in person or by phone.	80%
St Augustine Academy	Mon-Fri 6pm - 10pm Block bookings only	Whole Hall £30 Bookings in person or by phone.	100%
Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre	Mon-Fri 6pm - 8pm Block bookings only	Whole hall £40 Bookings by phone.	100%
The Maplesden Noakes School	Mon - Fri. 6pm - 9.30pm Sat 9am - 3.30pm Block bookings only	Whole hall £30 Badminton court £10 Bookings in person, or by phone after enquires on-line.	90%
YMCA	Mon - Fri 6.25am - 10pm Sat - Sun 8am - 6pm Membership required, then 'pay-and-play' and block bookings available.	Membership £41 per annum Whole hall £45 Badminton court £10.50 Bookings in person, or by phone.	95%

5.6 Key findings on supply

The key findings are as follows:

- With seven of the nine sports halls in the borough on school sites, there is limited midweek daytime access to sports halls and only four halls offer regular weekend availability.
- Only two of the community-accessible sports halls comply with (or exceed) the dimensions of 34.5m x 20m recommended in Sport England's *'Sports Halls Design and Layouts'* (2012) for halls that can cater for a full range of multi-sports use.

- Halls on school sites are typically provided as 33m x 17m or 33m x 18m to meet education needs, but have some limitation scattering for sports such as netball, handball, hockey and korfball.
- All the main populated areas of the borough are within 15-minutes driving time of a community-accessible sports hall with ‘pay-and-play’ access.
- Five of the halls are only available for block bookings by clubs or individuals, which mitigates against casual participants who may wish to play on an irregular or intermittent basis.
- Pricing is generally fairly consistent, with a full hall rate of £30 to £40 per hour at most facilities. Whilst the charges at Maidstone Leisure Centre are higher, the hall is 50% larger than the ‘standard’ four badminton court dimensions and under the Trust’s membership scheme, a single badminton court can be hired for £10.50 which is comparable to charges elsewhere.
- Peak time utilisation rates are universally high. Sport England recognises a measure of ‘comfortable capacity’, where a sports hall is regarded as effectively fully utilised when peak usage levels reach 80%. This reflects the fact that changeover periods between bookings, particularly those that involve removing and/or installing equipment, will reduce the usage time available. Seven of the nine sports halls in Maidstone are used to above ‘comfortable capacity’.

5.7 Current demand for sports halls

5.7.1 Expressed demand

Expressed community use demand for sports halls in Maidstone is as follows:

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Peak hours available</i>	<i>Peak hours utilised</i>	<i>% Peak utilisation</i>
Cornwallis Academy	20	15	75%
Lenham School	32	22	69%
Maidstone Grammar School	20	16	80%
Maidstone Leisure Centre	32	27	85%
New Line Learning Academy	20	16	80%
St Augustine Academy	20	20	100%
Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre	10	10	100%
The Maplesden Noakes School	24	22	90%
YMCA	32	30	95%
TOTALS	210	178	85%

5.7.2 Displaced demand

Displaced demand relates to users of sports halls from within the study area which takes place outside of the area. The following sports halls with community ‘pay-and-play’ accessibility are located in adjacent local authority areas, close enough to the borough boundary to provide usage opportunities for Maidstone residents.

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Distance from Maidstone boundary</i>
Angel Leisure Centre	Angel Lane, Tonbridge TN9 1SF	3 miles
Kings Rochester Sports Centre	Maidstone Road, Rochester ME1 3QJ	3 miles
Lordswood Leisure Centre	North Dane Way, Chatham ME5 8AY	1 mile
Swallows Leisure Centre	Central Avenue, Sittingbourne ME10 4NT	4 miles
Tunbridge Wells Sports Centre	St. John's Road, Tunbridge Wells TN4 9TX	2 miles
Weald Sports Centre	Angley Road, Cranbrook TN17 2PN	3 miles

Sport England's Facilities Planning Model (FPM) 2017 run for sports halls in Maidstone, which is examined in greater detail below, estimates that 27.7% of all sports hall demand in the borough is exported to facilities in neighbouring areas.

5.7.3 Unmet demand

Sport England's Facilities Planning Model (FPM) also included an assessment of unmet demand for sports halls in the borough. This involves two components:

- Demand that cannot be met within a sports hall catchment due to excess demand for that facility.
- Demand that cannot be met because it is located outside the catchment of a sports hall.

The FPM estimates that 7.2% of all demand for sports halls in Maidstone is currently unmet, which is equivalent to demand for 3.4 badminton courts (equivalent to slightly less than one sports hall). 95.4% of the unmet demand is attributable to the population living beyond the catchment of a sports hall.

5.8 Local sports participation priorities

There are no specific local sports participation priorities in Maidstone, other than a general policy commitment to promote health and well-being through increased levels of physical activity. Sports halls have a role to play in this, given the breadth of appeal of the wide range of indoor sports and activities that they can accommodate.

5.9 Sport-specific priorities

Analysis of sport-specific strategies (summarised in section 4.9 above) and consultation with Kent Sport and the governing bodies of sport produced a limited range of priorities in relation to local sports hall provision:

- **Basketball:** Maidstone Warriors Basketball Club operates at the YMCA sports hall where it runs youth and disability sessions and Aylesford School outside the borough. The club also uses several Maidstone school sports halls for training.
- **Table Tennis:** Table Tennis England responded that Maidstone is not a priority area and that local clubs are primarily based in village and community halls rather than larger sports halls

- **Volleyball:** Maidstone Volleyball Club is based at Maidstone Leisure Centre and is working with the Maidstone Leisure Trust to attract young players.

5.10 Future demand for sports halls

5.10.1 Population growth

MBC's 'Strategic Housing Market Assessment' (2015) confirmed the objectively assessed housing need for the borough over the period 2011 to 2031 as 17,660 dwellings. Of these 8,335 have already been built or granted planning permission. This scale of development will increase the borough's population by 22,380 to 177,523 people by 2031. This will represent an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.

5.10.2 Participation rates

One factor in considering future sports participation rates is to track historical trends, as a guide to possible future developments.

- **National trends:** Sport England's 'Active People' survey has recorded adult (16+) weekly participation rates for each sport at national level on an annual basis since 2005. The results for those sports that use sports halls are tabulated below. Badminton, Basketball and Tennis have also experienced statistically significant decreases, whilst Netball and Table Tennis have both achieved statistically significant increases:

Sport	2005/06	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	% Change
Badminton	1.29%	1.24%	1.20%	1.24%	1.20%	1.26%	1.16%	1.13%	1.04%	0.97%	-0.32%
Basketball	0.39%	0.45%	0.46%	0.36%	0.36%	0.35%	0.36%	0.31%	0.36%	0.35%	-0.04%
Gymnastics	0.14%	0.15%	0.12%	0.12%	0.11%	0.12%	0.11%	0.09%	0.10%	0.15%	+0.01%
Judo	0.04%	0.05%	0.04%	0.06%	0.03%	0.06%	0.04%	0.05%	0.04%	0.04%	No change
Netball	0.27%	0.29%	0.32%	0.34%	0.31%	0.37%	0.28%	0.35%	0.36%	0.42%	+0.15%
Table Tennis	0.17%	0.18%	0.20%	0.30%	0.32%	0.23%	0.25%	0.22%	0.23%	0.24%	+0.07%
Tennis	1.12%	1.18%	1.27%	1.04%	0.88%	1.03%	0.94%	0.97%	0.97%	0.90%	-0.22%
Volleyball	0.08%	0.12%	0.09%	0.09%	0.07%	0.06%	0.07%	0.06%	0.07%	0.08%	No change

- **Local trends:** Sport England's 'Active People' survey has recorded adult (16+) weekly participation rates for Maidstone on an annual basis since 2005. The results are tabulated below and show that whilst rates have fluctuated over the survey periods, there is an overall increase between 2005 and 2016, although due to the small sample sizes at local authority level (550 people), this is not regarded as statistically significant:

2005/06	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	% Change
34.9%	39.2%	34.5%	36.3%	35.0%	36.1%	32.1%	37.0%	35.6%	39.3%	+4.7%

5.10.3 Future projections

Sport England has developed the Sport Facility Calculator (SFC), to help to quantify how much additional demand for key community facilities like sports halls, will be generated by population increases. The SFC uses Sport England survey data on who uses facilities and applies this to the

population profile of the local area. This builds up a profile of usage, which can be then applied to estimate how much demand any given population would generate.

This demand is then converted into the quantity of facilities needed and expressed as badminton courts to define sports hall needs. For the purposes of projecting future demand in Maidstone, population growth of 22,380 by 2031 was assumed, along with current participation rates, since there have been no statistically significant increases since 2005, either locally in Maidstone or collectively for the sports that use sports halls. Based upon this, the SFC calculates demand for an additional 6.2 badminton courts, which is equivalent to 1.6 four-badminton court sized sports halls with full community access.

5.11 Key findings on demand

The key findings are as follows:

- Expressed demand for sports halls in Maidstone is high. In the peak demand periods, seven of the nine sports halls in Maidstone are used to above Sport England’s calculated ‘comfortable capacity’ figure of 80%.
- Sport England’s Facilities Planning Model (FPM) 2017 run for sports halls in Maidstone, estimates that 27.7% of all sports hall demand in the borough is exported to facilities in neighbouring areas.
- The FPM estimates that 7.2% of all demand for sports halls in Maidstone is currently unmet, which is equivalent to demand for 3.4 badminton courts (equivalent to slightly less than one sports hall). 95.4% of the unmet demand is attributable to the population living beyond the catchment of a sports hall.
- Sport England’s Sport Facility Calculator projects demand for an additional 6.2 badminton courts by 2031, which is equivalent to 1.6 four-badminton court sized sports halls with full community access.

5.12 The balance between sports hall supply and demand

Four criteria have been assessed to evaluate the balance between sports hall supply and demand in Maidstone:

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

5.13 Quantity

5.13.1 Current needs

Current sports halls in Maidstone are assessed to be at operating at over ‘comfortable capacity’, with a small shortfall in provision based upon the following evaluation:

- **Used peak capacity:** Average peak utilisation rates for sports halls in Maidstone are 85%, which is above Sport England’s ‘comfortable capacity’ figure of 80%. This suggests that the current number of community-accessible sports halls is inadequate to meet current needs, with a small capacity shortfall.
- **Satisfied demand:** The FPM supports this conclusion, calculating that 92.8% of demand for sports halls in Maidstone is met by current provision. The unmet demand is assessed to be equivalent to 3.4 badminton courts (0.85 of a sports hall).
- **Exported demand:** The FPM calculates that 27.7% of all sports hall demand in the borough is exported to facilities in neighbouring areas. This reflects both the lack of capacity in sports halls in Maidstone and the availability of some accessible spare capacity in adjacent local authorities.
- **Sports hall dimensions:** Only two of the sports halls comply with (or exceed) the dimensions of 34.5m x 20m recommended in Sport England’s ‘Sports Halls Design and Layouts’ (2012) for halls that can cater for a full range of multi-sports use. This does not cause immediate problems at present, because the smaller halls can cater adequately for recreational style play, but the needs of netball, handball, hockey and korfbal, which rely on the larger halls should be kept under review and all new facilities should comply with the larger dimensions.
- **Unavailable facilities:** A sports hall at St. Simon Stock School in Maidstone is currently unavailable for community use and the school has indicated that this position is unlikely to change. It does, however, represent one option for addressing the current deficit.
- **Changes in supply:** There are no known proposals to provide additional sports halls in the borough at present. However, seven of the nine existing sports halls are on school sites with no formal community use agreements, so access could in theory be withdrawn at any time.

5.13.2 Future needs

The quantity of sports halls required to meet future needs has been assessed as equivalent to 1.6 four-badminton court sized sports halls with full community access, based upon the following evaluation:

- **Demand increases:** The borough’s population is projected to increase by 22,380 to 177,523 people by 2031. This will represent an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.

- **Participation trends:** Based on national and local sports participation trends, for the purposes of forecasting future demand the likeliest scenario is for participation rates to remain at their current levels.
- **Additional needs:** Based upon a population increase of 22,380 people in the borough by 2031 and sports participation rates remaining at current levels, Sport England's Sport Facility Calculator projects demand for an additional 6.2 badminton courts, which is equivalent to 1.6 four-badminton court sized sports halls with full community access.

5.14 Quality

5.14.1 Current quality

There are no critical quality issues relating to sports halls in Maidstone, although the position should be kept under review based upon the following evaluation:

- **Existing quality issues:** Most sports halls rate from 'average' to 'good' across all quality categories, with the exception of 'poor' ratings for changing and disabled access at St. Augustine Academy, general access to the Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre and disability access at the Maplesden Noakes School. None of these quality issues has a significant impact upon either capacity or usage levels at present.
- **Ageing facilities:** The Maidstone Grammar School and Swadelands School sports halls were built in 1965 and 1972 respectively and have not been extensively refurbished since. Both facilities are likely to be reaching the end of their planned life expectancy, which will reduce the available supply unless they are replaced.

5.14.2 Future quality

By the end of the plan period in 2031, the Maidstone Leisure Centre sports hall will be at the end of its design life. The current management contract with Maidstone Leisure Trust expires in 2024, which may provide an opportunity to assess the options.

5.15 Accessibility

5.15.1 Current accessibility

Some parts of the borough lie beyond the catchment of the nearest sports hall based upon the following evaluation:

- **Geographical spread:** All the main populated areas of the borough are within 15-minutes driving time of a community-accessible sports hall with 'pay-and-play' access. There is one small area in the south-east of the borough near Ulcombe that is more than 15-minutes' drive from a community-accessible sports hall, although Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre is within 15-minutes for use involving block bookings by clubs.

- **Unmet demand:** The FPM estimates that 7.2% of all demand for sports halls in Maidstone is currently unmet, which is equivalent 728 visits per week in the peak period. This equates to demand for 3.4 badminton courts (equivalent to 0.85 of a sports hall). 95.4% of the unmet demand is attributable to the population living beyond the catchment of a sports hall.
- **Location of unmet demand:** The FPM calculates that the unmet demand is spread thinly across the district, rather than being focussed in a particular area.

5.15.2 Future accessibility

To ensure that there is adequate accessibility to sports halls in the future, an appropriate level of developer contributions will be required to upgrade existing facilities and/or to provide new ones, appropriately located in relation to the new population.

5.16 Availability

5.16.1 Current availability

There are a number of current impediments to sports hall availability in Maidstone:

- **'Pay and play' availability:** Because of the management arrangements at many of the sports halls on school sites in Maidstone, five of the halls are only available for block bookings by clubs or individuals, which mitigates against casual participants who may wish to play on an irregular or intermittent basis.
- **Off-peak availability:** With seven of the nine sports halls in the borough on school sites, there is limited midweek daytime access to sports halls and only four halls offer regular weekend availability.

5.16.2 Future availability

Addressing the current availability issues in the future will either involve providing sports halls on non-education sites, with appropriate management arrangements, or looking at innovative solutions to facilitate daytime community access to school sports halls.

5.17 The options for securing additional sports hall capacity

The options for securing existing and additional sports hall capacity to meet current and future needs are as follows:

5.17.1 Protect

Protecting existing sports halls through the Local Plan will be key both to securing local provision by ensuring that planning policy supports the retention of existing sports halls, including any without current community access, unless the loss of a facility would involve its replacement with a facility of at least the equivalent size, quality and accessibility.

5.17.2 Provide

Ensuring that extra sports hall capacity is achieved by:

- Providing new facilities in conjunction with new housing developments, either on-site or through developer contributions that reflect the additional sports hall demand arising from the additional population. To facilitate this, sports halls should be listed as ‘relevant infrastructure’ under CIL regulation 123.
- Encouraging the provision of sports halls that meet Sport England’s recommended dimensions (34.5m x 20m), to offer maximum flexibility of use.

5.17.3 Enhance

Enhancing existing sports hall capacity by:

- Securing formal Community Use Agreements at existing and proposed future facilities on school sites, to enhance community accessibility.
- Encouraging schools with existing community use to extend opening hours, particularly those with limited or no weekend use at present.
- Negotiating community access to the existing sports hall at St. Simon Stock School.
- Supporting schools to improve their management of community use arrangements, to improve ‘pay-and-play’ access to sports halls.

5.18 Action Plan

5.18.1 Introduction

The tables below set out the action plan for sports halls to guide the implementation of the strategy. The capital cost estimates are based upon Sport England’s *Facility Costs - Second Quarter of 2016* (2016).

5.18.2 Key strategic actions

Issues	Action	Lead	Partners	Estimated costs	Priority
Protection of existing sports halls	Include a policy in the Local Plan to protect all existing sports halls.	MBC	-	-	High
Community access to sports halls	Pursue formal Community Use agreements at all existing and any future proposed sports halls on education sites.	MBC	Academies and schools	Possible funding for improvements to physical accessibility (e.g. dedicated entrance, site security etc.)	High
Funding for future sports hall needs	Include sports halls as ‘relevant infrastructure’ under CIL regulation 123.	MBC	-	-	High

5.18.3 Site-specific actions

<i>Site</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Estimated costs</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Cornwallis Academy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No weekend community access. • No 'pay-and-play' use. • No formal Community Use Agreement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage Academy to provide weekend access and 'pay-and-play' use. • Pursue a formal Community Use Agreement. 	MBC	Cornwallis Academy	-	High
Lenham School	No formal Community Use Agreement.	Pursue a formal Community Use Agreement.	MBC	Swadelands School	-	Low
Maidstone Grammar School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited weekend access. • No formal Community Use Agreement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage School to extend weekend access. • Pursue a formal Community Use Agreement. 	MBC	Maidstone Grammar School	-	Medium
Maidstone Leisure Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An ageing facility. • Current management agreement expires in 2024. 	Feasibility study to establish the case for replacement or refurbishment of all on-site facilities.	MBC	Maidstone Leisure Trust	£20,000	Medium
New Line Learning Academy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No weekend community access. • No 'pay-and-play' use. • No formal Community Use Agreement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage Academy to provide weekend access and 'pay-and-play' use. • Pursue a formal Community Use Agreement. 	MBC	New Line Learning Academy	-	High
St Augustine Academy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Poor quality' changing and disabled access. • No weekend community access. • No 'pay-and-play' use. • No formal Community Use Agreement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the Academy in seeking external funding to improve facilities. • Encourage Academy to provide weekend access and 'pay-and-play' use. • Pursue a formal Community Use Agreement. 	MBC	St Augustine Academy	£100,000	High
St. Simon Stock School	No community access.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage School to allow community access. • Pursue a formal Community Use Agreement. 	MBC	St. Simon Stock School	-	High
Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Poor' quality general access. • No weekend community access. • No 'pay-and-play' use. • No formal Community Use Agreement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the School in seeking external funding to improve general access. • Encourage School to provide weekend access and 'pay-and-play' use. • Pursue a formal Community Use Agreement. 	MBC	Sutton Valance School	£50,000	High

<i>Site</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Estimated costs</i>	<i>Priority</i>
The Maplesden Noakes School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Poor' quality disabled access. • No Sunday community access. • No formal Community Use Agreement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the School in seeking external funding to improve facilities. • Encourage the school to provide Sunday access. • Pursue a formal Community Use Agreement. 	MBC	The Maplesden Noakes School	£50,000	Medium
YMCA	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-

6 SWIMMING POOLS

Key findings:

- **Quantity:** There are nine swimming pools at five sites with community use in Maidstone which comply with the minimum dimensions, plus four smaller pools. Four of the five swimming pool sites in Maidstone are used to above ‘comfortable capacity’ at peak times. Additional demand by 2031 will amount to the equivalent of one 25m x 4-lane pool with full community access.
- **Quality:** The quality of most aspects of most pools is ‘very good’ or ‘good’.
- **Accessibility:** Some areas on the edge of the borough are more than 20-minutes’ drive from the Maidstone Leisure Centre pools, although there is some access in these areas to pools with unrestricted access in neighbouring local authorities and to membership-only pools.
- **Availability:** Only the Maidstone Leisure Centre pools offer ‘pay-and-play’ public access in the borough, with the remaining facilities accessible on a membership only basis.

6.1 Introduction

This section examines the provision of swimming pools in Maidstone. Swimming pools are defined as indoor facilities with minimum pool length of 20 metres, although smaller teaching and diving pools are included in the assessment where they are integral to a facility with a main pool.

6.2 Quantity

6.2.1 Swimming pools with community use

The location and dimensions of swimming pools with community use in Maidstone is as follows:

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Year built</i>
David Lloyd Club (Maidstone)	Barker Road, Maidstone ME16 8LW	25m x 10m	2007
Freedom Leisure Maidstone	St. Peter’s Street, Maidstone ME16 0SX	20m x 10m	2004
Maidstone Leisure Centre	Mote Park, Maidstone ME15 8NQ	25m x 15m 25m x 10m 15m x 15m 9m x 9m 9m x 9m	1991
Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre	North St., Sutton Valence ME17 3HN	25m x 12m	2008
Velocity Health and Fitness (Maidstone)	Forstal Road, Maidstone ME14 3AQ	25m x 10m	2016

6.2.2 Additional smaller pools

The location and dimensions of the smaller swimming pools that serve some supplementary needs in Maidstone is as follows:

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Year built</i>
Feel Good Health Club	Ashford Road, Maidstone ME17 1RE	16m x 8m	2005
LivingWell Health Club	Bearsted Road, Maidstone ME14 5AA	19m x 9m	1998
Marriott Leisure Club	Ashford Road, Maidstone ME17 4NQ	16m x 12m	2008
Topnotch Health Club	London Road, Maidstone ME16 0DT	18m x 5m	2009

6.3 Quality

6.3.1 The criteria assessed

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

- **Pool area(s):** The overall condition, lighting, aquatic activities provided for, temperature, spectator provision and fitness for purpose.
- **Changing facilities:** Capacity, condition and fitness for purpose.
- **Disability access:** Provision for disabled access throughout the facility.
- **Maintenance and cleanliness:** The quality of maintenance and cleanliness standards.
- **General access:** Car parking, lighting, signposting and proximity to public transport.

6.3.2 The basis of the ratings

The facilities were rated on a five-point scale, where 5 equates to ‘very good’ (highlighted in green below), 4 to ‘good’ (also highlighted in green below), 3 to ‘average’ (highlighted in yellow below), 2 to ‘poor’ and 1 to ‘very poor’. The ratings for the swimming pools in Maidstone are shown in the table below.

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Pool area</i>	<i>Changing</i>	<i>Disability Access</i>	<i>Maintenance</i>	<i>General access</i>
David Lloyd Club (Maidstone)	5	5	5	5	3
Freedom Leisure Maidstone	5	5	5	5	4
Maidstone Leisure Centre	5	4	5	5	4
Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre	5	4	4	5	3
Velocity Health and Fitness (Maidstone)	5	4	4	5	4

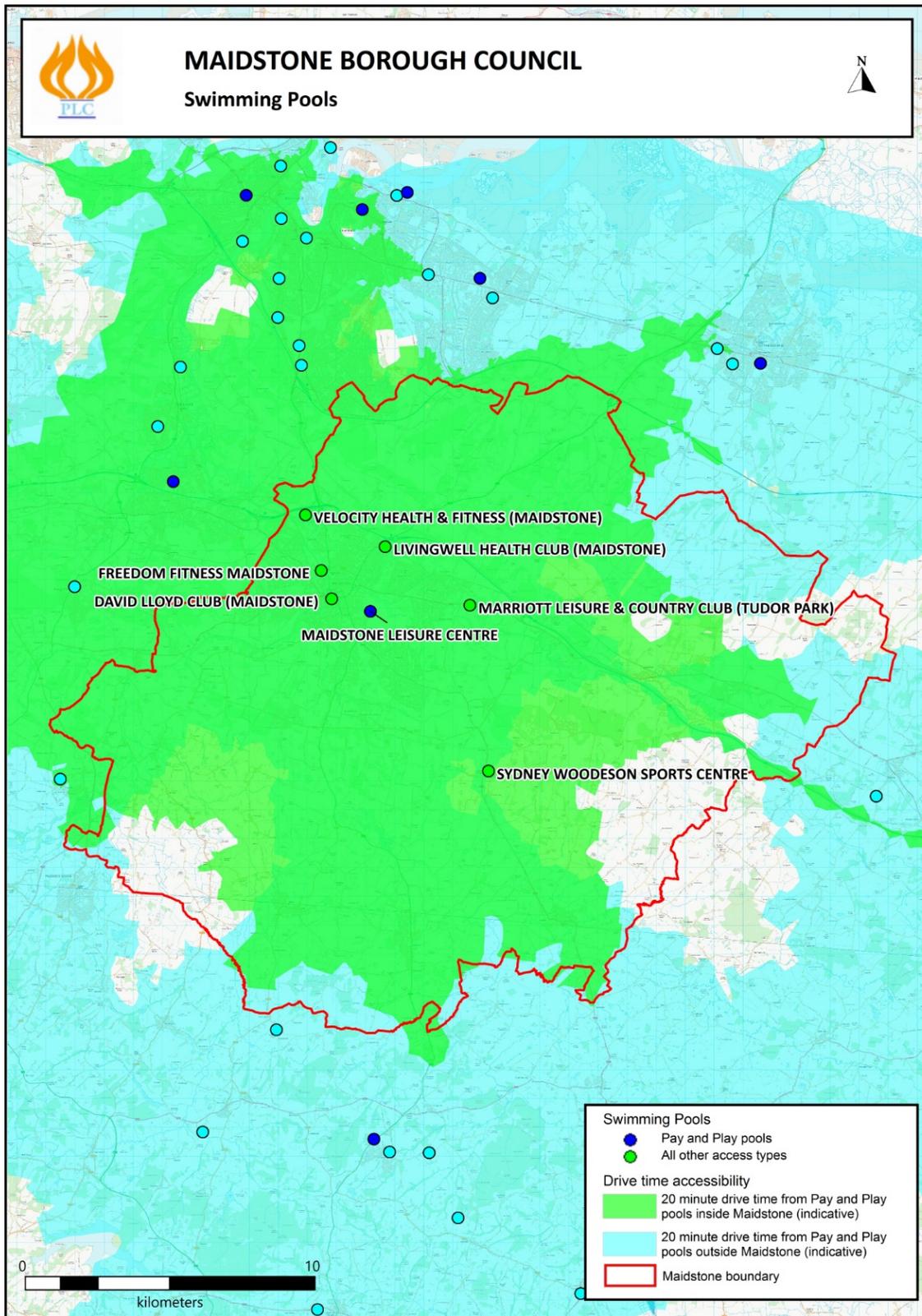
6.4 Accessibility

The map below shows the location of all swimming pools in Maidstone:

- Based on Sport England research, the ‘effective catchment’ for indoor swimming pools (defined as the time/distance travelled and the prevailing mode of transport used by up to 90% of facility users) is 20 minutes driving time.
- Pools with open access are marked in blue, with their 20-minute drive time catchments, which are denoted in green for facilities within the borough and in pale blue for those in

neighbouring areas with catchments that overlap the borough boundary.

- Pools with membership-only and other restrictive access are marked in green.



6.5 Availability

The table below identifies the opening hours, usage arrangements, pricing and used capacity in the peak periods.

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Opening hours and basis of use</i>	<i>Pricing</i>	<i>Peak usage</i>
David Lloyd Club (Maidstone)	Mon - Fri 6am - 10pm Sat - Sun 8am - 6pm Membership only	£60 per month for adults	70%
Freedom Leisure Maidstone	Mon - Fri 6.30am - 10.30pm Sat - Sun 8am - 6pm Membership only	£47 per month for adults	70%
Maidstone Leisure Centre	Mon-Fri 6.30am -10pm Sat-Sun 8am - 8pm 'Pay-and-play' with membership arrangement offering discounts	Adult casual swim peak £6.65 Adult casual swim off-peak £5.65 Junior casual swim peak £4.60 Junior casual swim off-peak £3.60 Family swim £19.75 Monthly Swim direct debit £25.95	75%
Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre	Mon 6.30pm - 8.30pm Sat - Sun 1.00pm - 6.00pm Block bookings only	Price be negotiation with club and swim school users.	100%
Velocity Health and Fitness (Maidstone)	Mon - Fri 6am - 10pm Sat - Sun 8am - 8pm Membership only	£58 per month for adults	65%

6.6 Key findings on supply

The key findings are as follows:

- There are nine swimming pools at five sites with community use in Maidstone which comply with the minimum dimensions, plus four smaller pools.
- Only the Maidstone Leisure Centre pools offer 'pay-and-play' public access in the borough, with the remaining facilities accessible on a membership only basis.
- Membership charges conform with market norms and include some discounts for junior membership, but might still be regarded as prohibitive to lower income groups.
- The quality of most features of most pools is 'very good' or 'good'.
- Some areas on the periphery of the borough are more than 20-minutes' drive from the Maidstone Leisure Centre pools, although there is some access in these areas to pools with unrestricted access in neighbouring local authorities and to membership-only pools.
- Peak time utilisation rates are universally high. Sport England recognises a measure of 'comfortable capacity', where a swimming pool is regarded as effectively fully utilised when peak usage levels reach 70%. Four of the five swimming pool sites in Maidstone are used to above 'comfortable capacity'.

6.7 Current demand for swimming pools

6.7.1 Expressed demand

Expressed community use demand for swimming pools in Maidstone is as follows:

<i>Facility</i>	<i>% Peak utilisation</i>
David Lloyd Club (Maidstone)	70%
Freedom Leisure Maidstone	70%
Maidstone Leisure Centre	75%
Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre	100%
Velocity Health and Fitness (Maidstone)	65%
TOTALS	76%

Sport England's Facilities Planning Model (FPM) 2017 run for swimming pools in Maidstone, estimates that expressed demand in the borough is equivalent to 10,707 visits per week in the peak period.

6.7.2 Displaced demand

Displaced demand relates to users of swimming pools from within the study area which takes place outside of the area. The following pools with community 'pay-and-play' accessibility are located in adjacent local authority areas, close enough to the borough boundary to provide usage opportunities for Maidstone residents.

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Distance from Maidstone boundary</i>
Angel Leisure Centre	Angel Lane, Tonbridge TN9 1SF	3 miles
Kings Rochester Sports Centre	Maidstone Road, Rochester ME1 3QJ	3 miles
Swallows Leisure Centre	Central Avenue, Sittingbourne ME10 4NT	4 miles
Tunbridge Wells Sports Centre	St. John's Road, Tunbridge Wells TN4 9TX	2 miles
Weald Sports Centre	Angley Road, Cranbrook TN17 2PN	3 miles

The FPM run for swimming pools in Maidstone calculates that the borough is a net importer of swimming demand. It estimates that 14.7% of all swimming demand (1,434 visits per week in the peak period) is exported to facilities in neighbouring areas, whilst 2,215 visits per week in the peak period are imported. This indicates that most local demand can be accommodated within the borough, with some external demand also included.

6.7.3 Unmet demand

Sport England's Facilities Planning Model (FPM) also included an assessment of unmet demand for swimming pools in the borough. This involves two components:

- Demand that cannot be met within a pool catchment due to excess demand for that facility.
- Demand that cannot be met because it is located outside the catchment of a pool.

The FPM estimates that 8.6% of all demand for swimming pools in Maidstone is currently unmet, which is equivalent to demand for 153sq.m of pool space (equivalent to 0.47 of a 25m x 6-lane pool). 99.6% of the unmet demand is attributable to the population living beyond the catchment of a swimming pool.

6.8 Local sports participation priorities

There are no specific local sports participation priorities in Maidstone, other than a general policy commitment to promote health and well-being through increased levels of physical activity. Swimming pools have a role to play in this, given the breadth of appeal to all age groups.

6.9 Sport-specific priorities

Consultation with Swim England and Kent Sport identified the following:

- **Swim England:** The governing body of swimming assesses pool supply against a standard of 11sq.m of pool space per 1,000 population. This calculation assesses current supply at the peak time in Maidstone to be the equivalent of 1,462sq.m. The standard indicates a demand for 1,809sq.m of water space, suggesting a shortfall of 347sq.m (equivalent to 1.07 25m x 6-lane pools). Swim England is also concerned that there is only a single ‘pay-and-play’ pool in the borough. Maidstone Leisure Centre is a strategically important but ageing swimming facility. Any loss or closure of this building would have serious consequences for the future of the sport in the borough.
- **Kent Sport:** The County Sports Partnership also commented on the importance of the Maidstone Leisure Centre to swimming in the borough, particularly for ‘pay-and-play’.

6.10 Future demand for swimming pools

6.10.1 Population growth

MBC’s ‘Strategic Housing Market Assessment’ (2015) confirmed the objectively assessed housing need for the borough over the period 2011 to 2031 as 17,660 dwellings. Of these 8,335 have already been built or granted planning permission. This scale of development will increase the borough’s population by 22,380 to 177,523 people by 2031. This will represent an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.

6.10.2 Participation rates

One factor in considering future sports participation rates is to track historical trends, as a guide to possible future developments. Sport England’s ‘Active People’ survey has recorded adult (16+) weekly participation rates for swimming at national and local level on an annual basis since 2005. The results are tabulated below and show that participation rates have fallen over the past decade, both in England and Maidstone:

<i>Sport</i>	<i>2005/06</i>	<i>2007/08</i>	<i>2008/09</i>	<i>2009/10</i>	<i>2010/11</i>	<i>2011/12</i>	<i>2012/13</i>	<i>2013/14</i>	<i>2014/15</i>	<i>2015/16</i>	<i>% Change</i>
England	8.04%	7.83%	7.57%	7.50%	6.62%	6.81%	6.77%	6.16%	5.70%	5.67%	-2.37%
Maidstone	8.05%	8.52%	6.38%	7.63%	-	-	8.57%	5.61%	-	-	-2.44%

6.10.3 Future projections

Sport England has developed the Sport Facility Calculator (SFC), to help to quantify how much additional demand for key community facilities like swimming pools, will be generated by population increases. The SFC uses Sport England survey data on who uses facilities and applies this to the population profile of the local area. This builds up a profile of usage, which can be then applied to estimate how much demand any given population would generate.

This demand is then converted into the quantity of facilities needed and expressed as pool water space to define swimming pool needs. For the purposes of projecting future demand in Maidstone, population growth of 22,380 by 2031 was assumed. Whilst swimming participation rates have fallen over the past decade, given the appeal of the sport to a broad cross-section of the community, it has been assumed that participation rates will remain static for the period until 2031. Based upon this, the SFC calculates demand for an additional 238sq.m of pool space by 2031, which is equivalent to one 25m x 4-lane pool with full community access.

6.11 Key findings on demand

The key findings are as follows:

- Expressed demand for swimming pools in Maidstone is high. In the peak demand periods, four of the five pool sites in Maidstone are used to above Sport England's calculated 'comfortable capacity' figure of 70%.
- Sport England's FPM estimates that only 14.7% of all swimming pool demand in the borough is exported to facilities in neighbouring areas.
- The FPM estimates that 8.6% of all demand for pools in Maidstone is currently unmet, which is equivalent to demand for just under half of a standard sized pool. 99.6% of the unmet demand is attributable to the population living beyond the catchment of a sports hall, rather than a lack of capacity in local facilities.
- Sport England's Sport Facility Calculator projects demand for an additional 238sq.m of pool space by 2031, which is equivalent to one 25m x 4-lane pool with full community access.

6.12 The balance between swimming pool supply and demand

Four criteria have been assessed to evaluate the balance between swimming pool supply and demand in Maidstone:

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

6.13 Quantity

6.13.1 Current needs

Current swimming pools in Maidstone are assessed to be at operating at over ‘comfortable capacity’, with a small shortfall in provision based upon the following evaluation:

- **Used peak capacity:** Average peak utilisation rates for pools in Maidstone are 76%, which is above Sport England’s ‘comfortable capacity’ figure of 70%. This suggests that there is a small capacity shortfall at present.
- **Satisfied demand:** The FPM supports this conclusion, calculating that 91.4% of demand for pools in Maidstone is met by current provision. The unmet demand is assessed to be equivalent to 0.47 of a swimming pool.
- **Exported demand:** The FPM calculates that the borough is a net importer of swimming demand. It estimates that 1,434 visits per week in the peak period is exported to facilities in neighbouring areas, whilst 2,215 visits per week in the peak period are imported. This indicates that most local demand can be accommodated within the borough, with some external demand also included.
- **Unmet demand:** The FPM estimates that 8.6% of all demand for swimming pools in Maidstone is currently unmet, which is equivalent to demand for 153sq.m of pool space (equivalent to 0.47 of a 25m x 6-lane pool). 99.6% of the unmet demand is attributable to the population living beyond the catchment of a swimming pool.
- **Changes in supply:** By the end of the plan period in 2031, Maidstone Leisure Centre will be at the end of its design life. Whilst the leisure pool was refurbished in 2010 and one of the learner pools in 2013, the current management contract with Maidstone Leisure Trust expires in 2024, which may provide an opportunity to assess the options

6.13.2 Future needs

The quantity of swimming pools required to meet future needs has been assessed as an additional 238sq.m of pool space by 2031, which is equivalent to one 25m x 4-lane pool with full community access, based upon the following evaluation:

- **Demand increases:** The borough’s population is projected to increase by 22,380 to 177,523 people by 2031. This will represent an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.
- **Participation trends:** Based on national and local sports participation trends, for the purposes of forecasting future demand the likeliest scenario is for participation rates to remain at their current levels.
- **Additional needs:** Sport England’s Sport Facility Calculator projects demand for 238sq.m of additional pool space by 2031, which is equivalent to one 25m x 4-lane pool with full community access

6.14 Quality

6.14.1 Current quality

There are no critical quality issues relating to swimming pools in Maidstone, although the position should be kept under review.

6.14.2 Future quality

Maidstone Leisure Centre was built in 1991, so will be 50 years old by the end of the plan period in 2031 and in need of refurbishment. Whilst the leisure pool was refurbished in 2010 and one of the learner pools in 2013, The current management contract with Maidstone Leisure Trust expires in 2024, which may provide an opportunity to assess the options.

6.15 Accessibility

6.15.1 Current accessibility

Some parts of the borough lie beyond the catchment of the nearest swimming pool based upon the following evaluation:

- **Geographical spread:** Some areas in the south-west, south-east and east of the borough are beyond the catchment of the Maidstone Leisure Centre pools, although there is some access in these areas to pools with unrestricted access in neighbouring local authorities and to membership-only pools.
- **Unmet demand:** The FPM estimates that 8.6% of all demand for swimming pools in Maidstone is currently unmet, which is equivalent to demand for 153sq.m of pool space (equivalent to 0.47 of a 25m x 6-lane pool). 99.6% of the unmet demand is attributable to the population living beyond the catchment of a swimming pool.
- **Location of unmet demand:** The FPM calculates that the unmet demand is spread thinly across the district, rather than being focussed in a particular area.

6.15.2 Future accessibility

To ensure that there is adequate accessibility to swimming pools in the future, an appropriate level of developer contributions will be required to upgrade existing facilities and/or to provide new ones, appropriately located in relation to the new population.

6.16 Availability

6.16.1 Current availability

Only Maidstone Leisure Centre offers ‘pay-and-play’ swimming on a non-membership basis, which mitigates against casual participants who may wish to swim on an irregular or intermittent basis.

6.16.2 Future availability

Ensuring that there are sufficient ‘pay-and-play’ swimming opportunities to meet future demand will entail the development of additional pool capacity. This may involve the redevelopment/expansion of Maidstone Leisure Centre or the development of a more geographically dispersed new network of provision. As at present, some additional capacity is likely to be provided by the commercial leisure sector.

6.17 The options for securing additional swimming pool capacity

The options for securing existing and additional swimming pool capacity to meet current and future needs are as follows:

6.17.1 Protect

Protecting existing pools through the Local Plan will be key both to securing local provision by ensuring that planning policy supports the retention of existing swimming pools, including those with membership-only access, unless the loss of a facility would involve its replacement with a facility of at least the equivalent size, quality and accessibility.

6.17.2 Provide

Ensuring that extra swimming pool capacity is achieved by:

- Providing new facilities in conjunction with new housing developments, either on-site or through developer contributions that reflect the additional swimming demand arising from the additional population. To facilitate this, swimming pools should be listed as ‘relevant infrastructure’ under CIL regulation 123.
- Encouraging the provision of swimming pools with a minimum length of 20m by commercial leisure providers to offer maximum flexibility of use.

6.17.3 Enhance

Enhancing existing swimming pool capacity by negotiating with:

- Commercial operators to provide casual swimming for non-members in off-peak periods.
- Negotiating additional community access, including casual swimming to the existing pool at the Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre.

6.18 Action Plan

6.18.1 Introduction

The tables below set out the action plan for swimming pools to guide the implementation of the strategy. The capital cost estimates are based upon Sport England’s *Facility Costs - Second Quarter of 2016* (2016).

6.18.2 Key strategic actions

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Estimated costs</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Protection of existing swimming pools	Include a policy in the Local Plan to protect all existing swimming pools.	MBC	-	-	High
'Pay-and-play' access to commercial pools	Encourage the operators of commercial pools to provide off-peak 'pay-and-play' access.	MBC	Private health clubs	-	Medium
Funding for future swimming pool needs	Include swimming pools as 'relevant infrastructure' under CIL regulation 123.	MBC	-	-	High

6.18.3 Site-specific actions

<i>Site</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Estimated costs</i>	<i>Priority</i>
David Lloyd Club (Maidstone)	No 'pay-and-play' use.	Encourage the operator to provide off-peak 'pay-and-play' access.	MBC	David Lloyd Club (Maidstone)	-	Medium
Freedom Leisure Maidstone	No 'pay-and-play' use.	Encourage the operator to provide off-peak 'pay-and-play' access.	MBC	Freedom Leisure Maidstone	-	Medium
Maidstone Leisure Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An ageing facility. • Current management agreement expires in 2024. 	Feasibility study to establish the case for replacement or refurbishment of all on-site facilities.	MBC	Maidstone Leisure Trust	£20,000	Medium
Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited community access. • No 'pay-and-play' use. • No formal Community Use Agreement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage Academy to provide more access and 'pay-and-play' use. • Pursue a formal Community Use Agreement. 	MBC	Sutton Valance School	-	High
Velocity Health and Fitness	No 'pay-and-play' use.	Encourage the operator to provide off-peak 'pay-and-play' access.	MBC	Velocity Health and Fitness	-	Medium

7 HEALTH AND FITNESS

Key findings:

- **Quantity:** There are 15 publicly accessible health and fitness facilities in Maidstone, collectively comprising 1,047 equipment stations. In addition, there are three school facilities with no public access. Additional demand by 2031 will amount to the equivalent of an extra 187 equipment stations.
- **Quality:** The quality of most aspects of most facilities is ‘very good’ or ‘good’.
- **Accessibility:** Some areas in the south-east and east of the borough are beyond the catchment of a ‘pay-and-play’ facility within Maidstone, although most in these areas have access to facilities with unrestricted access in neighbouring local authorities and/or to membership-only sites.
- **Availability:** Only two sites (comprising 15% of facility capacity) offer ‘pay-and-play’ public access in the borough, with the remaining facilities accessible on a membership only basis.

7.1 Introduction

This section examines the provision of health and fitness facilities in Maidstone. Health and fitness facilities are defined as dedicated community accessible facilities with a range of exercise equipment.

7.2 Quantity

7.2.1 Health and fitness facilities with community use

The location and number of stations at health and fitness facilities with community use in Maidstone is as follows:

Facility	Address	Stations	Year built
Bob Prowse Health Club	Armstrong Road, Maidstone ME15 6AZ	65	2006
David Lloyd Club (Maidstone)	Barker Road, Maidstone ME16 8LW	200	2007
Feel Good Health Club	Ashford Road, Maidstone ME17 1RE	33	2005
Fit4less (Maidstone)	Week Street, Maidstone ME14 1RF	40	2015
Freedom Leisure Maidstone	St. Peter’s Street, Maidstone ME16 0SX	81	2004
Lenham Activate	Ham Lane, Lenham ME17 2LL	26	2007
LivingWell Health Club	Bearsted Road, Maidstone ME14 5AA	28	1998
Maidstone Leisure Centre	Mote Park, Maidstone ME15 8NQ	120	1991
Marriott Leisure Club	Ashford Road, Maidstone ME17 4NQ	72	2008
Snap Fitness	High Street, Maidstone ME14 1JH	60	2017
Topnotch Health Club	London Road, Maidstone ME16 0DT	70	2009
truGym Maidstone	The Broadway, Maidstone ME16 8PS	110	2013
Velocity Health and Fitness	Forstal Road, Maidstone ME14 3AQ	90	2016
Weald of Kent Golf Club	Maidstone Road, TN27 9PT	12	2016
YMCA	Melrose Close, Maidstone ME15 6BD	40	2011

7.2.2 Health and fitness facilities without community use

The location of health and fitness facilities with no community use in Maidstone is as follows:

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Stations</i>	<i>Year built</i>
Bower Grove School	Fant Lane, Maidstone ME16 8NL	10	2011
St Augustine Academy	Boughton Lane, Maidstone ME15 9QL	17	2007
Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre	North Street, Sutton Valence ME17 3HN	24	2015

7.3 Quality

7.3.1 The criteria assessed

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

- ***Fitness facilities:*** The overall condition, mix of cardio-vascular and resistance equipment, lighting and ambience.
- ***Changing facilities:*** Capacity, condition and fitness for purpose.
- ***Disability access:*** Provision of disability-specific equipment and disabled access throughout the facility.
- ***Maintenance and cleanliness:*** The quality of maintenance and cleanliness standards.
- ***General access:*** Car parking, lighting, signposting and proximity to public transport.

7.3.2 The basis of the ratings

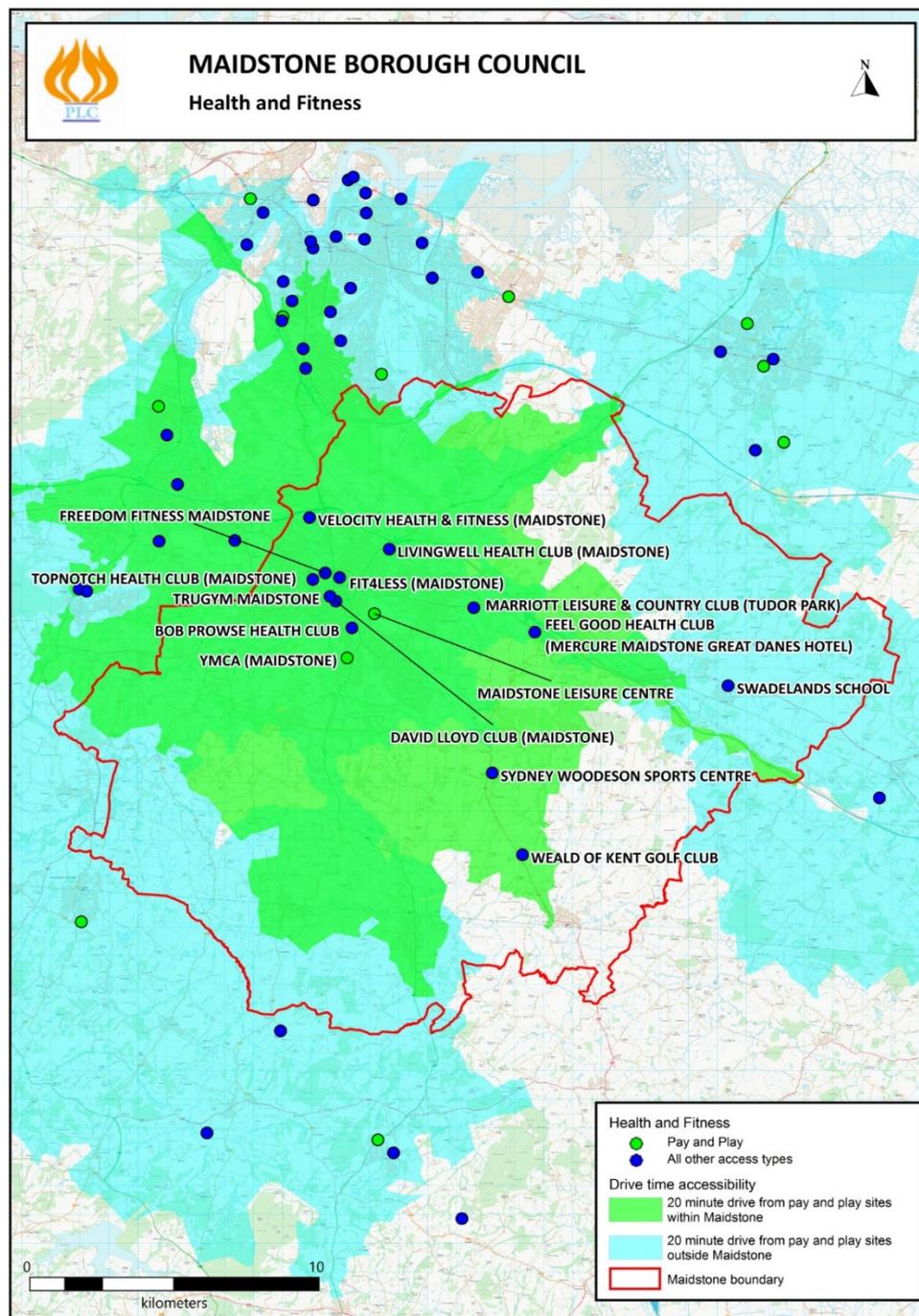
The facilities were rated on a five-point scale, where 5 equates to ‘very good’ (highlighted in green below), 4 to ‘good’ (also highlighted in green below), 3 to ‘average’ (highlighted in yellow below), 2 to ‘poor’ (highlighted in red below) and 1 to ‘very poor’.

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Fitness facilities</i>	<i>Changing</i>	<i>Disability Access</i>	<i>Maintenance</i>	<i>General access</i>
Bob Prowse Health Club	4	4	3	3	2
David Lloyd Club (Maidstone)	5	5	4	5	4
Feel Good Health Club	5	5	4	5	5
Fit4less (Maidstone)	5	5	4	5	4
Freedom Leisure Maidstone	5	5	4	5	4
Lenham Activate	4	4	4	4	4
LivingWell Health Club	5	5	4	5	5
Maidstone Leisure Centre	5	5	3	5	5
Marriott Leisure Club	5	5	4	5	5
Snap Fitness	5	5	4	5	4
Topnotch Health Club	5	5	4	5	4
truGym Maidstone	5	5	4	5	3
Velocity Health and Fitness	5	5	4	5	5
Weald of Kent Golf Club	5	5	4	5	4
YMCA	5	5	5	5	5

7.4 Accessibility

The map below shows the location of all health and fitness facilities in Maidstone:

- Based on Sport England research, the ‘effective catchment’ for health and fitness facilities is 20 minutes driving time.
- Facilities with ‘pay-and-play’ access are marked in green, with their 20-minute drive time catchments, which are denoted in green for facilities within the borough and in pale blue for those in neighbouring areas with catchments that overlap the borough boundary.
- Facilities with membership-only and other restrictive access are marked in blue.



7.5 Availability

The table below identifies the opening hours, usage arrangements and pricing (shown as monthly direct debit costs to facilitate comparison).

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Opening hours and basis of use</i>	<i>Pricing</i>
Bob Prowse Health Club	Mon - Fri 6.30am - 10pm Sat - Sun 9am - 5pm Membership only	£35
David Lloyd Club (Maidstone)	Mon - Fri 6am - 10pm Sat - Sun 8am - 6pm Membership only	£60
Feel Good Health Club	Mon - Fri 6.45am - 10pm Sat - Sun 7am - 9pm Membership only	£40.99
Fit4less (Maidstone)	Mon - Fri 6.30am - 10pm Sat - Sun 8am - 6pm Membership only	£19.99
Freedom Leisure Maidstone	Mon - Fri 6.30am - 10.30pm Sat - Sun 8am - 6pm Membership only	£47
Lenham Activate	Mon - Fri 7am - 9am and 5pm - 10pm Sat 8am - 3pm Membership only	£28
LivingWell Health Club	Mon - Fri 6am - 10pm Sat 7am - 9pm Sun 8am - 10pm Membership only	£46
Maidstone Leisure Centre	Mon-Fri 6.30am - 10pm Sat-Sun 8am - 8pm 'Pay-and-play' with membership arrangement offering discounts	£35.95
Marriott Leisure Club	Mon - Sun 6am - 11pm Membership only	£65
Snap Fitness	24/7 access for members only Staffed access Mon 9am - 8pm, Tue - Sat 10am - 8pm	£19.99
Topnotch Health Club	Mon - Fri 6.30am - 10pm Sat - Sun 8am - 6pm Membership only	£37.50
truGym Maidstone	Mon - Fri 5am - 12am Sat - Sun 8am - 8pm Membership only	£19.99
Velocity Health and Fitness	Mon - Fri 6.30am - 10pm Sat - Sun 8am - 8pm Membership only	£58
Weald of Kent Golf Club	Mon - Sun 6.45am - 9.30pm Membership only	£34.95
YMCA	Mon-Fri 6.30am - 10pm Sat-Sun 8am - 6pm 'Pay-and-play' with membership arrangement offering discounts	£36

7.6 Key findings on supply

The key findings are as follows:

- There are 15 publicly accessible health and fitness facilities in Maidstone, collectively comprising 1,047 equipment stations.
- Only the Maidstone Leisure Centre and the YMCA offer 'pay-and-play' public access in the borough, with the remaining facilities accessible on a membership only basis.
- Membership charges vary between £19.99 and £60 per month, although there are discounted introductory offers at many facilities.

- The quality of most features of most facilities is ‘very good’ or ‘good’.
- Some areas in the south-east and east of the borough are beyond the catchment of a ‘pay-and-play’ facility within Maidstone, although most have access in these areas to facilities with unrestricted access in neighbouring local authorities and to membership-only sites.

7.7 Current demand for health and fitness facilities

7.7.1 Expressed demand

The 2016 ‘*State of the UK Fitness Industry*’ report’ reveals that the UK health and fitness industry is continuing to grow. It has more clubs, more members and a greater market value than ever before. Over the twelve-month period to the end of March 2016, there were increases of:

- 1.9% in the number of fitness facilities.
- 5.3% in the number of members.
- 3.2% in overall market value.

For the first time ever, health and fitness members exceeded 9 million. 1 in 7 people in the UK is a member of a gym, an all-time penetration rate high of 14.3%. The low-cost market with its large membership numbers, online joining, long opening hours and low-prices has continued to expand rapidly. The private low-cost sector now accounts for 12% of the total number of private clubs, 13% of the private market value and 32% of the private sector membership.

7.7.2 Displaced demand

Displaced demand relates to users of health and fitness facilities from within the study area which takes place outside of the area. The following facilities with ‘pay-and-play’ accessibility are located in adjacent local authority areas, close enough to the borough boundary to provide usage opportunities for Maidstone residents.

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Distance from Maidstone boundary</i>
Angel Leisure Centre	Angel Lane, Tonbridge TN9 1SF	3 miles
Kings Rochester Sports Centre	Maidstone Road, Rochester ME1 3QJ	3 miles
Lordswood Leisure Centre	North Dane Way, Chatham ME5 8AY	1 mile
Swallows Leisure Centre	Central Avenue, Sittingbourne ME10 4NT	4 miles
Tunbridge Wells Sports Centre	St. John’s Road, Tunbridge Wells TN4 9TX	2 miles
Weald Sports Centre	Angley Road, Cranbrook TN17 2PN	3 miles

7.7.3 Unmet demand

All health and fitness facilities in the borough have indicated that they can accommodate some new users/members, so a lack facility capacity is not an issue even though usage is busy in the peak periods. Some of the population is outside the catchment of a ‘pay-and-play’ facility within Maidstone, although most have access in these areas to facilities with unrestricted access in neighbouring local authorities and to membership-only sites so there is no unmet geographical demand.

7.8 Local sports participation priorities

There are no specific local sports participation priorities in Maidstone, other than a general policy commitment to promote health and well-being through increased levels of physical activity. Health and fitness facilities have a particular role to play in this, given the breadth of appeal to all age groups.

7.9 Sport-specific priorities

There are no identified strategic priorities for developing health and fitness facilities in Maidstone.

7.10 Future demand for health and fitness facilities

7.10.1 Population growth

MBC's *'Strategic Housing Market Assessment'* (2015) confirmed the objectively assessed housing need for the borough over the period 2011 to 2031 as 17,660 dwellings. Of these 8,335 have already been built or granted planning permission. This scale of development will increase the borough's population by 22,380 to 177,523 people by 2031. This will represent an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.

7.10.2 Participation rates

One factor in considering future sports participation rates is to track historical trends, as a guide to possible future developments. Sport England's 'Active People' survey has recorded adult (16+) weekly participation rates for health and fitness at national and local level on an annual basis since 2005. The results are tabulated below and show that participation rates have increased significantly over the past decade, both in England and Maidstone:

<i>Sport</i>	<i>2005/06</i>	<i>2007/08</i>	<i>2008/09</i>	<i>2009/10</i>	<i>2010/11</i>	<i>2011/12</i>	<i>2012/13</i>	<i>2013/14</i>	<i>2014/15</i>	<i>2015/16</i>	<i>% Change</i>
England	12.6%	14.1%	14.0%	14.3%	14.3%	14.6%	15.3%	15.4%	15.5%	16.0%	+3.4%
Maidstone	13.8%	15.0%	12.5%	13.2%	12.9%	13.7%	13.0%	10.4%	17.0%	16.3%	+2.5%

7.10.3 Future projections

Local health and fitness participation rates have increased by an average of 0.25% per annum over the past decade. It would therefore be reasonable to assume a similar growth rate until 2031, which would increase demand by 3.5% by the end of the plan period. When combined with population growth of 14.4%, this would collectively increase demand by 17.9% by 2031. Based on current provision of 1,047 equipment stations and no effective spare capacity, there will be demand for 1,234 stations by 2031, an increase of 187 over the existing figure.

7.11 Key findings on demand

The key findings are as follows:

- In line with national trends, expressed demand for health and fitness facilities in Maidstone is high.

- Demand is projected to increase by 17.9% by the end of the plan period. This will lead to a need for an extra 187 equipment stations by 2031.

7.12 *The balance between health and fitness supply and demand*

Four criteria have been assessed to evaluate the balance between health and fitness facility supply and demand in Maidstone:

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

7.13 *Quantity*

7.13.1 *Current needs*

Current health and fitness facilities in Maidstone are assessed to be at operating at close to full capacity, based upon the following evaluation:

- **Used peak capacity:** Although no detailed figures are available, consultation with local operators indicates that most facilities are operating at close to full capacity in the peak periods.
- **Satisfied demand:** There is no evidence of unmet demand, with a good geographical spread of provision and ‘pay-and-play’ facilities providing more than 16% of the overall capacity in terms of equipment stations.
- **Changes in supply:** There are no know planned changes to supply, although commercial sector providers are likely to respond to increases in demand by expanding local capacity.

7.13.2 *Future needs*

The quantity of health and fitness provision required to meet future needs has been assessed as equivalent to 1,234 fitness stations by 2031, based upon the following evaluation:

- **Demand increases:** The borough’s population is projected to increase by 22,380 to 177,523 people by 2031. This will represent an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.

- **Participation trends:** Local health and fitness participation rates have increased by an average of 0.25% per annum over the past decade. It would therefore be reasonable to assume a similar growth rate until 2031, which would increase demand by 3.5% by the end of the plan period.
- **Additional needs:** Based the above figures and on current provision of 1,047 equipment stations and no effective spare capacity, there will be demand for 1,234 stations by 2031, an increase of 187 over the existing figure.

7.14 Quality

7.14.1 Current quality

There are no significant quality issues relating to health and fitness facilities in Maidstone, although the position should be kept under review.

7.14.2 Future quality

In a highly competitive market, commercial health and fitness providers place a high premium on equipment innovation and facility quality, so it seems reasonable to assume that local provision will continue to be upgraded regularly.

7.15 Accessibility

7.15.1 Current accessibility

Some areas in the south-east and east of the borough are beyond the catchment of a ‘pay-and-play’ facility within Maidstone, although most have access in these areas to facilities with unrestricted access in neighbouring local authorities and to membership-only sites.

7.15.2 Future accessibility

Commercial health and fitness operators are likely to ensure that additional facilities are provided that are well-located in relation to new housing developments.

7.16 Availability

7.16.1 Current availability

Only the Maidstone Leisure Centre and the YMCA offer ‘pay-and-play’ public access in the borough, with the remaining facilities accessible on a membership only basis. Membership charges vary between £19.99 and £60 per month, although there are discounted introductory offers at many facilities.

7.16.2 Future availability

With a competitive local market including several low-cost commercial providers, it seems unlikely that cost will be a barrier to accessibility in the future. However, the inclusion of expanded ‘pay-and-play’ health and fitness provision as part of any redevelopment of Maidstone Leisure Centre would ensure that accessible facilities are available for the whole community.

7.17 The options for securing additional health and fitness capacity

The options for securing existing and additional health and fitness facility capacity to meet current and future needs are as follows:

7.17.1 Protect

Protecting existing health and fitness facilities through the Local Plan will be key both to securing local provision by ensuring that planning policy supports the retention of existing facilities, including those with membership-only access, unless the loss of a facility would involve its replacement with a facility of at least the equivalent size, quality and accessibility.

7.17.2 Provide

Ensuring that extra health and fitness capacity is achieved by:

- Providing new or expanded facilities at Maidstone Leisure Centre, to ensure that ‘pay-and-play’ access is available, funded through developer contributions that reflect the extra demand arising from the additional population. To facilitate this, health and fitness facilities should be listed as ‘relevant infrastructure’ under CIL regulation 123.
- Encouraging the provision of health and fitness facilities by commercial leisure providers.

7.17.3 Enhance

Enhancing existing health and fitness capacity by negotiating with:

- Commercial operators to provide access for non-members in off-peak periods.
- Negotiating community access to the three facilities on school sites that have no external use at present.

7.18 Action Plan

The table below sets out the action plan for health and fitness facilities to guide the implementation of the strategy. All actions are generic, rather than facility specific. The capital cost estimates are based upon Sport England’s *Facility Costs - Second Quarter of 2016* (2016).

Issues	Action	Lead	Partners	Estimated costs	Priority
Protection of existing community health and fitness facilities.	Include a policy in the Local Plan to protect all existing health and fitness facilities.	MBC	-	-	High
Need for an additional 269 fitness stations by 2031.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand ‘pay-and-play’ capacity at Maidstone Leisure Centre. • Encourage additional provision by commercial providers. 	MBC	Maidstone Leisure Trust Commercial providers	Dependent on the scale and nature of provision.	Medium
‘Pay-and-play’ access to commercial health and fitness facilities.	Encourage the operators of commercial facilities to provide off-peak ‘pay-and-play’ access.	MBC	Private health clubs	-	Medium
Funding for future health and fitness needs.	Include health and fitness facilities as ‘relevant infrastructure’ under CIL regulation 123.	MBC	-	-	High

8 SQUASH COURTS

Key findings:

- **Quantity:** There are two facilities with community use in Maidstone, collectively containing six squash courts, plus one facility on a school site with two courts and no public access. There is sufficient spare capacity at existing courts to meet all additional demand to 2031.
- **Quality:** The quality of both facilities is ‘good’.
- **Accessibility:** Some areas in the south-west and north-east of the borough are beyond the catchment of a facility within Maidstone, although all have access in these areas to facilities in neighbouring local authorities.
- **Availability:** Only the Mote Squash Club offers ‘pay-and-play’ public access in the borough

8.1 Introduction

This section examines the provision of squash courts in Maidstone. Squash courts are defined as specialist courts for squash and racketball, complying with regulation dimensions.

8.2 Quantity

8.2.1 Squash Courts with community use

The location and number of squash courts with community use in Maidstone is as follows:

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Courts</i>	<i>Year built</i>
Maidstone Squash Club	Union Street, Maidstone ME14 1EB	2	2009
Mote Squash Club	Mote Park, Maidstone ME15 7RN	4	2008

8.2.2 Squash Courts without community use

The location and number of squash courts with no community use in Maidstone is as follows:

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Courts</i>	<i>Year built</i>
Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre	North Street, Sutton Valence ME17 3HN	2	1950

8.3 Quality

8.3.1 The criteria assessed

The quality of squash courts was assessed by a non-technical visual inspection during a site visit to all facilities. The criteria that were assessed to give a single overall score for each squash facility were the court surface, changing provision, line markings, walls, disability and general access and fitness for purpose.

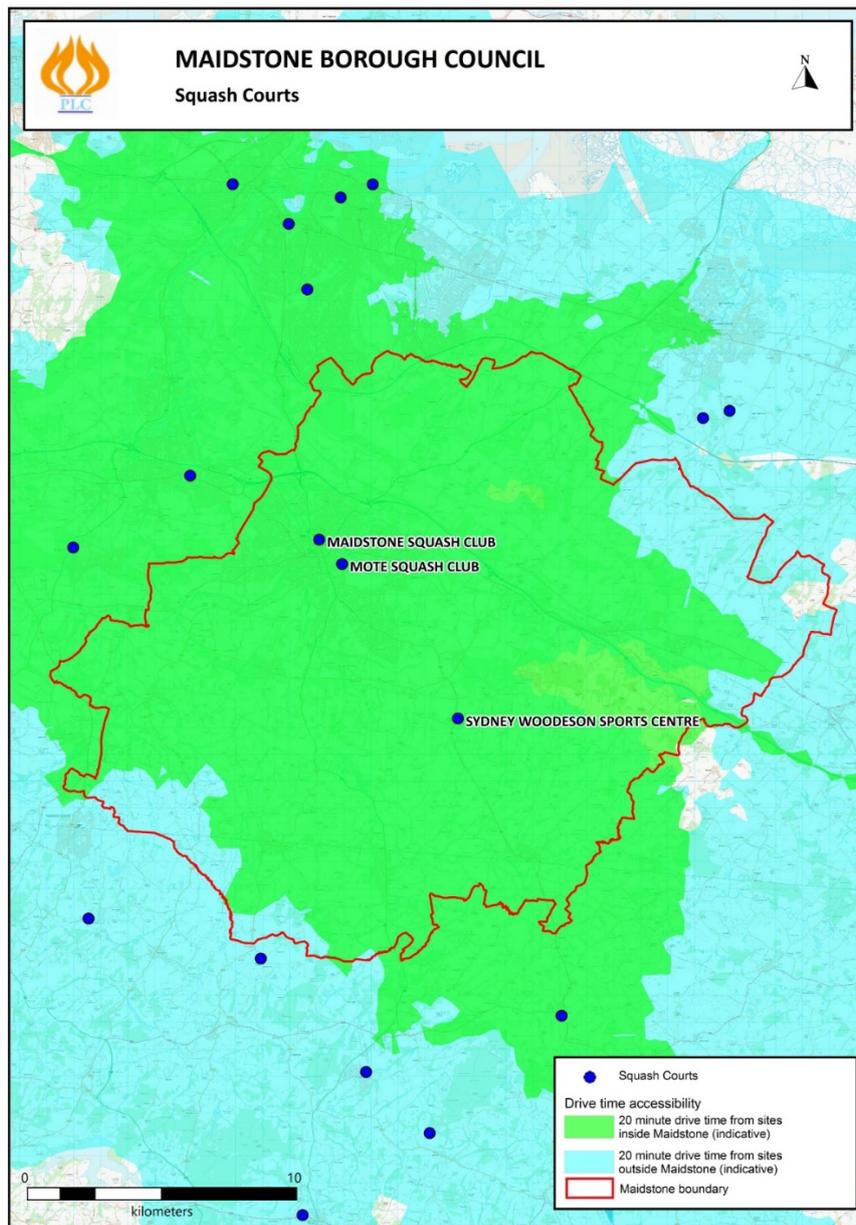
8.3.2 The basis of the ratings

The facilities were rated on a five-point scale, where 5 equates to ‘very good’, 4 to ‘good’ (highlighted in green below), 3 to ‘average’, 2 to ‘poor’ and 1 to ‘very poor’. The ratings for the squash courts in Maidstone are shown in the table below.

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Score</i>
Maidstone Squash Club	4
Mote Squash Club	4
Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre	4

8.4 Accessibility

Based on Sport England research, the ‘effective catchment’ for squash courts is 20 minutes driving time. The map below shows the location of all squash courts in Maidstone, together with courts in neighbouring areas within the 20-minute drivetime catchment of the borough boundary.



8.5 Availability

The table below identifies the opening hours, usage arrangements and used capacity in the peak period.

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Opening hours and basis of use</i>	<i>Pricing</i>	<i>Peak usage</i>
Maidstone Squash Club	Mon - Sun 7.00am - 11.00pm Membership only	Adult membership £110 pa Students £35 pa Juniors £20 pa	55%
Mote Squash Club	Mon-Sun 7.00am -10.30pm Membership only Casual 'pay-and-play bookings	Adult peak membership £160 pa Adult off-peak membership £80 Students £35 pa Juniors £35 pa Casual £12 per session	60%

8.6 Key findings on supply

The key findings are as follows:

- There are two facilities with community use in Maidstone, collectively containing six squash courts, plus one facility on a school site with two courts and no public access. Both the community accessible facilities are available for use on a membership basis only.
- Only the Mote Squash Club offers 'pay-and-play' public access in the borough.
- The quality of both facilities is 'good'.
- Some areas in the south-west and north-east of the borough are beyond the catchment of a facility within Maidstone, although all have access in these areas to facilities in neighbouring local authorities.

8.7 Current demand for squash courts

8.7.1 Expressed demand

Squash participation has been in long-term decline and both clubs in the borough have experienced membership reductions in the past decade although both currently have stable membership numbers. Peak-time court utilisation rates are 55% and 60% respectively, which indicates significant spare capacity.

8.7.2 Displaced demand

Displaced demand relates to users of squash courts from within the study area which takes place outside of the area. There is no evidence of exported demand from Maidstone, although several facilities are located in adjacent local authority areas, close enough to the borough boundary to provide usage opportunities for Maidstone residents.

8.7.3 Unmet demand

Unmet demand involves two components:

- Demand that cannot be met within a facility catchment due to excess demand for that facility.
- Demand that cannot be met because it is located outside the catchment of a facility.

Both clubs in the borough have indicated that they can accommodate new users/members, so facility capacity is not an issue. Some of the population is outside the catchment of a facility within Maidstone, although all have access in these areas to facilities in neighbouring local authorities so there is no unmet geographical demand.

8.8 Local sports participation priorities

There are no specific local sports participation priorities in Maidstone, other than a general policy commitment to promote health and well-being through increased levels of physical activity. As a specialist activity, squash is likely to have limited appeal to new sports participants.

8.9 Sport-specific priorities

England Squash commented that the two clubs in Maidstone are strong with good facilities and a stable membership. The governing body's current strategic emphasis is on protecting the current supply of facilities and the development of players rather than promoting construction of new courts.

8.10 Future demand for squash courts

8.10.1 Population growth

MBC's 'Strategic Housing Market Assessment' (2015) confirmed the objectively assessed housing need for the borough over the period 2011 to 2031 as 17,660 dwellings. Of these 8,335 have already been built or granted planning permission. This scale of development will increase the borough's population by 22,380 to 177,523 people by 2031. This will represent an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.

8.10.2 Participation rates

One factor in considering future sports participation rates is to track historical trends, as a guide to possible future developments. Sport England's 'Active People' survey has recorded adult (16+) weekly participation rates for squash at national level on an annual basis since 2005. The results are tabulated below and show that participation has declined significantly over the past decade, with the number of regular (at least once a week) players falling by more than 100,000, from 299,800 in 2005 to 199,500 in 2016. The adult participation rates are detailed below:

2005/06	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	% Change
0.74%	0.71%	0.72%	0.69%	0.67%	0.61%	0.55%	0.45%	0.51%	0.45%	-0.29%

8.10.3 Future projections

Local squash participation rates have been stable in recent years and whilst this runs counter to national trends, it would be reasonable to assume static growth to 2031. Population growth of 14.4% will therefore increase demand for squash court capacity by a similar amount.

8.11 Key findings on demand

The key findings are as follows:

- Contrary to national trends, expressed demand for squash courts in Maidstone is stable.
- Population growth of 14.4% in Maidstone by 2031 is likely increase demand for squash court capacity by a similar amount.

8.12 The balance between squash court supply and demand

Four criteria have been assessed to evaluate the balance between squash court supply and demand in Maidstone:

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

8.13 Quantity

8.13.1 Current needs

Current squash courts in Maidstone are assessed to be at operating with significant capacity, based upon the following evaluation:

- **Used peak capacity:** The courts at Maidstone Squash Club are operating at 55% and those at Mote Park Squash Club at 60% in the peak periods.
- **Satisfied demand:** There is no evidence of unmet demand in the borough.
- **Changes in supply:** There are no know planned changes to supply, with relatively recent court refurbishment at both local clubs.

8.13.2 Future needs

Spare capacity at the existing courts should be able to accommodate all additional future demand, based upon the following evaluation:

- **Demand increases:** The borough's population is projected to increase by 22,380 to 177,523 people by 2031. This will represent an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.
- **Participation trends:** Local squash participation rates have been projected to remain static until 2031.
- **Additional needs:** With 45% spare peak time capacity at the Maidstone Squash Club courts and 40% at Mote Park Squash Club, all additional demand can be accommodated by current spare capacity.

8.14 Quality

8.14.1 Current quality

There are no significant quality issues relating to squash courts in Maidstone, although the position should be kept under review.

8.14.2 Future quality

Both local clubs continue to invest in maintaining and improving their facilities, so if this process can be assisted with funding from developer contributions in the future, it seems reasonable to assume that local provision will continue to be upgraded regularly.

8.15 Accessibility

8.15.1 Current accessibility

Some areas in the south-west and north-east of the borough are beyond the catchment of a facility within Maidstone, although all have access in these areas to facilities in neighbouring local authorities.

8.15.2 Future accessibility

Since the current facilities are geographically well-located to serve boroughwide needs, they will continue to serve future needs.

8.16 Availability

8.16.1 Current availability

Mote Park Squash Club offers casual use and both clubs have membership fees that are set at reasonable rates with discounts for off-peak use and juniors.

8.16.2 Future availability

It is reasonable to assume that similar membership arrangements will be offered in the future and if developer contribution funding is offered to enhance the facilities at both sites, it could be conditional on the provision of 'pay-and-play' access.

8.17 The options for securing additional squash court capacity

The options for securing existing and additional squash court capacity to meet current and future needs are as follows:

8.17.1 Protect

Protecting existing squash courts through the Local Plan will be key both to securing local provision by ensuring that planning policy supports the retention of existing facilities, unless the loss of a facility would involve its replacement with a facility of at least the equivalent size, quality and accessibility.

8.17.2 Provide

There is no identified strategic need to provide additional squash courts, although the position should be regularly reviewed over the lifespan of the strategy.

8.17.3 Enhance

Enhancing existing squash courts by ensuring that the courts and ancillary facilities receive regular maintenance and improvements.

8.18 Action Plan

The table below sets out the action plan for squash courts to guide the implementation of the strategy.

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Estimated costs</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Protection of existing squash courts.	Include a policy in the Local Plan to protect all existing squash courts.	MBC	-	-	High
Monitoring demand levels	Regular monitoring to ensure that changes in demand do not affect assessed needs.	MBC	-	-	Medium

9 INDOOR AND OUTDOOR TENNIS COURTS

Key findings:

- **Quantity:** There are four seasonally covered indoor tennis courts with community use in Maidstone, 52 outdoor courts with community access (of which 36 are floodlit) and 30 outdoor courts without community use (of which 21 are floodlit). There is sufficient spare capacity at existing indoor and outdoor courts to cater for all additional demand to 2031.
- **Quality:** The quality of courts is ‘poor’ at three sites, in particular at Freedom Leisure Maidstone where the courts are seasonally covered to provide the single indoor facility in the borough. Seven of the 13 outdoor court sites have at least one element that is rated as ‘poor’.
- **Accessibility:** The whole population is within the 30-minute drivetime catchment of the indoor courts at Freedom Leisure Maidstone. Large areas in the east and west of the borough are more than 10-minutes’ drive from the nearest ‘pay-and-play’ outdoor tennis court, although all areas are within 10-minutes of the nearest court if club facilities are included.
- **Availability:** ‘Pay-and-play’ tennis is available at all four of the indoor courts in the borough and at 19 36.5% of the 52 community-accessible outdoor courts.

9.1 Introduction

This section examines the provision of indoor and outdoor tennis courts in Maidstone.

- Indoor tennis halls are defined specialist permanent or temporary indoor facilities with appropriate playing surface, line markings, nets and court dimensions for tennis.
- Outdoor tennis courts are defined as specialist outdoor facilities with appropriate playing surface, line markings and nets for tennis.

9.2 Quantity

9.2.1 Indoor tennis courts with community use

The location and number of indoor tennis courts with community use in Maidstone is as follows. The courts are covered seasonally between September and March with two airdome structures:

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Courts</i>	<i>Year built</i>
Freedom Leisure Maidstone	St. Peter’s Street, Maidstone ME16 0SX	4	2008

9.2.2 Outdoor tennis courts with community use

The location and number of outdoor tennis courts with community use in Maidstone is as follows:

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Courts</i>	<i>Lights</i>
Allington Chestnuts TC	Buckland Rd, Maidstone ME16 0SF	9 Tarmac	Yes
Bearsted and Thurnham TC	Church Landway, Bearsted ME14 4NE	5 Tarmac	Yes
Clare Park tennis courts	Tonbridge Road, Maidstone ME16 8JS	2 Tarmac	No
Feel Good Health Club	Ashford Road, Hollingbourne ME17 1RE	2 Tarmac	No
Freedom Leisure Maidstone	St. Peter's Street, Maidstone ME16 0SX	5 Tarmac*	Yes
Headcorn Tennis Club	Lenham Road, Headcorn TN27 9LE	3 Synthetic turf	Yes
Maidstone Tennis Club	Giddyhorn Lane Park, Maidstone ME16 0DE	4 Synthetic turf	Yes
Marden tennis courts	Albion Road, Marden TN12 9EF	2 Tarmac	No
Marriott Health Club	Ashford Road, Bearsted ME14 4NQ	2 Tarmac	Yes
Penenden Heath tennis courts	The Green, Penenden Heath ME14 2DU	6 Tarmac	Yes
South Park tennis courts	Armstrong Road, Maidstone ME15 6AZ	4 Tarmac	No
Staplehurst Tennis Club	Frittenden Road, Staplehurst TN12 0DH	3 Grass 2 Tarmac	No Yes
Sutton Valence Tennis Club	North Street, Sutton Valence ME17 3HT	3 Tarmac	No

* Includes the four seasonally covered courts.

9.2.3 Outdoor tennis courts without community use

The location of outdoor tennis courts without community use in Maidstone is as follows:

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Courts</i>	<i>Lights</i>
Kent Police	Sutton Rd, Maidstone ME15 9BZ	2 Tarmac	No
Maidstone Grammar School for Boys	Barton Road, Maidstone ME15 7BT	2 Tarmac	No
Mapleton Noakes School	Buckland Rd, Maidstone ME16 0TJ	5 Tarmac	No
New Line Learning Academy	Boughton Lane, Loose ME15 9QL	6 Synthetic turf	Yes
Saint Augustine Academy	Oakwood Rd, Maidstone ME16 8AE	2 Tarmac	Yes
Saint Simon Stock School	Oakwood Park, Maidstone ME16 0JP	7 Tarmac	Yes
Sutton Valence School	North St., Sutton Valence ME17 3HN	6 Synthetic turf	Yes

9.3 Quality

9.3.1 The criteria assessed for indoor courts

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

- **The court:** The overall condition, playing surface, clear span roof height, lighting, spectator provision, equipment and fitness for purpose.
- **Changing facilities:** The capacity, condition and fitness for purpose.
- **Disability access:** The extent of full disabled access to the facility, including the provision of access ramps, dedicated changing, toilets and car parking.
- **Maintenance and cleanliness:** The quality of maintenance and cleanliness standards.
- **General access:** Car parking, signposting, external lighting and proximity to public transport.

9.3.2 The criteria assessed for outdoor courts

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

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

9.3.3 The basis of the ratings

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

9.3.4 Indoor court assessment

The ratings for the indoor tennis courts in Maidstone are shown in the table below.

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Courts</i>	<i>Changing</i>	<i>Disability Access</i>	<i>Maintenance</i>	<i>General access</i>
Freedom Leisure Maidstone	2	4	4	4	4

9.3.5 Outdoor court assessment

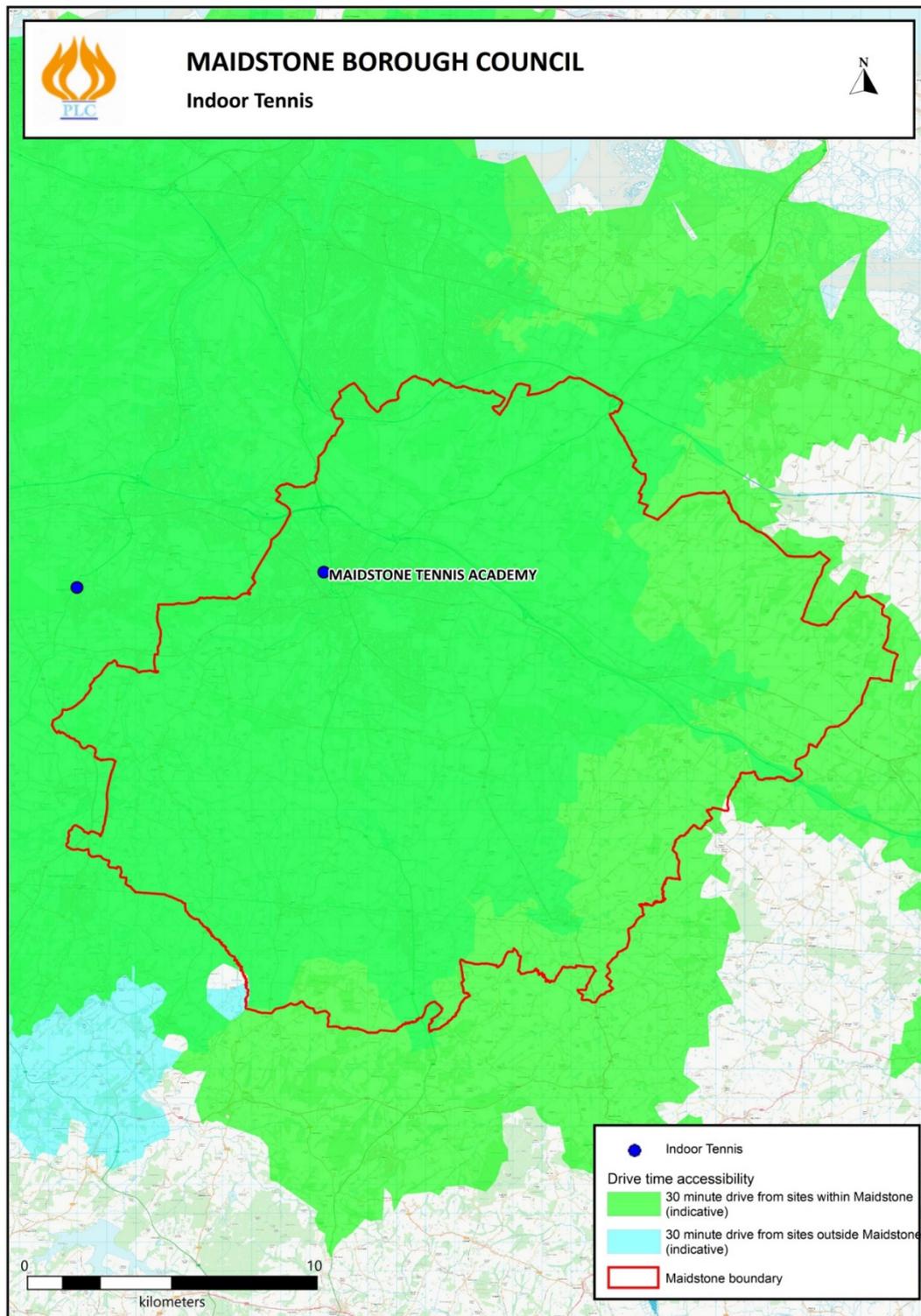
The ratings for the outdoor tennis courts in Maidstone are shown in the table below.

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Court</i>	<i>Fencing</i>	<i>Disability Access</i>	<i>General access</i>	<i>Lighting</i>
Allington Chestnuts TC	5	5	3	5	4
Bearsted and Thurnham TC	5	5	4	4	5
Clare Park tennis courts	2	3	3	3	-
Feel Good Health Club	3	3	3	2	-
Freedom Leisure Maidstone	2	5	4	5	5
Headcorn Tennis Club	4	5	4	3	4
Maidstone Tennis Club	5	5	2	3	4
Marden tennis courts	3	2	2	3	-
Marriott Health Club	4	4	3	4	4
Penenden Heath tennis courts	5	4	3	4	5
South Park tennis courts	4	4	4	4	-
Staplehurst Tennis Club	3	2	2	4	2
Sutton Valence Tennis Club	2	2	1	2	-

9.4 Accessibility

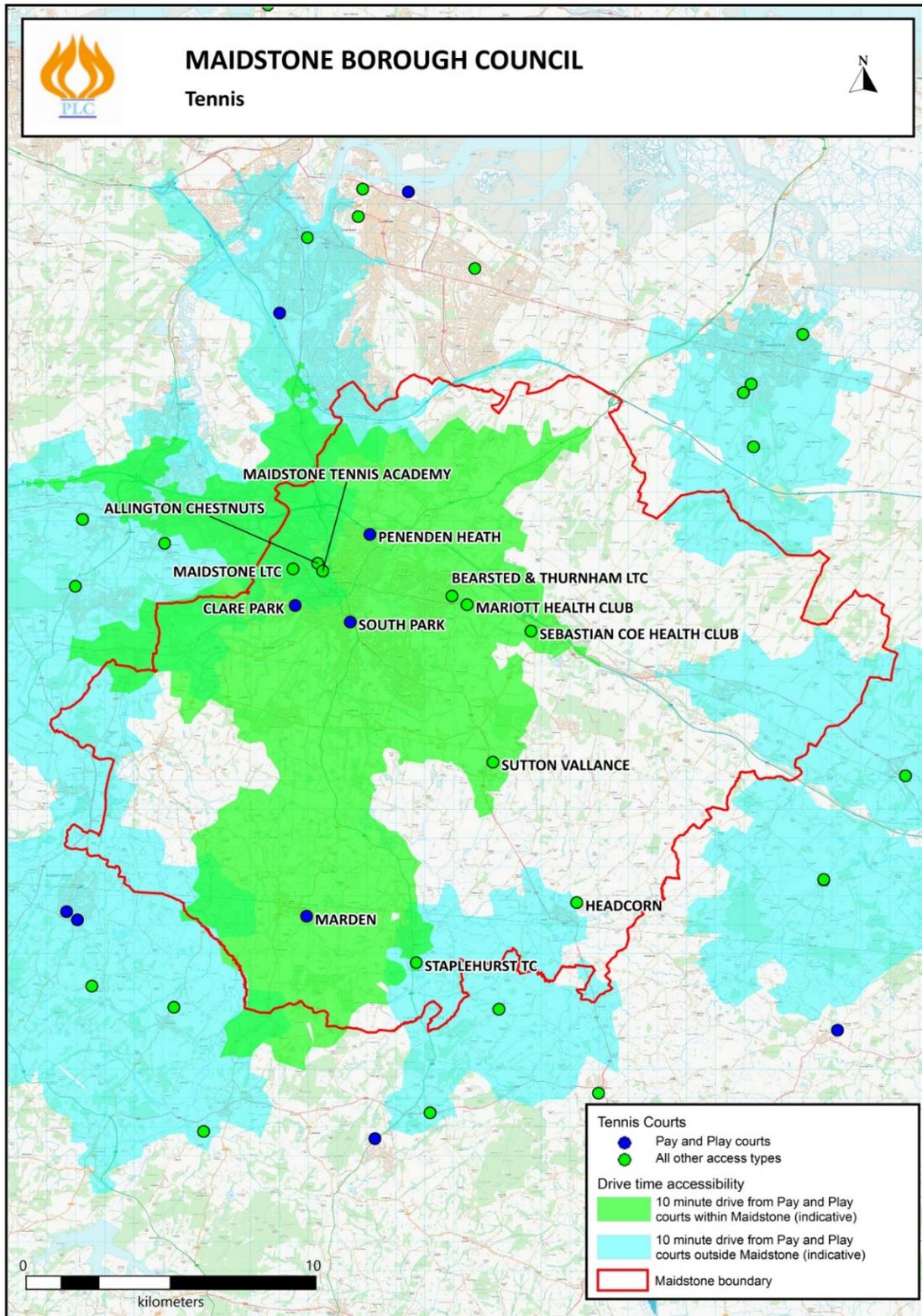
9.4.1 Indoor courts

Based on LTA research, the ‘effective catchment’ for indoor tennis courts is 30 minutes driving time. The map below shows the location of the indoor tennis courts in Maidstone, together with courts in neighbouring areas which are within the 30-minute drivetime catchment of the borough boundary:



9.4.2 Outdoor courts

Based on Sport England research, the ‘effective catchment’ for outdoor tennis courts is 10 minutes driving time. The map below shows the location of the outdoor tennis courts in Maidstone, together with courts in neighbouring areas which are within the 10-minute drivetime catchment of the borough boundary:



9.5 Availability

The table below identifies the basis of use and cost of tennis court usage in Maidstone:

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Basis of use</i>
Allington Chestnuts TC	-	Membership only
Bearsted and Thurnham TC	£130 per year membership	Membership only
Clare Park tennis courts	£8 per court per hour (adults) £4.40 per court per hour (concessions)	'Pay-and-play'
Feel Good Health Club	£40.99 per month membership	Membership only
Freedom Leisure Maidstone	£5 per court per hour casual hire £30 per month membership	'Pay-and-play' Membership Coaching Academy
Headcorn Tennis Club	£90 per year membership	Membership only
Maidstone Tennis Club	£130 per year membership	Membership only
Marden tennis courts	£2 per court per hour	'Pay-and-play'
Marriott Health Club	£65 per month membership	Membership only
Penenden Heath tennis courts	£8 per court per hour (adults) £4.40 per court per hour (concessions)	'Pay-and-play' Coaching Academy
South Park tennis courts	£8 per court per hour (adults) £4.40 per court per hour (concessions)	'Pay-and-play'
Staplehurst Tennis Club	£60 per year membership	Membership only
Sutton Valence Tennis Club	£50 per year membership	Membership only

9.6 Key findings on supply

The key findings are as follows:

- There are four seasonally covered indoor tennis courts with community use in Maidstone, 52 outdoor courts with community access (of which 36 are floodlit) and 30 outdoor courts without community use (of which 21 are floodlit).
- The quality of courts is 'poor' at three sites, in particular at Freedom Leisure Maidstone where the courts are seasonally covered to provide the single indoor facility in the borough. Seven of the 13 outdoor court sites have at least one element that is rated as 'poor'.
- The whole population is within the 30-minute drivetime catchment of the indoor courts at Freedom Leisure Maidstone.
- Large areas in the east and west of the borough are more than 10-minutes' drive from the nearest 'pay-and-play' outdoor tennis court, although all areas are within 10-minutes of the nearest court if club facilities are included.
- 'Pay-and-play' tennis is available at all four of the indoor courts in the borough and at 19 (36.5%) of the 52 community-accessible outdoor courts.

9.7 Current demand for tennis courts

9.7.1 Expressed demand

Tennis participation has been in long-term decline and although most clubs in the borough currently have stable membership numbers. There are no detailed figures available for peak time court utilisation, but all local providers have indicated that there is significant spare capacity at most courts.

9.7.2 Displaced demand

Displaced demand relates to users of tennis courts from within the study area which takes place outside of the area. There is no evidence of exported demand from Maidstone, although several courts are located in adjacent local authority areas, close enough to the borough boundary to provide usage opportunities for Maidstone residents.

9.7.3 Unmet demand

All clubs in the borough have indicated that they can accommodate new users/members, so facility capacity is not an issue. Some of the population is outside the catchment of a 'pay-and-play' facility within Maidstone, although all have access in these areas to facilities on club sites so there is no unmet geographical demand.

9.8 Local sports participation priorities

There are no specific local sports participation priorities in Maidstone, other than a general policy commitment to promote health and well-being through increased levels of physical activity. As an activity appealing to both genders and most age groups, tennis is likely to have some appeal to new and lapsed sports participants.

9.9 Sport-specific priorities

The Lawn Tennis Association commented that whilst Maidstone is not one of its priority areas for development, there is a healthy club network in the borough with several strong clubs with good junior development programmes. The Maidstone Tennis Academy at Freedom Leisure Maidstone has produced a number of elite players.

9.10 Future demand for tennis courts

9.10.1 Population growth

MBC's *'Strategic Housing Market Assessment'* (2015) confirmed the objectively assessed housing need for the borough over the period 2011 to 2031 as 17,660 dwellings. Of these 8,335 have already been built or granted planning permission. This scale of development will increase the borough's population by 22,380 to 177,523 people by 2031. This will represent an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.

9.10.2 Participation rates

One factor in considering future sports participation rates is to track historical trends, as a guide to possible future developments. Sport England's 'Active People' survey has recorded adult (16+) weekly participation rates for tennis at national level on an annual basis since 2005. The results are tabulated below and show that participation has declined significantly over the past decade, with the number of regular (at least once a week) players falling by more than 59,000, from 457,200 in 2005 to 398,100 in 2016. The adult participation rates are detailed below:

2005/06	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	% Change
1.12%	1.18%	1.27%	1.04%	0.88%	1.03%	0.94%	0.89%	1.02%	0.90%	-0.22%

9.10.3 Future projections

Local tennis participation rates have been stable in recent years and whilst this runs counter to national trends, it would be reasonable to assume static growth to 2031. Population growth of 14.4% will therefore increase demand for tennis court capacity by a similar amount.

9.11 Key findings on demand

The key findings are as follows:

- Contrary to national trends, expressed demand for indoor and outdoor tennis courts in Maidstone is stable.
- Population growth of 14.4% in Maidstone by 2031 is likely increase demand for indoor and outdoor tennis court capacity by a similar amount.

9.12 The balance between tennis court supply and demand

Four criteria have been assessed to evaluate the balance between indoor and outdoor tennis court supply and demand in Maidstone:

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

9.13 Quantity

9.13.1 Current needs

Current indoor and outdoor tennis courts in Maidstone are assessed to be at operating with significant spare capacity, based upon the following evaluation:

- **Used capacity:** All local providers have indicated that there is significant spare capacity at most courts.
- **Satisfied demand:** There is no evidence of unmet demand in the borough.
- **Changes in supply:** There are no known planned changes to tennis court supply, although court quality at Freedom Leisure Maidstone, which is currently rated as ‘average’ should be kept under review to ensure that any further deterioration does not adversely affect usage capacity.

9.13.2 Future needs

Spare capacity at the existing indoor and outdoor tennis courts should be able to accommodate all additional future demand, based upon the following evaluation:

- **Demand increases:** The borough’s population is projected to increase by 22,380 to 177,523 people by 2031. This will represent an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.
- **Participation trends:** Local tennis participation rates have been projected to remain static until 2031.
- **Additional needs:** With spare capacity at both indoor and outdoor courts, all additional demand can be accommodated by current spare capacity.
- **Access to courts on school sites:** In addition to the 52 courts that are currently community accessible, there are a further 30 courts on school sites, 21 of which are floodlit, where community use might be negotiated subject to additional demand.

9.14 Quality

9.14.1 Current quality

There are a number of quality issues relating to tennis courts in Maidstone, with the following elements rated as ‘poor’ quality:

- The court surfaces at Clare Park.
- General access at Feelgood Health Club.
- The indoor/outdoor court surfaces at Freedom Leisure Maidstone.
- Disabled access at Maidstone Tennis Club.
- Court fencing and disabled access at Marden tennis courts.
- Court fencing and disabled access and floodlighting at Staplehurst Tennis Club.
- The court surface, fencing, disabled and general access at Sutton Valance Tennis Club.

9.14.2 Future quality

All court providers will need to continue to invest in maintaining and improving their facilities, so if this process can be assisted with funding from developer contributions in the future, it seems reasonable to assume that local provision will continue to be upgraded regularly.

9.15 Accessibility

9.15.1 Current accessibility

Whilst the whole population is within 30-minutes drivetime of the indoor courts, parts of the east and west of the borough are more than 10-minutes' drive from the nearest 'pay-and-play' outdoor tennis court. However, all areas are within 10-minutes of the nearest court of club facilities are included.

9.15.2 Future accessibility

It is unlikely that new outdoor tennis courts will be provided in the areas outside the catchment of the current facilities.

9.16 Availability

9.16.1 Current availability

'Pay-and-play' tennis is available at all four of the indoor courts in the borough and at 19 (36.5%) of the 52 community-accessible outdoor courts. Club membership fees are generally set at reasonable rates.

9.16.2 Future availability

It is reasonable to assume that a similar balance of 'pay-and-play' and membership arrangements will be offered in the future and if developer contribution funding is offered to enhance the facilities at club sites, it could be conditional on the provision of 'pay-and-play' access.

9.17 The options for securing additional tennis court capacity

The options for securing existing and additional tennis court capacity to meet current and future needs are as follows:

9.17.1 Protect

Protecting existing indoor and outdoor tennis courts through the Local Plan will be key both to securing local provision by ensuring that planning policy supports the retention of existing facilities, unless the loss of a facility would involve its replacement with a facility of at least the equivalent size, quality and accessibility.

9.17.2 Provide

There is no identified strategic need to provide additional indoor or outdoor tennis courts, although the position should be regularly reviewed over the lifespan of the strategy.

9.17.3 Enhance

Enhancing existing tennis court capacity by:

- Ensuring that the courts and ancillary facilities receive regular maintenance and improvements, funded by developer contributions where appropriate.
- Negotiating community access to the 30 outdoor tennis courts on school sites.

9.18 Action Plan

9.18.1 Introduction

The tables below set out the action plan for indoor and outdoor tennis courts to guide the implementation of the strategy. The capital cost estimates are based upon Sport England's *Facility Costs - Second Quarter of 2016*' (2016).

9.18.2 Key strategic actions

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Estimated costs</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Protection of existing tennis courts.	Include a policy in the Local Plan to protect all existing tennis courts.	MBC	-	-	High
Community access to school courts	Negotiate access to tennis courts on school sites.	MBC	Schools	-	Medium
Funding for future tennis court needs.	Include tennis courts as 'relevant infrastructure' under CIL regulation 123.	MBC	-	-	High

9.18.3 Site-specific actions

<i>Site</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Estimated costs</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Allington Chestnuts TC	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Bearsted and Thurnham TC	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Clare Park tennis courts	Poor quality court surface	Resurface courts	MBC	External funders	£20,000	Medium
Feel Good Health Club	Poor quality general access	Improve court access	Feel Good	-	£5,000	Medium
Freedom Leisure Maidstone	Poor quality court surface	Resurface courts	Freedom Leisure	LTA	£50,000	High
Headcorn Tennis Club	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Maidstone Tennis Club	Poor quality disabled access	Improve disabled access	MTC	External funders	£5,000	Medium
Marden tennis courts	Poor quality court fencing and disabled access	Improve court fencing and disabled access	Parish Council	External funders	£8,000	Medium
Marriott Health Club	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-

<i>Site</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Estimated costs</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Penenden Heath tennis courts	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
South Park tennis courts	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Staplehurst Tennis Club	Poor quality court fencing, disabled access and floodlighting.	Improve court fencing, disabled access and floodlighting	STC	External funders	£15,000	Medium
Sutton Valance Tennis Club	Poor quality court surface, fencing, disabled access and floodlighting.	Improve court surface fencing, disabled access and floodlighting	SVTC	External funders	£50,000	Medium

10 INDOOR AND OUTDOOR BOWLS FACILITIES

Key findings:

- **Quantity:** There is one 8-rink indoor bowls hall and ten outdoor bowls greens in Maidstone. There is sufficient spare capacity at existing indoor and outdoor facilities to cater for all additional demand to 2031.
- **Quality:** The quality of facilities is generally good, with the only ‘poor’ elements being disabled and general access at Hunton Bowls Club.
- **Accessibility:** The whole population is within the 30-minute drivetime catchment of Mote Park Indoor Bowls Club. A small area in the east of the borough is more than 15-minutes’ drive from the nearest outdoor bowls green.
- **Availability:** All facilities operate on a membership basis, although several clubs run weekly introductory coaching sessions to attract new members

10.1 Introduction

This section examines the provision of indoor and outdoor bowls facilities in Maidstone.

- Indoor bowls halls are defined specialist indoor facilities with appropriate playing surface and rink dimensions for bowls.
- Outdoor bowls greens are defined as effectively flat, fine turf grassed areas, 40 yards x 40 yards, with regulation banks and ditches around the perimeter and ancillary facilities for changing and equipment storage.

10.2 Quantity

10.2.1 Indoor bowls halls with community use

The location and number of rinks at the only indoor bowls hall with community use in Maidstone is as follows:

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Rinks</i>
Mote Park Indoor Bowls Club	Mote Park, Willow Way Maidstone ME15 7RN	8

10.2.2 Outdoor bowls greens with community use

The location and number of outdoor bowls greens with community use in Maidstone is as follows:

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Address</i>
Bearsted and Thurnham BC	Church Landway, Bearsted ME14 4NE
Clare Park Bowls Club	Tonbridge Road, Maidstone ME16 8JS
Headcorn Bowls Club	Maidstone Road, Headcorn TN27 9RL
Hunton Bowls Club	West Street, Hunton ME15 0RR
Kent Police Bowls Club	Sutton Road, Maidstone ME15 9BZ
Loose Bowls Club	Loose Road, Maidstone ME15 9UA
Maidstone Bowls Club	Buckland Road, Maidstone ME16 0DT
Marden Bowls Club	Howland Road, Marden TN12 9DR
Penenden Heath Bowls Club	Recreation Ground, Penenden Heath ME14 2DH
Westborough Bowls Club	Cloudberry Close, London Road, Maidstone ME16 0LY

10.3 Quality

10.3.1 The criteria assessed for indoor bowls halls

The quality of the indoor bowls hall was assessed by a non-technical visual inspection during a site visit. The criteria that were assessed were as follows:

- **The green:** The overall condition, lighting, spectator provision, equipment storage and fitness for purpose.
- **Changing facilities:** The capacity, condition and fitness for purpose.
- **Disability access:** The extent of full disabled access to the facility, including the provision of access ramps, dedicated changing, toilets and car parking.
- **Maintenance and cleanliness:** The quality of maintenance and cleanliness standards.
- **General access:** Car parking, signposting, external lighting and proximity to public transport.

10.3.2 The criteria assessed for outdoor bowls greens

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

- **The green:** The quality of the grass, flatness and regulation ditches.
- **Changing facilities:** The capacity, condition and fitness for purpose.
- **Disability access:** The extent of full disabled access to the facility, including the provision of access ramps, dedicated changing, toilets and car parking.
- **General access:** Parking, signage and proximity to public transport.

10.3.3 The basis of the ratings

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

10.3.4 Indoor bowls hall assessment

The ratings for the indoor bowls facility in Maidstone are shown in the table below.

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Changing</i>	<i>Disability Access</i>	<i>Maintenance</i>	<i>General access</i>
Mote Park Indoor Bowls Club	5	5	4	5	5

10.3.5 Outdoor bowls greens assessment

The ratings for the outdoor bowls greens in Maidstone are shown in the table below.

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Changing</i>	<i>Disability Access</i>	<i>General access</i>
Bearsted and Thurnham BC	5	5	4	5
Clare Park BC	3	4	4	5
Headcorn BC	5	4	4	5
Hunton BC	4	3	2	2
Kent Police BC	4	3	3	3
Loose BC	4	4	4	5
Maidstone BC	4	4	4	5
Marden BC	4	3	3	3
Penenden Heath BC	4	4	3	4
Westborough BC	4	3	3	3

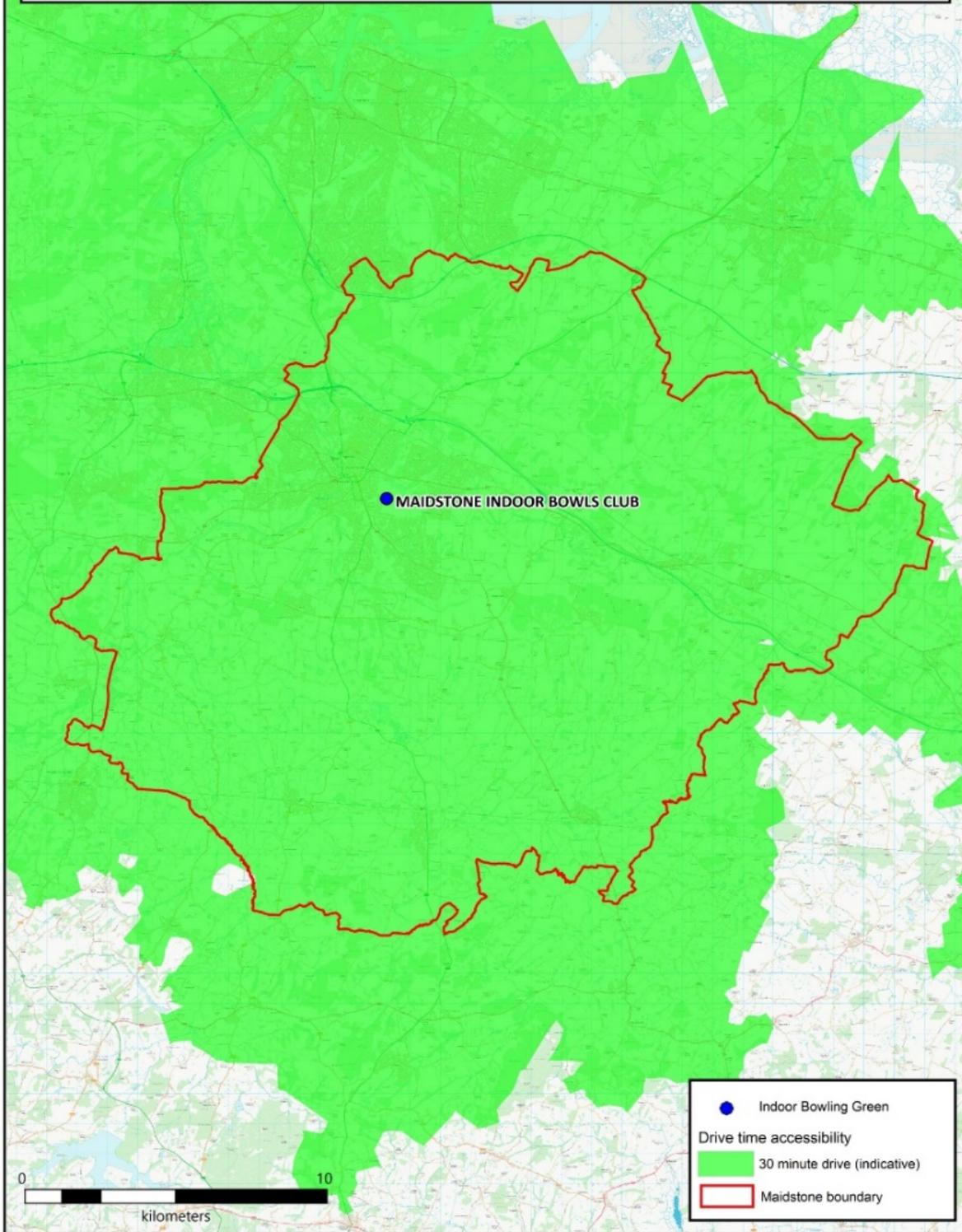
10.4 Accessibility

10.4.1 Indoor bowls hall

Based on Sport England research, the ‘effective catchment’ for indoor bowls facilities (defined as the time/distance travelled and the prevailing mode of transport used by up to 90% of facility users) is 30 minutes driving time. The map shows the location of the indoor bowls hall, with a 30-minute drivetime catchment:



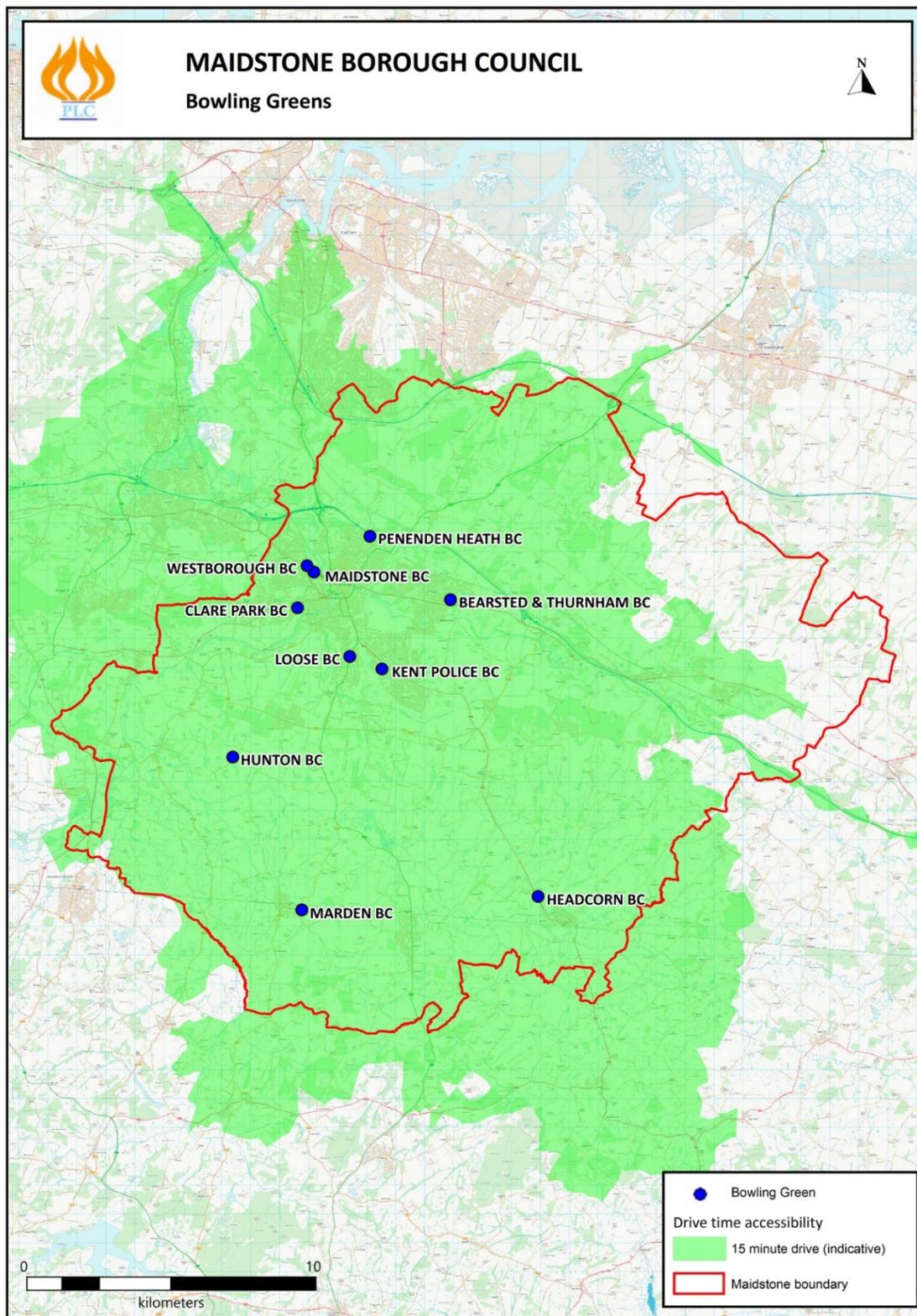
MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL
Indoor Bowling Greens



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right. 2017

10.4.2 Outdoor bowls greens

Based on Sport England research, the ‘effective catchment’ for outdoor bowls greens (defined as the time/distance travelled and the prevailing mode of transport used by up to 90% of facility users) is 15 minutes driving time. The map below shows the location of the outdoor bowls greens in Maidstone, with a 15-minute drivetime catchment:



10.5 Availability

10.5.1 Indoor bowls hall

The use of the facility is confined to members of Mote Park Indoor Bowls Club, although the club has an extensive programme of coaching and introductory sessions, including free open days.

10.5.2 Outdoor bowls greens

The table below identifies the basis of use of outdoor bowls greens in Maidstone:

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Basis of use</i>
Bearsted and Thurnham BC	Membership only Junior coaching provided
Clare Park BC	Membership only
Headcorn BC	Membership only
Hunton BC	Membership only Introductory sessions provided
Kent Police BC	Membership only
Loose BC	Membership only Introductory sessions provided
Maidstone BC	Membership only
Marden BC	Membership only Introductory sessions provided
Penenden Heath BC	Membership only
Westborough BC	Membership only

10.6 Key findings on supply

The key findings are as follows:

- There is one 8-rink indoor bowls hall and ten outdoor bowls greens in Maidstone.
- The quality of facilities is generally good, with the only ‘poor’ elements being disabled and general access at Hunton Bowls Club.
- The whole population is within the 30-minute drivetime catchment of Mote Park Indoor Bowls Club.
- A small area in the east of the borough is more than 15-minutes’ drive from the nearest outdoor bowls green.
- All facilities operate on a membership basis, although several clubs run weekly introductory coaching sessions to attract new members.

10.7 Current demand for bowls facilities

10.7.1 Expressed demand

- **Indoor bowls:** Mote Park IBC currently has 550 members. Sport England's *Indoor Bowls Guidance Note* (2005) stipulates that full capacity is reached at 80 - 100 members per rink, so as an eight-rink facility, the indoor hall can accommodate 640 - 800 members. This suggests that expressed demand amounts to around 69% based on 100 members per rink.
- **Outdoor bowls:** Bowls participation has been in long-term decline and the national picture of falling demand is reflected in the Maidstone area, with Tovil Bowls Club closing in 2016 due to a shortage of members. Four clubs have made significant efforts to attract new participants, in particular juniors, with some success, but all local outdoor clubs have indicated that they have significant spare capacity.

10.7.2 Displaced demand

Displaced demand relates to users of bowls greens from within the study area which takes place outside of the area. There is no evidence of exported demand for indoor or outdoor bowls facilities from Maidstone.

10.7.3 Unmet demand

All clubs in the borough have indicated that they can accommodate new users/members, so facility capacity is not an issue. The whole borough population is within the catchment of the indoor facility, but a small area in the east of the borough is outside the 15-minute drivetime catchment of an outdoor green, so there is a limited amount unmet geographical demand.

10.8 Local sports participation priorities

There are no specific local sports participation priorities in Maidstone, other than a general policy commitment to promote health and well-being through increased levels of physical activity. As an activity appealing primarily to older age groups, bowls is likely to have some appeal to new and lapsed sports participants in an expanding proportion of the population.

10.9 Sport-specific priorities

The Bowls Development Alliance commented that Maidstone is not a development priority area for bowls and that none of the clubs in the borough has been prioritised for support through its Club Development Programme, but all are eligible for support through its Play Bowls package.

10.10 Future demand for bowls

10.10.1 Population growth

MBC's *Strategic Housing Market Assessment* (2015) confirmed the objectively assessed housing need for the borough over the period 2011 to 2031 as 17,660 dwellings. Of these 8,335 have already been built or granted planning permission. This scale of development will increase the borough's population by 22,380 to 177,523 people by 2031. This will represent an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.

10.10.2 Participation rates

One factor in considering future sports participation rates is to track historical trends, as a guide to possible future developments. Sport England's 'Active People' survey has recorded adult (16+) weekly participation rates for bowls at national level on an annual basis since 2005. The results are tabulated below and show that participation has declined significantly over the past decade, with the number of regular (at least once a week) players falling by more than 98,000, from 309,800 in 2005 to 211,900 in 2016. The participation rates are detailed below:

2005/06	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	% Change
2.21%	2.32%	2.10%	2.02%	1.54%	1.57%	1.73%	1.58%	1.33%	1.30%	-0.91%

10.10.3 Future projections

Sport England has developed the Sport Facility Calculator (SFC), to help to quantify how much additional demand for key community facilities like indoor bowls halls, will be generated by population increases. The SFC uses Sport England survey data on who uses facilities and applies this to the population profile of the local area. This builds up a profile of usage, which can be then applied to estimate how much demand any given population would generate. This demand is then converted into the quantity of facilities needed and expressed as rinks to define indoor bowls needs. Based upon this, the SFC calculates demand equivalent to an additional 1.58 indoor bowls rinks by 2031.

10.11 Key findings on demand

The key findings are as follows:

- Expressed demand for indoor and outdoor bowls in Maidstone has fallen in the past decade.
- Population growth of 14.4% in Maidstone by 2031 is likely increase demand for indoor and outdoor bowls green capacity by a similar amount, assuming static participation rates in the future.
- In terms of indoor bowls, the Sport Facility Calculator assesses that the extra demand is equivalent to 1.58 indoor rinks.

10.12 The balance between bowls supply and demand

Four criteria have been assessed to evaluate the balance between indoor and outdoor bowls green supply and demand in Maidstone:

- **Quantity:** Are there enough greens with sufficient capacity to meet needs now and in the future?
- **Quality:** Are the greens fit for purpose for the users now and in the future?
- **Accessibility:** Are the greens in the right physical location for the users now and in the future?

- **Availability:** Are the greens available for those who want to use them now and in the future?

10.13 Quantity

10.13.1 Current needs

Current indoor and outdoor bowls facilities in Maidstone are assessed to be at operating with significant spare capacity, based upon the following evaluation:

- **Used capacity:** All local clubs have indicated that there is significant spare capacity to attract additional members.
- **Satisfied demand:** There is no evidence of unmet demand in the borough.
- **Changes in supply:** There are no know planned changes to bowls green supply.

10.13.2 Future needs

Spare capacity at the existing indoor and outdoor bowls facilities should be able to accommodate all additional future demand, based upon the following evaluation:

- **Demand increases:** The borough's population is projected to increase by 22,380 to 177,523 people by 2031. This will represent an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.
- **Participation trends:** Local bowls participation rates have been projected to remain static until 2031.
- **Additional indoor bowls needs:** The Sport Facility Calculator assesses that the extra demand for indoor bowls is equivalent to 1.58 indoor rinks (accommodating 126 - 158 members) Existing spare capacity at Mote Park. IBC amounts to the equivalent of 2.5 rinks (or 250 members), so additional demand to 2031 can all be accommodated by the current facility.
- **Additional outdoor bowls needs:** There is sufficient spare capacity at existing bowls clubs to accommodate all additional demand to 2031 and this should add to the long-term viability of the current clubs.

10.14 Quality

10.14.1 Current quality

Disability and general access are rated as 'poor' at Hunton Bowls Club, but all other aspects of all other facilities are rated as at least 'average' quality.

10.14.2 Future quality

All providers will need to continue to invest in maintaining and improving their facilities, so if this process can be assisted with funding from developer contributions in the future, it seems reasonable to assume that local provision will continue to be upgraded regularly.

10.15 Accessibility

10.15.1 Current accessibility

The whole population is within the 30-minute drivetime catchment of Mote Park Indoor Bowls Club, but a small area in the east of the borough is more than 15-minutes' drive from the nearest outdoor bowls green.

10.15.2 Future accessibility

It is unlikely that new outdoor bowls greens will be provided in the areas outside the catchment of the current facilities.

10.16 Availability

10.16.1 Current availability

Sessions for non-members are run at four of the ten outdoor bowls clubs in the borough. Club membership fees are generally set at reasonable rates.

10.16.2 Future availability

It is reasonable to assume that a similar balance of arrangements for use by non-members will be offered in the future and if developer contribution funding is offered to enhance the facilities at club sites, it could be conditional on the provision of 'pay-and-play' access.

10.17 The options for securing additional bowls capacity

The options for securing existing and additional bowls capacity to meet current and future needs are as follows:

10.17.1 Protect

Protecting existing indoor and outdoor bowls facilities through the Local Plan will be key both to securing local provision by ensuring that planning policy supports the retention of existing facilities, unless the loss of a facility would involve its replacement with a facility of at least the equivalent size, quality and accessibility.

10.17.2 Provide

There is no identified strategic need to provide additional indoor or outdoor bowls facilities, although the indoor bowls position in particular should be regularly reviewed over the lifespan of the strategy.

10.17.3 Enhance

Enhancing existing bowls facility capacity by:

- Ensuring that the greens and ancillary facilities receive regular maintenance and improvements, funded by developer contributions where appropriate.
- Making the provision of access for non-members a condition of any developer contribution funding offered towards bowls facilities improvements.

10.18 Action Plan

10.18.1 Introduction

The tables below set out the action plan for indoor and outdoor bowls facilities to guide the implementation of the strategy. The capital cost estimates are based upon Sport England's *Facility Costs - Second Quarter of 2016*' (2016).

10.18.2 Key strategic actions

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Estimated costs</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Protection of existing bowls facilities	Include a policy in the Local Plan to protect all existing bowls facilities	MBC	-	-	High
Funding for future bowls facilities needs.	Include bowls facilities as 'relevant infrastructure' under CIL regulation 123.	MBC	-	-	High

10.18.3 Site-specific actions

<i>Site</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Estimated costs</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Bearsted and Thurnham BC	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Clare Park BC	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Headcorn BC	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Hunton BC	Poor quality disabled and general access	Improve disabled and general access	HBC	-	£5,000	Medium
Kent Police BC	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Loose BC	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Maidstone BC	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Marden BC	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Penenden Heath BC	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Westborough BC	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-

11 ATHLETICS TRACKS

Key findings:

- **Quantity:** There is one 8-lane synthetic athletics track in Maidstone. There is sufficient spare capacity at the existing track to cater for all additional demand to 2031.
- **Quality:** The quality of the facility is generally good, although general access to the track is rated as only 'average'.
- **Accessibility:** The whole population is within the 30-minute drivetime catchment of the track.
- **Availability:** The track is only accessible by Medway and Maidstone Athletics Club on a membership basis, although as a specialist facility type athletics tracks generally attract minimal casual usage.

11.1 Introduction

This section examines the provision of athletics tracks in Maidstone. Athletics tracks are defined as 400m synthetic surfaced tracks with full field events provision.

11.2 Quantity

The location and number of lanes at the athletics track with community use in Maidstone is as follows:

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Lanes</i>
Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre	North Street, Sutton Valence ME17 3HN	8

11.3 Quality

11.3.1 The criteria assessed for athletics tracks

The quality of the athletics track was assessed by a non-technical visual inspection during a site visit. The criteria that were assessed were as follows:

- **The track:** The overall condition of the track surface, line markings, lighting, spectator provision, equipment storage and fitness for purpose.
- **Changing facilities:** The capacity, condition and fitness for purpose.
- **Disability access:** The extent of full disabled access to the facility, including the provision of dedicated changing, toilets and car parking.
- **Maintenance and cleanliness:** The quality of maintenance and cleanliness standards.

- **General access:** Car parking, signposting, external lighting and proximity to public transport.

11.3.2 The basis of the ratings

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

11.3.3 Athletics track assessment

The ratings for the athletics track in Maidstone are shown in the table below.

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Track</i>	<i>Changing</i>	<i>Disability Access</i>	<i>Maintenance</i>	<i>General access</i>
Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre	4	5	4	5	3

11.4 Accessibility

As a specialist facility, athletics tracks typically attract users from within a 30-minute drivetime catchment. The catchment of the track at the Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre covers the whole of the local population and the facility at Medway Park just to the north of the borough boundary is also used by the local club.

11.5 Availability

The track is not available to the general public on a ‘pay-and-play’ basis, but is hired by Medway and Maidstone Athletics Club for junior squad training sessions two evenings per week. There is no security of tenure for this arrangement. The Club’s main base is at the Medway Park Track in Gillingham.

11.6 Key findings on supply

The key findings are as follows:

- There is one 8-lane synthetic athletics track in Maidstone.
- The quality of facility is generally good, although general access to the track is rated as only ‘average’.
- The whole population is within the 30-minute drivetime catchment of the track.
- The track is only accessible by members of Medway and Maidstone Athletics Club, although as a specialist facility type athletics tracks generally attract minimal casual usage.

11.7 Current demand for athletics tracks

11.7.1 Expressed demand

Medway and Maidstone Athletics Club currently has 300 members and 300 members and runs teams at age groups from Young Athletes to veterans. As its name suggests, in addition to Maidstone residents it also serves athletics demand from the Medway area (Gillingham, Chatham, Rochester and Rainham). The club has currently closed its waiting list for prospective members aged 7 - 11 due to the high demand, although the key constraint is a shortage of coaches rather than a lack of facility capacity.

11.7.2 Displaced demand

Displaced demand relates to users of athletics tracks from within the study area which takes place outside of the area. With the local athletics club's main base being in Gillingham, all athletes from Maidstone make extensive use of the Medway Park track.

11.7.3 Unmet demand

There is significant unmet demand from 7 - 11 year olds, but no evidence of surplus demand from other age groups.

11.8 Local sports participation priorities

There are no specific local sports participation priorities in Maidstone, other than a general policy commitment to promote health and well-being through increased levels of physical activity. Track and field athletics is a specialist subset of activities, which whilst increasingly appealing to participants from the older age groups is still a relatively minority interest.

11.9 Sport-specific priorities

England Athletics has not identified Maidstone as a priority area for development. As per the UK Athletics *Facilities Strategy 2014 - 2019* (2014), it believes that there are sufficient 400m tracks in the area to meet current and future needs.

11.10 Future demand for athletics

11.10.1 Population growth

MBC's *Strategic Housing Market Assessment* (2015) confirmed the objectively assessed housing need for the borough over the period 2011 to 2031 as 17,660 dwellings. Of these 8,335 have already been built or granted planning permission. This scale of development will increase the borough's population by 22,380 to 177,523 people by 2031. This will represent an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.

11.10.2 Participation rates

One factor in considering future sports participation rates is to track historical trends, as a guide to possible future developments. Sport England's 'Active People' survey has recorded adult (16+) weekly participation rates for running (which includes track and field athletics) at national level on an annual basis since 2005. The results are tabulated below and show that participation has increased significantly over the past decade, with the number of regular (at least once a week) runners growing by 864,000. The participation rates are detailed below:

2005/06	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	% Change
3.33%	3.89%	4.16%	4.45%	4.47%	4.72%	4.65%	4.96%	5.29%	5.37%	+2.04%

11.10.3 Future projections

Whilst demand for running in general is growing, this primarily involves recreational running on roads and footpaths, rather than participation in track and field athletics with its dependence on specialist track facilities, where participation has been broadly static. In relation to additional future demand for tracks, therefore, it seems reasonable to project needs based on the current participation rates.

11.11 Key findings on demand

The key findings are as follows:

- Expressed demand for athletics is relatively high in Maidstone, with unmet demand amongst 7 - 11 year olds that relates to a shortage of coaches rather than a lack of track capacity.
- Population growth of 14.4% in Maidstone by 2031 is likely increase demand for athletics track capacity by a similar amount, assuming static participation rates in the future.

11.12 The balance between athletics supply and demand

Four criteria have been assessed to evaluate the balance between athletics track supply and demand in Maidstone:

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

11.13 Quantity

11.13.1 Current needs

The current athletics track in Maidstone is assessed to be at operating with significant spare capacity, based upon the following evaluation:

- **Used capacity:** The track is used by Maidstone and Medway AC on two evenings per week only. This represents 25% of the available capacity in the peak period.
- **Satisfied demand:** Whilst there is unmet demand amongst the younger age groups, this is due to a lack of coaching capacity rather than a shortage of track capacity.
- **Changes in supply:** There are no know planned changes to athletics track supply, although the lack of secured community use at the Sydney Wooderson track means that access could, in theory, be withdrawn at any time.

11.13.2 Future needs

Spare capacity at the existing tracks in Sutton Valance and Gillingham should be able to accommodate all additional future demand, based upon the following evaluation:

- **Current spare capacity:** Current peak time spare capacity at the Sydney Wooderson track is 75%.
- **Demand increases:** The borough's population is projected to increase by 22,380 to 177,523 people by 2031. This will represent an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.
- **Participation trends:** Local athletics participation rates have been projected to remain static until 2031.

11.14 Quality

11.14.1 Current quality

The current quality of the track and ancillary facilities is good, although general access is only 'average'.

11.14.2 Future quality

Tracks need to be resurfaced regularly to Sutton Valance School will need to continue to invest in maintaining and improving the facilities.

11.15 Accessibility

11.15.1 Current accessibility

The whole population is within the 30-minute drivetime catchment Sydney Wooderson and Medway Park tracks.

11.15.2 Future accessibility

Assuming that both tracks remain operational and have community use, the whole population will continue to have access to an athletics track.

11.16 Availability

11.16.1 Current availability

The track is not available to the general public on a ‘pay-and-play’ basis, but is hired by Medway and Maidstone Athletics Club for junior squad training sessions two evenings per week. There is no security of tenure for this arrangement.

11.16.2 Future availability

Although there is no reason to suppose that community access will be withdrawn in the future, there is no guarantee at present that this will not happen. Efforts should be made to secure community access.

11.17 The options for securing athletics track capacity

The options for securing existing and additional athletics track capacity to meet current and future needs are as follows:

11.17.1 Protect

Protecting existing athletics tracks through the Local Plan will be key both to securing local provision by ensuring that planning policy supports the retention of existing facilities, unless the loss of a facility would involve its replacement with a facility of at least the equivalent size, quality and accessibility.

11.17.2 Provide

There is no identified strategic need to provide an additional track.

11.17.3 Enhance

Enhancing existing athletics track capacity by securing community use through a formal Community Use Agreement.

11.18 Action Plan

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Estimated costs</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Protection of existing athletics tracks	Include a policy in the Local Plan to protect the existing athletics track	MBC	-	-	High
Securing community use of the track	Pursue a formal Community Use Agreement with Sutton Valance School	MBC	Sutton Valance School	-	High
Funding for future athletics needs	Include athletics tracks as ‘relevant infrastructure’ under CIL regulation 123.	MBC	-	-	High

12 POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1 Introduction

This section contains policies and recommendations for the protection, enhancement and provision of sports facilities in Maidstone.

12.2 Policy context

The recommendations made in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 74, which stipulates that existing sports facilities, should not be built upon unless:

- An assessment has taken place which has clearly shown the facility to be surplus to requirements, or;
- The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality, in a suitable location, or;
- The development is for alternative sport and recreation provision, the needs for which clearly outweighs the loss.

12.3 Protect

12.3.1 Recommendation 1: Safeguarding existing provision

The Maidstone Sports Facilities Strategy comprises a robust and evidence-based assessment of current and future needs for sports facilities in the district. The Strategy has identified a need for all current facilities to be retained, on the basis of the specific identified roles that each can play in delivering the needs of sport in the borough both now and in the future. It is therefore recommended that existing planning policies continue to support the retention of all sites, based upon the evidence in the Sports Facilities Strategy.

12.3.2 Recommendation 2: Community access to education sports facilities

A significant proportion of some types of sports facility in Maidstone are located on school sites (in particular eight out of nine sports halls and the only athletics track in the borough). None of these facilities are subject to formal Community Use Agreements and external use could, therefore in theory be withdrawn at any time. Some education sports facilities have no community use at all at present, which does not optimise the use of public resources. Furthermore, the management arrangements for many school sports facilities with external use are not conducive to maximising that use. It is therefore recommended that:

- Efforts are made to secure formal Community Use Agreements at existing education sports facilities.
- Where appropriate, Community Use Agreements become a condition of planning consent at new education sports facilities, along with a design and specification that is consistent with maximising school and community use.

- Encourage schools with their community use management arrangements.

12.4 Enhance

12.4.1 Recommendation 3: Capacity improvements

Some of the current and future demand for sports facilities in Maidstone can be accommodated through enhancements to existing facilities. Improvements to playing surfaces to increase carrying capacity, provision of floodlights for some outdoor facilities, extended and reconfigured changing facilities to cater for simultaneous adult/junior and male/female usage will all facilitate extra usage at existing sites. It is recommended that the site-specific action plan in the Maidstone Sports Facilities Strategy be used as the basis for prioritising facilities enhancements that will help to alleviate the current identified and future projected deficits.

12.4.2 Recommendation 4: Developer contributions (enhancements)

Some of the additional demand arising from the proposed housing development in Maidstone, can be accommodated through enhancements to existing sports facilities. It is therefore recommended that:

- The site-specific action plan in the Maidstone Sports Facilities Strategy be used as the basis for determining facility enhancements that demonstrably relate to the scale and location of specific developments.
- An appropriate level of financial contributions should then be sought under Section 106 or CIL arrangements, using Sport England’s Sports Facility Calculator tool as a guide, to cover the capital and revenue implications of the enhancements.
- To facilitate this, sports facilities should be listed as ‘relevant infrastructure’, under CIL Regulation 123 unless the Council considers it unlikely that CIL receipts would extend to delivering sports facilities projects, in which case they should be excluded and secured through planning obligations, having regard to the pooling restrictions.

12.5 Provide

12.5.1 Recommendation 5: Maidstone Leisure Centre

Maidstone Leisure Centre is the major community sports facility in the borough, of key strategic significance for swimming, but also ‘pay-and-play’ health and fitness provision. By 2031, the Centre will have reached the end of its planned lifespan. The current management contract with the Maidstone Leisure Trust expires in 2024, which will give the Council an important opportunity to review the scale and location of the facilities mix provided, to determine whether the current configuration is the most appropriate to deliver community leisure needs over the next few decades: It is therefore recommended that Maidstone Borough Council commissions a review of Maidstone Leisure Centre to examine whether:

- The current scale and configuration of swimming facilities is appropriate to current and future needs and if not, what alternatives should be provided.
- Other facilities should be considered for inclusion in a new or refurbished leisure centre.

- Provision of community sports facilities at the current site in the centre of the borough is the most appropriate way to meet current and future needs, compared with a more dispersed model of provision.
- The Council is the most appropriate provider of the facilities or whether other providers such as the education and/or commercial sectors could meet all identified needs.

12.5.2 Recommendation 6: Other new sports facilities

Whilst spare capacity in most types of sports facility can meet current and future needs to 2031, specific shortfalls identified in the Maidstone Sports Facilities Strategy by an evidence-based needs assessment, that would best be met through new provision include:

- The equivalent of 1.6 four-badminton court sized sports halls with full community access.
- The equivalent of one 25m x 4-lane pool with full community access.
- 187 health and fitness equipment stations.

It is recommended that Maidstone Borough Council should play an active role in encouraging the provision of these facilities, in conjunction with education providers and the commercial sector.

12.5.3 Recommendation 7: Developer contributions (new provision)

Some of the additional demand arising from the proposed housing development in Maidstone, can be accommodated through the provision of new sports facilities. It is therefore recommended that:

- The site-specific action plan in the Maidstone Sports Facilities Strategy be used as the basis for determining new facility provision that demonstrably relates to the scale and location of specific developments.
- An appropriate level of financial contributions should then be sought under Section 106 or CIL arrangements, using Sport England's Sports Facility Calculator tool as a guide, to cover the capital and revenue implications of providing the facilities.
- To facilitate this, sports facilities should be listed as 'relevant infrastructure', under CIL Regulation 123 unless the Council considers it unlikely that CIL receipts would extend to delivering sports facilities projects, in which case they should be excluded and secured through planning obligations, having regard to the pooling restrictions.

13 APPLYING AND REVIEWING THE STRATEGY

13.1 Introduction

This section identifies the applications of the Maidstone Sports Facilities Strategy (SFS) and the mechanisms for reviewing it to ensure that it remains robust and up-to-date.

13.2 Strategy applications

The success of the SFS will be determined by how it is used. While the use of the SFS should be led by the Maidstone Borough Council, its application and delivery should be the responsibility of the project steering group involving other key local stakeholders including Sport England, Kent Sport and the Maidstone Sports Trust. The SFS has a number of applications:

13.2.1 Sports development planning

The SFS can be applied to help:

- Highlight, justify and make the case for sports development activities with particular sports, groups and clubs and in particular areas.
- Identify current and future trends and changes in the demand for individual sports and how they are played.
- Inform the work, strategies and plans of sporting organisations active in the area.
- Advocate the need to work with specific educational establishments to secure community use of their site(s).
- Develop and/or enhance school club links by making the best use of school sites where they have spare capacity and are well located to meet demand.

13.2.2 Planning policy

The SFS can be applied to help:

- Develop new, and review the effectiveness of existing, local planning policy (e.g. Local and Neighbourhood Plans) in line with paragraph 73 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- The implementation of local planning policy to meet the needs of the community in line with paragraph 74 of the NPPF.

13.2.3 Planning applications

The SFS can be applied to help:

- Inform the development of planning applications which affect existing and/or proposed new sports facilities provision.

- Inform pre-application discussions to ensure any subsequent planning applications maximise their benefit to sport and are developed in line with national (e.g. NPPF paragraph 74) and local planning policy.
- Sports clubs and other organisations provide the strategic need for development proposals thereby potentially adding support to their application(s) and saving them resources in developing such evidence.
- Maidstone Borough Council to assess planning applications affecting existing and/or proposed new playing sports facilities provision in line with national (e.g. NPPF paragraph 74) and local planning policy.
- Sport England and other parties respond to relevant planning application consultations.

The SFS can also be applied to help Maidstone Borough Council to meet other relevant requirements of the NPPF including:

- Taking account of and supporting local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs (NPPF paragraph 17 - Core Planning Principles).
- Delivering the social, recreational, cultural facilities and services the community needs (NPPF paragraph 70).
- Planning positively for the development and infrastructure required in the area to meet the objectives, principles and policies of the framework (NPPF paragraph 157).
- Working with public health leads and health organisations to understand and take account of the health status and needs of the local population, including expected future changes, and any information about relevant barriers to improving health and well-being (NPPF paragraph 171).

13.2.4 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The SFS can be applied to help:

- Advocate the need for sports facilities provision to be taken into account when the local authority is developing and/or reviewing an approach to the CIL (Charging Schedule, including the Regulation 123 list and Infrastructure Delivery Plan) and the wider benefits of doing so (e.g. improving health and wellbeing).
- Provide prioritised infrastructure requirements for sports facilities provision including deliverable sport, area and site-specific projects with costings (where known).

13.2.5 Funding bids

The SFS can be applied to help:

- Provide the evidence base and strategic need to support funding bids by a range of parties to a variety of potential funding sources.
- Inform potential bidders of the likely strategic need for their project.

13.2.6 Facility and asset management

The SFS can be applied to help:

- Ensure a strategic approach is taken to the provision and management of sports facilities.
- Inform the current management, strategies and plans of sports facility providers e.g. local authorities (within the study area and neighbouring areas), leisure trusts and educational establishments.
- Share knowledge of how sites are managed and maintained, the lessons learnt and good practice.
- Highlight the potential of asset transfers and ensure any proposed are beneficial to all parties.
- Provide additional protection for particular sites over and above planning policy, for example through deeds of dedication.
- Resolve issues around security of tenure.

13.2.7 Public health

The SFS can be applied to help:

- Understand how the community currently participates in sport, the need for sports facilities and how this may evolve.
- Raise awareness of and tackle any barriers to people maintaining and increasing their participation.
- Highlight and address any inequalities of access to provision within the study area.
- Provide evidence to help support wider health and well-being initiatives.

13.2.8 Co-ordinating resources and investment

The SFS can be applied to help:

- Raise awareness of the current resources and investment (revenue and capital) going into the management, maintenance and improvement of sports facilities provision.
- Co-ordinate the current and any future resources and investment to ensure the maximum benefit to sport and that value for money is secured.

- Ensure the current and any future resources and investment are complimentary and do not result in their inefficient use.

13.2.9 Capital programmes

The SFS can be applied to help:

- Provide the evidence base to justify the protection and investment in sports facilities provision.
- Influence the development and implementation of relevant capital programmes (e.g. school refurbishment and new build programmes).

13.3 Monitoring delivery

A process should be put in place to ensure regular monitoring of how the recommendations and action plan are being delivered. This monitoring should be led by Maidstone Borough Council and supported by all members of, and reported back to, the steering group. Understanding and learning lessons from how the SFS has been applied should also form a key component of monitoring its delivery.

13.4 Keeping the strategy robust and up-to-date

Along with ensuring that the SFS is used and applied, a process should be put in place to keep it robust and up to date. This will expand the life of the SFS providing people with the confidence to continue to both use it and attach significant value and weight to its key findings and issues, along with its recommendations and actions.

Sport England advocates that the SFS should be reviewed regularly from the date it is formally signed off by the steering group. This will help to maintain the momentum and commitment built up when developing the SFS. Taking into account the time to develop the SFS this should also help to ensure that the original supply and demand information is no more than two years old without being reviewed.

The Sport England guidance advocates that reviews should highlight:

- How the delivery of the recommendations and action plan has progressed and any changes required to the priority afforded to each action (e.g. the priority of some may increase following the delivery of others).
- How the SFS has been applied and the lessons learnt.
- Any changes to particularly important facilities and/or sites in the area (e.g. the most used or high-quality sites for a particular sport) and other supply and demand information, what this may mean for the overall assessment work and the key findings and issues.
- Any development of a specific sport or particular format of a sport.
- Any new or emerging issues and opportunities.

**Ploszajski Lynch
Consulting Ltd.**



Maidstone Borough Council

*Playing Pitch Strategy
Final Draft*

June 2018

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Ploszajski Lynch Consulting Ltd. (PLC) was commissioned by Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) to produce a Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) for the borough. This is part of a wider assessment of sport and leisure provision in the borough which also includes indoor and outdoor built leisure facilities.

1.2 Strategic drivers

The primary purpose of the PPS is to provide a strategic framework which ensures that the provision of outdoor playing pitches meets the local needs of existing and future residents within Maidstone Borough. Development in the Borough has brought an increase in sports provision which is able to meet some of the needs of the area. However future development is likely to put a strain on the sporting infrastructure of Maidstone. The PPS will help to secure and safeguard sport in Maidstone now and in the future.

1.3 The aim and objectives of the strategy

1.3.1 Aim

The aim of the PPS is to provide Maidstone Borough Council with an assessment of all relevant outdoor sport facilities in the Borough. This will provide a baseline for current and future supply and demand assessments and also set out a vision with a strategic approach to sport and recreation provision in the Borough in the short, medium and long term (to 2031).

The strategy will also establish the principles to help inform where future resources should be focussed to ensure that proposed provision of pitches and related facilities will meet future demand and reflect sustainable development objectives.

1.3.2 Objectives

The objectives of the PPS are to:

- Provide an evidence base for use in planning, investment and sports development decisions.
- Refer to, and be in general accordance with, relevant national (including the National Planning Policy Framework), regional, sub-regional and local policies and priorities.
- Provide a clear picture of existing supply, surpluses, deficit and anticipated future demand for pitches by sport and age bracket.
- Assess the current supply of playing pitches including private facilities, with insight into the quality of these facilities and services, identifying possible future supply, including broad location and opportunities for opening up private sites for community use.

- Make reference to provision of facilities immediately adjacent to the Borough to ensure a full picture of local provision is available.
- Identify ways to increase opportunities for participation in sport and physical activity.
- Consult with key established user groups such as local teams, the local Sport and Physical Activity Alliance, the governing bodies of the pitch sports (NGB's), schools and education establishments and local key partners to apply local feedback to contextualise the results.

1.4 The scope of the strategy

1.4.1 The sports

The sports included in the Strategy are:

- Football.
- Cricket.
- Rugby Union.
- Rugby League.
- Hockey.
- American Football.
- Lacrosse.

1.5 The study methodology

The methodology for the study follows the *'Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance'* (2013) approach to playing pitch assessments, developed by Sport England. The process involves five stages and ten steps as follows:

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

1.6 Strategy format

The structure of the Strategy document is as follows:

- The local context.
- Strategic influences.
- Assessing playing pitch needs in Maidstone.
- Football needs.
- Cricket needs.
- Rugby needs.
- Hockey needs.
- American Football needs.
- Lacrosse needs.
- Strategy implementation.

2 THE LOCAL CONTEXT

2.1 Introduction

This section identifies the context within which playing pitch provision is made in Maidstone.

2.2 Background

Maidstone is the county town of Kent and occupies a central location in the county. It stands on the River Medway which links the town to the Thames estuary. The Borough of Maidstone is one of the most attractive areas in the country in which to live, work or to visit, lying between the North Downs and the Weald. The borough's easy access to both the attractions of rural Kent and of London means that Maidstone itself and the nearby towns and villages are highly desirable locations. Maidstone is at the centre of a good transport network with good rail and motorway access to London, the Channel ports and thence to Europe.

2.3 Population

The key population statistics are as follows:

2.3.1 Current population

Maidstone is the most populous of the Kent districts. The 2011 census measured the population as 155,143. 107,627 people live in the town of Maidstone, with the remainder located in surrounding villages. According to Kent County Council's *'Business Intelligence Statistical Bulletin'* (2017) the population of the borough increased to 166,400 by the middle of 2016, an increase of 11,257 (7%).

2.3.2 Age structure

Maidstone has a relatively elderly age structure. The borough has a slightly lower proportion of people aged under 25 years (29.4%) compared with Kent as a whole (29.8%).

2.3.3 Ethnicity

Maidstone's population is comparatively ethnically homogeneous with 94% of residents classifying themselves as White. 3.2% classify themselves as Asian with 0.9% being Black African or Black Caribbean.

2.3.4 Population growth

MBC's *'Strategic Housing Market Assessment'* (2015) confirmed the objectively assessed housing need for the borough over the period 2011 to 2031 as 17,660 dwellings. Of these 8,335 have already been built or granted planning permission. This scale of development will increase the borough's population by 22,380 to 177,523 people by 2031. This will represent an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.

2.4 Deprivation

According to the Government's 2015 Indices of Multiple Deprivation, Maidstone is a comparatively prosperous area. It ranks 206th out of 326 English local authorities in terms of overall deprivation. However, this overall rating does hide some local inequalities. Public Health England estimates that 4,100 children (14.3%) in the borough live in poverty.

2.5 Health

Local health indices are recorded in Public Health England's *'Health Profile for Maidstone'* (2015). These show that in general the health of people in Maidstone is better than in England as a whole:

- Life expectancy at birth is higher than the national averages by 0.8 years for men and 0.5 years for women. However, there is a life expectancy gap of 5.4 years for men and 3.8 years for women between the most and least deprived parts of the Borough.
- 17.3% of year 6 children in Maidstone are obese, compared with a national average of 19.1%.
- Only 18.9% of adults in the Borough are obese, compared with a national average of 23%.

2.6 Participation in sport and physical activity

Sport England's *'Active People'* surveys 9 and 10 have identified the following key measures of adult (16+) participation in sport and physical activity in Maidstone:

2.6.1 Overall participation

Overall rates of regular adult participation in sport and physical activity (at least one session of 30 minutes of moderate intensity exercise per week) in Maidstone in 2015/16 were 39.3%, which is above the Kent average of 35.4% and above the 38.3% figure for the south-east as a whole.

2.6.2 Volunteering

The percentage of the population volunteering to support sport for at least one hour a week in Maidstone is 11.5% which is below both the south-east average of 13.6% and the national average of 12.6%.

2.6.3 Club membership

The percentage of the population belonging to a sports club in Maidstone is 26.9% higher than the south-east average of 24.5% and the national average of 22%

2.6.4 Coaching

The percentage of the Maidstone population receiving sports coaching in the last twelve months was 13.1% in 2015/16, below the south-east average of 18.1% and the England average of 15.6%.

2.6.5 Organised competition

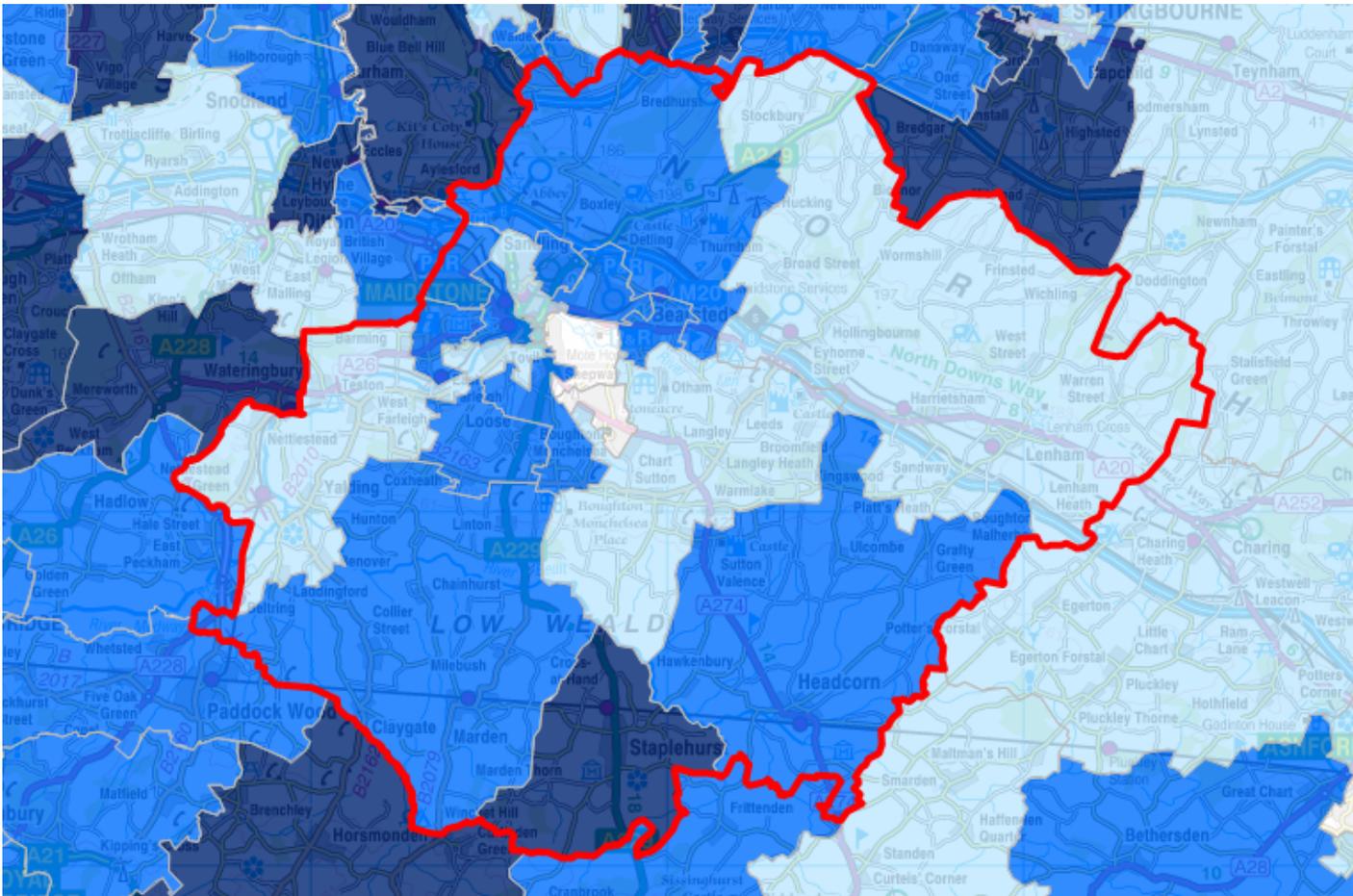
The percentage of the Maidstone population taking part in a sporting competition in the last twelve months was 16.1% in 2015/16, above the south-east figure of 15.6% and the national average of 13.3%.

2.6.6 Satisfaction

The percentage of adults who are very or fairly satisfied with sports provision in Maidstone in 2015/16 was 62.2%, below the south-east figure of 64.3% and in line with the England average of 62.2%.

2.6.7 Geographical variations

Whilst overall rates of participation in the borough are relatively high, there are large variations at Middle Super Output Area (MSOA) level, with two areas in the south of Maidstone town in the lowest quartile nationally and one around Staplehurst in the highest quartile.



- Lowest quartile
- Low middle quartile
- Upper middle quartile
- Highest quartile

2.7 The implications for pitch provision

The implications of the local context for pitch provision in Maidstone:

- **A relatively elderly population:** A relatively elderly age structure is typically associated with lower rates of participation in sport and physical activity, so this may reduce demand for the pitch sports in Maidstone.
- **A predominantly white population:** Physical activity participation rates amongst the white population are typically higher than for other ethnic groups. The low proportion of Maidstone residents from black and minority ethnic groups may contribute to the relatively levels of involvement in sport locally.
- **Population growth:** The borough's population is projected to increase by 22,380 people by 2031. This will create significant additional demand for the pitch sports.
- **Overall sports participation rates:** General participation rates in sport and physical activity are higher than the respective county and regional averages.
- **Club membership, coaching and formal competitions:** Involvement with formal sports structures like club-based activity and coaching in Maidstone are relatively high. This suggests that the pitch sports, which involve all of these elements, should be relatively popular locally.
- **Geographical variations in participation:** Analysis of participation rates at Middle Super Output Area level reveal significant differences between the urban and rural parts of the borough, which will impact upon demand patterns.

3 STRATEGIC INFLUENCES

3.1 Introduction

This section examines the influence of relevant policies and priorities on playing pitch provision in Maidstone, including the impact of national strategies.

3.2 Maidstone Council's Strategic Plan

The Council's work is guided by *'The Strategic Plan 2015-2020'*. The 2017/8 refresh of the plan sets out the vision for the area 'that our residents live in decent homes, enjoy good health and a pleasant environment, with a successful economy that is supported by reliable transport networks'. The vision is being delivered through several Action Areas of which the most relevant to the PPS are:

- Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all.
- Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough.

These priorities are being delivered through several Action Areas of which the most relevant to the PPS are:

- Ensuring there are good leisure and cultural attractions.
- Encouraging the good health and wellbeing

Success in these areas will be measured by customer satisfaction with the council's leisure and cultural attractions and some, unspecified health indicators.

3.3 Maidstone Local Plan

The Local Plan sets out local planning policies and identifies how land is used, determining what will be built where. Adopted local plans provide the framework for development and must be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy. The Maidstone Borough Local Plan was adopted in October 2017 and sets out the spatial vision for the future as supporting the wider vision of the borough:

- The council's vision for the borough is set out in the community strategy and the strategic plan (2015) and its 2017/18 update. The Maidstone Borough Local Plan is the spatial expression of the council's vision.
- The Plan sets out standards of provision for sports pitches at 1.6 hectares per 1,000 people in line with the national standard adopted by Fields in Trust. However, as identified in the review of Government planning policy below, local authorities are required to undertake a robust assessment of local needs based upon Sport England's *'Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance'* (2013) which places less reliance on per capita standards and more upon a detailed site-specific assessment of the supply-demand balance.

3.4 Kent Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Maidstone Borough Council is a member of the West Kent CCG Health and Wellbeing Board. This board is responsible for delivery in that area of the wider *Kent Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2014-2017* (2014). The health vision as set out in the strategy is ‘to improve health and wellbeing outcomes, deliver better coordinated quality care, improve the public’s experience of integrated health and social care services, and ensure that the individual is involved and at the heart of everything we do’.

The strategy makes no mention of sport and physical activity is promoted only as a way of decreasing obesity. No specific targets for participation are set out.

3.5 The Government’s Planning Policies

In March 2012, the Government published the *National Planning Policy Framework* (2012), setting out its economic, environmental and social planning policies for England. Taken together, these policies articulate the Government’s vision of sustainable development, which should be interpreted and applied locally to meet local aspirations. The policies of greatest relevance to pitch provision and retention are as follows:

- **Sustainable development:** ‘The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Sustainable development means development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’.
- **Health and well-being:** ‘Local planning authorities should work with public health leads and health organisations to understand and take account of the health status and needs of the local population, including expected future changes, and any information about relevant barriers to improving health and well-being’.
- **Open space, sports and recreational facilities:** ‘Access to good quality opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities. The planning system has a role in helping to create an environment where activities are made easier and public health can be improved. Planning policies should identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of sports and recreational facilities in the local area. The information gained from this assessment of needs and opportunities should be used to set locally derived standards for the provision of sports and recreational facilities’.
- ‘Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:
 - An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
 - The need for and benefits of the development clearly outweigh the loss’.

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

- ***Open space, sport and recreation provision:*** ‘Open space should be taken into account in planning for new development and considering proposals that may affect existing open space. It can provide health and recreation benefits to people living and working nearby’.
 - ‘Authorities and developers may refer to Sport England’s guidance on how to assess the need for sports and recreation facilities’.
 - ‘Local planning authorities are required to consult Sport England in certain cases where development affects the use of land as playing fields. Where there is no requirement to consult, local planning authorities are advised to consult Sport England in cases where development might lead to loss of, or loss of use for sport, of any major sports facility, the creation of a site for one or more playing pitches, artificial lighting of a major outdoor sports facility or a residential development of 300 dwellings or more’.
- ***Health and well-being:*** ‘Local planning authorities should ensure that health and wellbeing, and health infrastructure are considered in local and neighbourhood plans and in planning decision making’.
 - ‘Development proposals should support strong, vibrant and healthy communities and help create healthy living environments which should, where possible, include making physical activity easy to do’.
 - ‘Opportunities for healthy lifestyles must be considered (e.g. planning for an environment that supports people of all ages in making healthy choices, helps to promote active travel and physical activity and promotes high quality open spaces and opportunities for play, sport and recreation).

3.6 The Government’s Sports Strategy

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

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

3.7 Sport England Strategy

Sport England's strategy 'Towards an Active Nation' (2016) contains a significant policy shift to encourage more currently inactive people to become active, with a relative move away from support for programmes aimed at existing participants. Elements of particular relevance to pitch provision in Maidstone are as follows:

- More money and resources will be focused on tackling inactivity because this is where the gains for the individual and for society are greatest.
- There will be greater investment in children and young people from the age of five to build positive attitudes to sport and activity as the foundations of an active life.
- Sport England will work with those parts of the sector that serve existing participants to help them identify ways in which they can become more sustainable and self-sufficient.

3.8 The implications for pitch provision

The implications of the key strategic influences on pitch provision in Maidstone are:

- **Maidstone Strategic Plan:** Encouraging the good health and well-being of Maidstone residents is a key action area. The key challenge for the pitch sports is to ensure that their 'offer' is sufficiently relevant and attractive to engage a wider participation base, including people who are currently inactive.
- **Maidstone Planning policy:** A robust, evidence-based assessment of playing pitch needs in the borough is required to inform planning policy, including the Local Plan review and this PPS will provide this.
- **National sports policy shifts:** The move in national sports policy towards prioritising new participants will create a challenge for the pitch sports to ensure that their 'offer' is sufficiently relevant and attractive to engage a wider participation base, including people who are currently inactive. Recent innovations such as walking and small-sided versions of the sports might prove more attractive than the more traditional models, but this will have implications for facilities needs in the future, because this type of activity does not need to be accommodated on formal grass pitches.

4 ASSESSING PLAYING PITCH NEEDS IN MAIDSTONE

4.1 Introduction

This section explains the basis upon which the current playing pitch needs in Maidstone have been identified, along with the approach for identifying the additional provision that will be needed as a result of population growth.

4.2 Assessing current needs

The methodology applied to assess the supply-demand balance for pitches and related facilities follows Sport England's recommended methodology, advocated in *'Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance'* (2013). To assess whether the current provision is adequate to meet existing demand an understanding of the situation at all sites available to the community needs to be developed. This is achieved by providing a brief overview for each site, which comprises:

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

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

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

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

4.3 Assessing future needs

4.3.1 Assessment methodology

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

- Establishing projected population change.
- Analysing sports development proposals and participation trends.
- Considering existing deficiencies or spare capacity.
- Taking account of any forthcoming changes to facility supply.

4.3.2 Assessed demand parameters

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

- **Population change:** MBC's *'Strategic Housing Market Assessment'* (2015) confirmed the objectively assessed housing need for the borough over the period 2011 to 2031 as 17,660 dwellings. Of these 8,335 have already been built or granted planning permission. This scale of development will increase the borough's population by 22,380 to 177,523 people by 2031. This will represent an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.
- **Participation trends:** According to Sport England's *'Active People'* survey, participation at a national level in all the pitch sports has remained static or fallen in the period since 2005, in some cases by quite significant margins. This means that future increases in participation in the pitch sports cannot be assumed based upon historic trends and have therefore not been factored in to projected needs.
- **Sports development initiatives:** A limited range of sports development initiatives is delivered in Maidstone involving the pitch sports. There are no firm proposals to expand or amend the current programmes and an increase in participation directly attributable to these activities has therefore not been factored in to projected future needs.
- **Changes in supply:** Any known proposed gains or losses in pitches and related facilities provision will influence the ability to accommodate the additional demand arising from the increased population and this has been included in the capacity assessments.

4.4 Delivering future needs

4.4.1 Process

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

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

4.4.2 Methodology

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

- **Current provision:** The adequacy of current provision and any existing spare capacity was assessed using Sport England's approved methodology, adapted where appropriate to assess informal demand and facilities.
- **Additional needs:** Additional needs were calculated by identifying the existing Team Generation Rates in the borough, to identify the number of people that are currently required to form a team of various types in each of the pitch sports. These figures have then been applied to the projected population increases, to calculate the gross additional team and related pitch needs arising from an extra 22,380 people.
- **Net requirements:** The net requirement for additional provision was calculated by comparing the extra required capacity to the current spare capacity where appropriate, to identify the difference.
- **Location of provision:** The location of additional pitch and related facilities needs was established by comparing the respective levels of projected population growth in each part of the borough.

4.5 Sources of information

4.5.1 Consultation

Information was gathered from a wide range of consultees including:

- **Sport England:** Guidance on the assessment methodology.
- **Maidstone Borough Council:** Consultation with officers from Leisure, Planning and Grounds Maintenance on their respective areas of responsibility.
- **Neighbouring local authorities:** Information on their playing pitch assessments and the impact of any cross-border issues.
- **Kent Sport:** Information on local and wider strategic priorities.

- ***Governing bodies of sport:*** Information on local and wider strategic priorities and local supply and demand information.
- ***Individual pitch sports clubs:*** Information on playing pitch usage patterns, current and future needs and opinions on quality.
- ***Parish Councils:*** Information on the quantity and quality of pitches that they provide.
- ***Schools:*** Information on playing pitch needs and aspirations and attitudes towards community use.

4.6 The criteria assessed

4.6.1 Quantity

The number of pitches and related facilities was established and cross checked against other sources provided by local stakeholders and consultees.

4.6.2 Quality

The quality of playing pitches was assessed by visiting every pitch in the borough during the respective playing seasons and assessing quality criteria using the recognised non-technical visual assessment criteria. The ratings for each aspect of each pitch were checked and challenged via the clubs' survey and stakeholder consultation and amended where necessary.

4.6.3 Accessibility

The accessibility of pitches, in particular the extent of secured community use and pricing was assessed, to identify any barriers to use that might impact on the capacity of local provision.

4.6.4 Access

The geographical spread of each type of pitch was mapped, the extent of catchment coverage was then determined and any gaps established.

4.6.5 Strategic priority

The assessment of need and priorities for provision was identified by the governing bodies of the respective pitch sports.

4.6.6 Used capacity

The used capacity of existing pitches at each site was assessed using a bespoke supply-demand spreadsheet.

4.7 Summary

The approach outlined above has been applied in the following sections to identify the playing pitch needs of football, cricket, rugby union, rugby league, hockey, American football and lacrosse.

5 FOOTBALL NEEDS IN MAIDSTONE

5.1 Key stakeholders

The key stakeholders delivering football in Maidstone are:

- **Kent FA:** Ten of the football clubs in the borough affiliate to the Kent FA.
- **FA-affiliated clubs:** There are 45 FA-affiliated clubs in Maidstone, who collectively run 58 adult teams, 106 youth teams and 68 mini-soccer teams.
- **Pitch providers:** A range of organisations provide football pitches in the borough, in particular schools and parish councils.

5.2 Strategic context

5.2.1 Football Association

The Football Association's *National Game Strategy 2015 - 2019* has a number of targets with important implications for football and its facilities needs at grassroots level (see box below).

- Boost female youth participation by 11% by 2019.
- Increase the number of over 16's playing every week by over 200,000, by offering a variety of formats by 2019.
- Create 100 new '3G' football turf pitches and improve 2,000 grass pitches by 2019.
- Develop Football Hubs in major centres of population.
- Ensure that 50% of youth football and mini-soccer matches are played on '3G' pitches by 2019.

5.2.2 Neighbouring local authorities

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

Ashford

The Council is in the final stages of producing a new playing pitch strategy. Draft findings include:

- All latent demand can be met from within current provision.
- There will be a need to provide seven additional adult pitches, three youth 11v11, three youth 9v9, three mini-soccer 7v7 pitches and two mini soccer 5v5 pitches to meet the needs of anticipated population growth.
- One team from Ashford plays at Swadelands School in Maidstone, but there is no evidence of any exported demand to Ashford.

Medway

The council has an adopted strategy dating from 2012 which it plans to revise in 2018. The strategy identified:

- No need for additional adult pitches or ‘3G’ pitches.
- A shortage of up to 36 youth pitches and 11 mini-soccer pitches.
- There is no evidence of any imported football demand from Maidstone, nor any exported demand to Maidstone.

Swale

The council has an adopted playing pitch strategy dating from 2015. It identifies:

- A shortage of junior/mini football pitches, especially in the Sittingbourne area.
- This can be met through converting surplus senior pitches and increasing access to education sites that are not currently available for community use.
- There is no evidence of any imported football demand from Maidstone, nor any exported demand to Maidstone.

Tonbridge and Malling

The council will shortly be finalising a Pitch Strategy. Its most recent assessment states that:

- Football is ‘favourably provided for’.
- However, there is a shortfall of 12 junior football pitches offset by a surplus of 9 adult football pitches.
- The council has plans to improve facilities at Tonbridge Racecourse and Tonbridge Farm pitch complexes.
- There is no evidence of any imported football demand from Maidstone, nor any exported demand to Maidstone.

Tunbridge Wells

The council is finalising a playing pitch strategy in 2018. However, there is no evidence of any imported football demand from Maidstone, nor any exported demand to Maidstone.

5.2.3 Implications of the strategic context

The implications of the strategic context for football in Maidstone are as follows:

- ***Participation increases:*** The FA’s target increases in participation amongst the over 16s need to be set in the context of falling demand locally for adult league football.
- ***‘3G’ pitches:*** The increased dependence on ‘3G’ football turf pitches for youth football and mini-soccer matches by 2019 will fit well in an area where there are good levels of provision of such pitches.
- ***Exported demand:*** There is no evidence of any imported football demand from Maidstone, nor any exported demand to Maidstone.

5.3 Football pitch demand in Maidstone

5.3.1 Expressed demand

The following football clubs and teams are affiliated to the Kent FA and are based in Maidstone. The information was supplied by the Kent FA through its 'Whole Game System' database, cross-referenced to the clubs' survey.

A questionnaire survey of clubs affiliated to the Kent FA produced responses from 17 clubs, collectively representing 182 teams or 78.4% of the 232 affiliated teams in Maidstone. The following clubs responded:

- AFC Ashford Athletic
- Bearsted FC
- Coxheath and Farleigh FC
- Castle Colts FC
- Kent Police FC
- Lenham Wanderers FC
- Loose Lions FC
- Maidstone Athletic FC
- Maidstone Tempests FC
- Maidstone United FC
- Marden Minors FC
- MPE FC
- Staplehurst Monarchs United FC
- Staplehurst Monarchs Youth FC
- Vinters FC
- Whitehawks FC
- Yalding and Laddingford FC

<i>Club</i>	<i>Match venue</i>	<i>Training venue</i>	<i>Adult teams</i>	<i>Youth (11v11) teams</i>	<i>Youth (9v9) teams</i>	<i>Mini (7v7) teams</i>	<i>Mini (5v5) teams</i>
AFC Ashford Athletic	Swadelands School	Homelands Stadium	1	-	-	-	-
Barming Youth FC	Barming Primary School Barming Heath Giddyhorn Recn. Ground Gatland Recn. Ground New Barming Pavilion	Maplesden Noakes School	-	7	5	5	4
Bearsted FC	Bearsted FC Bearsted Green Chart Sutton Memorial PF	Bearsted FC Bearsted Green Swadelands School	1	8	4	3	-
Blue Eagles FC	Langley Recn. Ground	Langley Recn. Grd.	1	-	-	-	-
Castle Colts FC	The Orchard Ground Allington Primary School	The Orchard Ground Allington Prim Sch	-	1	7	3	5
Castle Wanderers FC	The Orchard Ground Allington Primary School	The Orchard Grd.	-	1	-	1	2
Coxheath & Farleigh	Chart Sutton Memorial PF Beacon Playing Field	The Orchard Grd. Cornwallis Academy	1	2	2	2	1

Club	Match venue	Training venue	Adult teams	Youth (11v11) teams	Youth (9v9) teams	Mini (7v7) teams	Mini (5v5) teams
Coxheath Colts JFC	Beacon Playing Field	Cornwallis Academy	-	-	2	-	-
Cross Keys (Sunday)	KGV Playing Field, Loose	-	1	-	-	-	-
Fisherman's Arms FC	Sutton Valence Mem. Grd	-	1	-	-	-	-
Headcorn FC	Headcorn Football Club	Headcorn FC	2	-	-	-	-
Headcorn Juniors FC	Headcorn Football Club Ulcombe Recreation Ground	Headcorn FC	-	2	1	3	2
Hollingbourne FC	Lance Memorial PF	Lance Memorial PF	1	-	-	-	-
Hunton FC	KGV Playing Field	-	1	-	-	-	-
Independent Maidstone Utd Supporters FC	The Gallagher Stadium	-	1	-	-	-	-
Kent County Squad	The Gallagher Stadium	The Gallagher Stad	1	-	-	-	-
Kent Police FC	Police HQ	-	1	-	-	-	-
Kings Park Rangers FC	Swadelands School '3G'	-	1	-	-	-	-
Lenham Wanderers FC	William Pitt Field Swadelands School	William Pitt Field Swadelands School	2	4	2	-	-
Loose Lions FC	Molehill Copse Pr. School Leeds Playing Field Sutton Valence Mem. Grd.	Molehill Copse Pr. School	-	4	1	2	1
Maidstone Int. FC	Shepway Green Pitches	Kings Hill Sp. Park	1	-	-	-	-
Maidstone Kestrels FC	Parkwood	-	1	-	-	-	-
Maidstone Tempests FC	Mote Park	Strood Sp. Centre	1	-	-	-	-
Maidstone United FC	The Gallagher Stadium	The Gallagher Stad	6	-	-	-	-
Maidstone Utd Ladies & Girls	Giddyhorn Recn Ground Cornwallis Academy	The Gallagher Stadium	1	-	2	2	1
Maidstone Utd Raiders	The Gallagher Stadium Bower Grove School	Bower Grove School	7	1	1	1	-
Maidstone Utd Youth FC	Oakwood Park School The Gallagher Stadium	Oakwood Park Sch The Gallagher Stad	-	6	2	3	4
Malgo FC	The Maplesden Noakes Sch.	-	1	-	-	-	-
Mangravet Utd FC	Sutton Valence Mem Ground	-	1	-	-	-	-
Marden Minors FC	Pattenden Lane	Pattenden Lane	2	-	1	-	-
MPE FC	Madginford Primary School South Park Mallards Way Parkwood	-	-	2	2	3	4
Park Royal (Maidstone)	Civil Service Sports Soc. Club	-	1	-	-	-	-
Parkwood Jupitors FC	Parkwood	-	1	-	-	-	-
Roseacre Raiders FC	Elizabeth Harvie Field Parish Recreation Ground Roseacre Junior School South Borough Prim. Sch.	Valley Park School Elizabeth Harvie Field	-	1	5	1	3
Soccer Elite FA Ltd.	Maplesden Noakes '3G'	Maplesden '3G'	3	-	1	2	-
Staplehurst Monarchs United FC	Jubilee Playing Field	-	2	-	-	-	-
Staplehurst Monarchs YFC	Jubilee Playing Field	Bethany School	-	6	4	2	1
Sutton Valance Athletic	Sutton Valance Mem. Grd.	Sutton Valance M.G.	1	-	-	-	-
Vinters FC	Valley Park School	Valley Park School	4	12	6	-	5

<i>Club</i>	<i>Match venue</i>	<i>Training venue</i>	<i>Adult teams</i>	<i>Youth (11v11) teams</i>	<i>Youth (9v9) teams</i>	<i>Mini (7v7) teams</i>	<i>Mini (5v5) teams</i>
Walnut Wanderers FC	Oakwood Park School	Oakwood Park GS	1	-	-	-	-
Weaving AFC	Mote Park	Mote Park	1	-	-	-	-
West Farleigh FC	Elmscroft Park	Elmscroft Park	3	-	-	-	-
Whitehawks FC	Swadelands School 3G New Line Learning Academy	Swadelands 3G	2	-	-	-	-
Yalding & Laddingford	The Kintons	Mascalls Academy	2	1	-	1	1
TOTALS	-	-	58	58	48	34	34

The key demand issues are as follows:

- **Team numbers:** There are 57 adult men’s teams, one adult women’s team, 57 youth male (11v11) teams, one youth female (11v11) team, 38 youth male (9v9) teams, 10 youth female (9v9) teams, 34 mini-soccer (7v7) teams and 34 mini-soccer (5v5) teams that draw the majority of their membership from Maidstone.
- **Women and girl’s football:** Football for women and girls is under-developed in Maidstone, with only one adult and one youth 11v11 team.
- **Club to team ratios:** On average, football clubs in Maidstone have 5.5 teams. This compares favourably with the national average of 3.3 teams per club, suggesting that clubs are better organised and more sustainable than elsewhere.
- **Charter Standard Clubs:** Of the 45 clubs in Maidstone 16 have achieved the FA’s quality-assured Charter Standard status. This is 33% which compares with the national average of 27%. In terms of teams, 89% (156 out of 175) of youth and mini-soccer teams play within a Charter Standard club in Maidstone, compared with the national average of 81.1%. This means that the benefits of belonging to an accredited club with formalised safeguarding procedures and qualified coaches is enjoyed by the majority of youth and mini-soccer players in Maidstone.

5.3.2 Expressed demand trends

Overall football participation by adults is falling across the country. The ‘Active People’ survey shows that participation has fallen from 3.15 million adult players in 2010/11 to 2.66 million in 2015/16. This is reflected in Maidstone where there has been a decline in adult demand in recent years. For example, the Maidstone and District Football League, which is the grass-roots Saturday competition now has 22 teams in two divisions compared with six divisions of 12 to 14 teams at its height in the late 1980s. Similarly, the Maidstone and Mid-Kent League which plays on a Sunday has reduced from 72 teams in the early 1990s peak, to 32 teams in season 2016/17. Conversely, football participation amongst young people is strong across the country aided in part by the increase in participation by female players. Data from the FA and the survey returns from Maidstone clubs shows a strong and relatively stable position in the mini and youth leagues centred around Maidstone.

- The Maidstone Invicta Primary League (U7 to U11) has had a stable membership of around 220 mini-soccer teams in recent years.

- The Maidstone Boys Primary League (U12 to U15) increased from 112 to 119 teams at youth level over the last four years.
- The Maidstone Minor League (U16 and U18) has increased from 38 to 48 teams over the last four years.

5.3.3 Displaced demand

Displaced demand relates to play by teams or other users of playing pitches from within the study area which takes place outside of the area. Examination of the data on where Maidstone-based teams play their home games revealed that only three teams from Marden Minors are having to travel outside of the borough (to Tonbridge and Malling) to access pitches for home matches and training. However, 80% of respondents to the football clubs survey reported a difficulty in accessing local facilities, in particular youth and mini-soccer pitches. Only 58% of clubs reported that they always played at their preferred venue. Whilst there is no displaced demand at present, this position is likely to change in the longer term.

5.3.4 Unmet demand

Unmet demand takes a number of forms:

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

There is some evidence of unmet demand, although consultation with local clubs and pitch providers indicated that this has less to do with the quantity of provision than:

- **Site capacity:** Some larger clubs noted a lack of multi-pitch sites large enough to enable them to play at a single venue.
- **Accessibility:** Two central Maidstone clubs complained about having to travel to other parts of the borough to access pitches.
- **Changing facilities:** Poor or non-existent changing rooms and showers were cited by 29% of teams as being unacceptable.
- **Cleanliness:** 39% of teams complained about dog fouling and litter.
- **Affordability:** Several of the larger clubs indicated a lack of affordable training venues. Some floodlit sites at schools around the borough, but these are perceived to be expensive particularly as most schools prefer to block book facilities.

5.3.5 Latent demand

Whereas unmet demand is known to currently exist, latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from a population if they had access to more or better provision. The Kent FA believes that there is no clear evidence of latent demand for football in Maidstone.

5.4 Football pitch supply in Maidstone

5.4.1 Introduction

This section summarises the detail of football facilities supply in Maidstone, including:

- '3G' football turf pitches.
- Other artificial grass pitches used for football.
- Grass football pitches.

5.4.2 '3G' football turf pitches

The '3G' football turf pitches in Maidstone are detailed below. All the pitches are on the FA's '3G' Pitch Register and can be used for training and matches where competition rules allow.

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Size</i>	<i>Year built</i>
Swadlands School	Ham Lane, Lenham ME17 2LL	105m x 65m	2010
The Gallagher Stadium	James Whatman Way, Maidstone ME14 1LQ	105m x 70m	2016
The Maplesden Noakes School	Buckland Road, Maidstone ME16 0TJ	100m x 60m	2008
Valley Park School	Huntsman Lane, Maidstone ME14 5DT	105m x 70m	2014
YMCA (Maidstone)	Melrose Close, Maidstone ME15 6BD	90m x 45m	2011

5.4.3 Other artificial turf pitches

The following pitches, whilst non-specialist football surfaces, have some football usage:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Surface</i>	<i>Size</i>	<i>Year built</i>
Invicta Grammar School	Huntsman Lane, Maidstone ME14 5DS	Sand-filled	88m x 53m	2015
Maidstone Hockey Club	Armstrong Road, Maidstone ME15 6AX	Sand-dressed	97m x 60m	2011

5.4.4 Grass football pitches

Provision of grass pitches with regulation line markings and goalposts for organised football are as follows. Pitches shown in brackets are overmarked onto another pitch with resultant reductions in usage capacity. The dimensions of the pitches are as follows:

<i>Pitch Type</i>	<i>Pitch length</i>	<i>Pitch width</i>	<i>Size including run-offs</i>
Adult football	100m	64m	106m x 70m
Youth football	100m	64m	106m x 70m
Youth football (U15-U16)	91m	55m	97m x 61m
Youth football (U13-U14)	82m	50m	88m x 56m
Youth football (9v9)	73m	46m	79m x 52m
Mini-soccer (7v7)	55m	37m	61m x 43m
Mini-soccer (5v5)	37m	27m	43m x 33m

- *Available for community use and used:*

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Adult 11v11</i>	<i>Youth 11v11</i>	<i>Youth 9v9</i>	<i>Mini 7v7</i>	<i>Mini 5v5</i>
Allington Primary School	Hildenborough Cres, Maidstone ME16 0PG	-	-	1	2	1
Barming Heath	Heath Road, Barming ME16 9LQ	-	1	-	-	-
Barming Primary School	Belmont Close, Barming ME16 9DY	-	-	1	1	1
Beacon Playing Field	Linden Road, Coxheath ME17 4RA	-	1	1	1	1
Bearsted FC	Honey Lane, Bearsted ME15 8RG	1	-	2	1	-
Bearsted Green	Church Lane, Maidstone ME14 4EF	-	2	-	-	-
Bower Grove School	Font Lane, Maidstone ME16 8NL	-	-	-	1	-
Chart Sutton Memorial PF	Wormlike Road, Chart Sutton ME17 3RS	1	-	-	-	-
Civil Service Sports & Social Club	Recreation Close, Maidstone ME14 5AZ	1	-	-	-	-
Cornwallis Academy	Hubbard Lane, Coxheath ME17 4HX	-	-	1	-	-
Elizabeth Harvie Field	Trapfield Close, Bearsted ME15 6TL	-	-	-	-	1
Elmscroft Park	Charlton Lane, Maidstone ME15 0PB	1	-	-	-	-
Gatland Recreation Ground	Fanta Lane, Maidstone ME16 8NL	-	1	1	-	-
Giddyhorn Recreation Ground	Poplar Grove, Maidstone ME16 0BY	-	-	-	1	2
Headcorn Football Club	Grigg Lane, Headcorn TN27 9LU	1	-	-	1	1
Jubilee Playing Field	Headcorn Road, Staplehurst TN12 0DS	1	1	1	1	1
King George V Playing Field	West Street, Hunton ME15 0RR	1	-	-	-	-
King George V Playing Field	Walnut Tree Avenue, Loose ME15 9RN	1	-	-	-	-
Kent Police HQ	Sutton Road, Maidstone ME15 9BZ	2	-	-	-	-
Lance Memorial Playing Field	Greenway Ct. Rd., Hollingbourne ME17 1QQ	1	-	-	-	-
Langley Recreation Ground	Horseshoes Lane, Langley ME17 3JY	1	-	-	-	-
Leeds Playing Field	Upper Street, Leeds ME17 1RU	-	1	-	-	-
Madginford Primary School	Egremont Rd., Maidstone ME15 8LH	-	-	-	1	-
Maidstone Leisure Centre	Mote Park, Maidstone ME15 8NQ	2	-	-	-	-
Mallards Way	Murrain Drive, Maidstone ME15 8XJ	-	-	1	-	1
Marden Minors FC	Pattenden Lane, Marden TN12 9QJ	1	-	1	-	-
Molehill Copse Primary Academy	Hereford Rd., Maidstone ME15 7ND	-	-	1	1	1
New Barming Pavilion	Church Lane, Maidstone ME16 9HA	-	-	1	-	-
New Line Learning Academy	Boughton Lane, Loose, Maidstone ME15 9QL	2	-	-	-	-
Oakwood Park Grammar School	Oakwood Park, Maidstone ME16 8AH	1	-	-	-	-
Parish Recreation & Sports Field	Lenham Road, Kingswood ME17 1LX	1	-	-	-	-
Parkwood	Longshaw Road, Maidstone ME15 9JD	1	-	-	-	-
Roseacre Junior School	The Landway, Bearsted ME14 4BL	-	-	1	-	-
Shepway Green	Cumberland Ave, Maidstone ME15 7JP	1	-	-	-	-
South Borough Primary School	Postley Rd., Maidstone ME15 6TL	-	-	1	-	-
South Park	Armstrong Rd., Maidstone ME15 6AZ	-	-	1	-	-
Swadelands School	Ham Lane, Lenham ME17 2LL	2	-	-	-	-
The Kintons	Vicarage Road, Yalding ME18 6DP	2	-	-	1	1
The Maplesden Noakes School	Great Buckland, Maidstone ME16 0TJ	4	-	-	-	-
The Orchard Ground	Castle Road, Maidstone ME16 0PZ	1	1	2	-	-
Ulcombe Recreation Ground	The Street, Ulcombe ME17 1DX	-	1	-	-	-
Valley Park School	Huntsman Lane, Maidstone ME14 5DT	3	-	3	-	-
War Memorial Playing Field	North Street, Sutton Valance ME17 3HT	1	1	-	-	-
William Pitt Field	Old Ham Lane, Lenham ME17 2LR	1	-	1	-	-
TOTALS	-	35	10	21	12	12

- *Available for community use and not used:*

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Adult 11v11</i>	<i>Youth 11v11</i>	<i>Youth 9v9</i>	<i>Mini 7v7</i>	<i>Mini 5v5</i>
Bearsted Woodland Trust	Church Lane, Bearsted ME14 4EE	-	-	-	1	-
Bell Wood Primary School	Brishing Lane, Bell Wood ME15 9 EZ	-	-	-	1	-
Boughton Monchelsea Rec. Grd.	Church St., Boughton Monchelsea ME17 4HN	-	1	-	1	-
Coxheath Primary School	Stockett Lane, Coxheath ME17 4PS	-	-	-	1	-
Coxheath Recreation Ground	Stockett Lane, Coxheath ME17 4PY	-	-	1	2	-
Headcorn Primary School	King's Road, Headcorn TN27 9QT	-	-	1	-	-
Kingswood Primary School	Cayser Drive, Kingswood ME17 3QF	-	-	-	1	-
Lenham Primary School	Ham Lane, Lenham ME17 2LL	-	-	-	1	-
Loose Primary School	Loose Road, Loose ME15 9UW	-	-	-	1	-
Maidstone Leisure Centre	Mote Park, Maidstone ME15 8NQ	-	-	2	1	-
Marden Playing Fields	Rookery Path, Marden TN12 9HL	1	-	-	-	-
Penenden Heath	Heath Rd., Maidstone ME14 2DA	1	-	-	-	-
Senacre Community Centre	Titchfield Road, Maidstone ME15 8FX	1	-	-	-	-
Senacre Wood School	Graveney Rd., Maidstone ME15 8QQ	-	-	-	1	-
South Park	Armstrong Rd., Maidstone ME15 6AZ	1	2	-	-	-
TOTALS	-	4	3	4	11	0

- *Not available for community use:*

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Adult 11v11</i>	<i>Youth 11v11</i>	<i>Youth 9v9</i>	<i>Mini 7v7</i>	<i>Mini 5v5</i>
Archbishop Courtenay Prim. Sch.	Eccleston Rd., Maidstone ME15 6QN	-	-	-	1	-
St. Augustine Academy	Oakwood Park, Maidstone ME16 8AE	2	-	-	-	-
St. John's Primary School,	Provender Way, Maidstone ME14 5TZ	-	-	-	2	-
St. Simon Stock School	Oakwood Park, Maidstone ME16 0JP	-	2	-	-	-
Sandling Primary School	Ashburnham Rd., Maidstone ME14 2JG	-	-	-	1	-
Sutton Valance School	North St., Sutton Valance ME17 3NH	2	1	-	-	-
Sutton Valance Prep. School	Chart Rd., Sutton Valance ME17 3RF	-	-	-	2	-
TOTALS	-	4	3	0	6	0

5.4.5 Artificial turf pitch quality

The quality of all '3G' football turf pitches in Maidstone was assessed from site visits by applying the Non-technical Visual Assessment criteria developed for use in conjunction with the *Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance*. The assessment generates an overall 'score' by evaluating the playing surface, fencing, floodlighting, disability access and changing provision. The scores equate to ratings of 'Good' for 80% or more 'Standard' for 79% - 51% and 'Poor' for 50% or below:

- *'3G' football turf pitches:*

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitch</i>	<i>Changing</i>
Swadelands School	Standard	Standard
The Gallagher Stadium	Good	Good
The Maplesden Noakes School	Standard	Standard
Valley Park School	Standard	Standard
YMCA (Maidstone)	Standard	Standard

- **Artificial grass pitches:**

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitch</i>	<i>Changing</i>
Invicta Grammar School	Standard	Standard
Maidstone Hockey Club	Standard	Standard

5.4.6 Grass pitch quality

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

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

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

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitches</i>	<i>Pitch</i>	<i>Changing</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Allington Primary School	Youth (9v9) pitch Mini (7v7) pitch 1 Mini (7v7) pitch 2 Mini (5v5) pitch	Standard Standard Standard Standard	-	A larger school site with no available changing for community users.
Barming Heath	Youth (11v11) pitch	Standard	-	‘Standard’ quality pitch with no on-site changing.
Barming Primary School	Youth (9v9) pitch Mini (7v7) pitch Mini (5v5) pitch	Standard Standard Standard	-	A larger school site with no available changing for community users.
Beacon Playing Field	Youth (11v11) pitch Youth (9v9) pitch Mini (7v7) pitch Mini (5v5) pitch	Standard Standard Standard	Good	‘Standard’ quality pitch with changing in the village hall.
Bearsted FC	Adult pitch Youth (9v9) pitch 1 Youth (9v9) pitch 2 Mini (7v7) pitch	Good Good Good Good	Good	A high-quality, well-maintained facility with a stadium pitch.
Bearsted Green	Youth (11v11) pitch 1 Youth (11v11) pitch 2	Standard	-	Pitches on cricket outfield. No changing facilities.

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitches</i>	<i>Pitch</i>	<i>Changing</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Bower Grove School	Mini (7v7) pitch	Standard	-	'Standard' quality with no available changing for community users.
Chart Sutton Memorial Playing Field	Adult pitch	Poor	Poor	'Poor' standard rutted pitch with rusty goalposts and 'poor' changing.
Civil Service Sports & Social Club	Adult pitch	Standard	Good	Pitch at the higher end of the 'standard' rating. 'Good' changing.
Cornwallis Academy	Youth (9v9) pitch	Standard	Standard	'Standard' quality provision.
Elizabeth Harvie Field	Mini (5v5) pitch	Standard	Standard	'Standard' quality provision.
Elmscroft Park	Adult pitch	Standard	Standard	'Standard' quality pitch with remote changing facility.
Gatland Recreation Ground	Youth (11v11) pitch Youth (9v9) pitch	Poor Poor	-	'Poor' quality pitches with no changing
Giddyhorn Recreation Ground	Youth (9v9) pitch Mini (7v7) pitch Mini (5v5) pitch 1 Mini (5v5) pitch 2	Standard Standard Standard Standard	-	Key site for youth and mini play, with 'standard' quality pitches and no changing facilities.
Headcorn Football Club	Adult pitch Mini (7v7) pitch	Good Good	Good	'Good' quality pitches and changing provision.
Jubilee Playing Field, Staplehurst	Adult pitch Youth (11v11) pitch Youth (9v9) pitch Mini (7v7) pitch Mini (5v5) pitch	Poor Standard Standard Standard Standard	Good	Football Foundation funded site with 'good' changing facilities, but one 'poor' quality adult pitch amongst otherwise 'standard' quality pitches.
King George V Playing Field, Hunton	Adult pitch	Standard	Poor	'Poor' quality changing on a multi-sport site (also cricket and bowls).
King George V Playing Field, Loose	Adult pitch	Standard	Standard	'Standard' quality provision, with some evidence of dog fouling.
Kent Police HQ	Adult pitch 1 Adult pitch 2	Good Good	Good	'Good' quality, well maintained facilities.
Lance Memorial Playing Field, Hollingbourne	Adult pitch	Good	Good	'Good' quality, well maintained facilities.
Langley Recreation Ground	Adult pitch	Standard	Standard	Pitch and changing at the higher end of the 'standard' rating.
Leeds Playing Field	Youth (11v11) pitch	Standard	Standard	'Standard' quality provision.
Madginford Primary School	Mini (7v7) pitch	Standard	-	'Standard' quality with no available changing for community users.
Maidstone Leisure Centre	Adult pitch 1 Adult pitch 2 Youth (9v9) pitch 1 Youth (9v9) pitch 2 Mini (7v7) pitch	Standard Standard Standard Standard Standard	Good	'Standard' quality pitches, with 'good' quality changing in the Leisure Centre. Some car parking issues at peak times.
Mallards Way	Youth (9v9) pitch Mini (5v5) pitch	Standard Poor	-	'Poor' quality mini-pitch with no changing facilities. Poor road access.
Marden Minors FC	Adult pitch Youth (9v9) pitch	Good Good	Poor	'Good' quality pitches with 'poor' quality portacabin changing.
Molehill Copse Primary Academy	Youth (9v9) pitch Mini (7v7) pitch Mini (5v5) pitch	Standard Standard Standard	-	'Standard' pitches with no available changing for community users.

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitches</i>	<i>Pitch</i>	<i>Changing</i>	<i>Comments</i>
New Barming Pavilion	Youth (9v9) pitch	Standard	Good	'Standard' pitch with 'good' quality new changing facilities.
New Line Learning Academy	Adult pitch	Standard	Standard	'Standard' quality provision.
Oakwood Park Grammar School	Adult pitch	Standard	Standard	Pitch at the higher end of 'standard' quality.
Parkwood	Adult pitch	Standard	Standard	Site shared with a Rugby Club
Roseacre Junior School	Youth (9v9) pitch	Standard	-	'Standard' pitches with no available changing for community users.
Shepway Green	Adult pitch	Poor	Standard	'Poor' quality pitch with litter and dog fouling.
South Park	Youth (9v9) pitch	Standard	-	Pitch at the lower end of 'standard' quality and no changing facilities.
Swadelands School	Adult pitch 1 Adult pitch 2	Standard Standard	Good	'Hub Site' with a '3G' pitch and 'good' quality changing provision.
The Kintons	Adult pitch 1 Adult pitch 2 Youth (7v7) pitch Mini (5v5) pitch	Standard Standard Standard Standard	Poor	Pitches at the lower end of 'standard' quality, 'poor' quality changing in a cricket pavilion.
The Maplesden Noakes School	Adult pitch 1 Adult pitch 2 Adult pitch 3 Adult pitch 4	Standard Standard Standard Standard	Standard	Key site for adult football, with 'standard' quality pitches and changing facilities.
The Orchard Ground	Adult pitch Youth (11v11) pitch Youth (9v9) pitch	Standard Standard Standard	Standard	'Standard' quality provision, well managed by a Community Association.
Ulcombe Recreation Ground	Youth (11v11) pitch	Standard	Standard	'Standard' quality pitch on a cricket outfield.
Valley Park School	Adult pitch 1 Adult pitch 2 Adult pitch 3 Youth (9v9) pitch 1 Youth (9v9) pitch 2 Youth (9v9) pitch 3	Good Good Good Good Good Good	Standard	Key site for football with 'good' quality pitches and changing at the higher end of the 'standard' rating.
War Memorial Playing Field	Adult pitch Youth (11v11) pitch	Standard	Poor	'Standard' quality pitches with very 'poor' changing facilities.
William Pitt Field	Adult pitch Youth (9v9) pitch	Standard	Standard	'Standard' quality provision.

5.4.7 Summary of grass pitch quality

The number and percentage of pitches in each quality band is tabulated below. The summary shows that almost one-quarter of pitches are rated as 'good' quality, with fewer than one-in-ten being assessed as 'poor' quality.

<i>Pitch type</i>	<i>Good</i>		<i>Standard</i>		<i>Poor</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Adult 11v11	9	25.7%	23	65.7%	3	8.6%
Youth 11v11	0	0.0%	9	90.0%	1	10.0%
Youth 9v9	6	28.6%	14	66.7%	1	4.7%
Mini-soccer 7v7	2	16.7%	10	83.3%	0	0.0%
Mini-soccer 5v5	0	10.0%	11	91.7%	1	8.3%
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>18.9%</i>	<i>67</i>	<i>74.4%</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>6.7%</i>

The number and percentage of pitches of each type that are served by ‘poor’ quality or no changing facilities is tabulated below. Whilst youth and mini players frequently do not use changing facilities even where they are provided, it is concerning that more than one-third of pitches are served by ‘poor’ quality changing facilities. The adverse impact on user experiences makes it more difficult to recruit and retain new players, particularly women and girls.

<i>Pitch type</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Adult 11v11	6	17.1%
Youth 11v11	4	40.0%
Youth 9v9	8	38.1%
Mini-soccer 7v7	8	55.7%
Mini-soccer 5v5	7	63.6%
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>37.1%</i>

5.4.8 Grass pitch maintenance

Grass football pitches in Maidstone are provided and maintained by a range of organisations including the borough council, parish councils, schools, community organisations and those football clubs who own or lease the grounds they use. As a result, the quality of pitch maintenance is highly variable across the borough ranging from high quality, well maintained pitches at Bearsted and Valley Park School through to the very poor pitch at Chart Sutton.

There is a great deal of informal use of public pitches by dog walkers and joggers and by groups of friends for kickabouts. Also, damage is caused at some open sites by unauthorised activities such as bicycles and golf.

Sport England Guidance in its publication ‘*Natural Turf for Sport*’ (2011), specified a need for a £5,000 to £10,500 per annum budget for undrained or pipe drained football pitches. This figure was increased in its ‘*Protecting Playing Fields*’ (2015) guidance, to £11,700 for an adult football pitch and £9,600 for a youth football pitch. Consultation with pitch providers indicates that current expenditure is typically in the range of £4,000 to £5,000 per pitch, with several sites relying on volunteer labour to maintain standards.

5.4.9 Pitch hire charges

- Grass pitches in Maidstone:** Because there is a wide range of pitch providers hire charges vary across the borough. Prices also vary with regards to the size of pitch and the quality of changing. Prices for a single booking are higher than for bookings on 10 or more occasions as the latter is exempt from VAT. The table below gives examples of current pricing and show that hire charges for Maidstone Borough Council pitches are generally higher than those levied by schools and parish councils.

<i>Pitch Provider</i>	<i>Pitch Size and Description</i>	<i>Price per Match</i>	<i>Price per 10 or more Matches</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Maidstone BC	Adult with Changing	£74.40	£64.80	Use of changing rooms is optional and has a standard charge of £16.80
Maidstone BC	Adult no changing	£57.60	£48	
Maidstone BC	Junior/Mini with Changing	£39.60	£35.80	
Maidstone BC	Junior/Mini Pitch No Changing	£22.80	£19	
Valley Park School	Adult	-	£49	Includes changing
Valley Park School	Junior	-	£19	Includes changing
Chart Sutton Parish Council	Adult	-	£35	Includes changing
Marden Parish Council	Adult	-	£55	Includes changing
Headcorn Parish Council	Adult	£300 per month independent of level of use		Includes changing

- Grass pitches in neighbouring areas:** For comparison, the table below provides information on charging in some neighbouring local authority areas. For ease of comparison the table refers to pitches with changing rooms and showers. The table shows that pitch hire costs in the borough of Maidstone are in line with the charges made in neighbouring areas, so there are no cost factors to encourage imported or exported demand.

<i>Pitch Provider</i>	<i>Pitch Size & Description</i>	<i>Price per Match</i>	<i>Price per 10 or more Matches</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council	Adult	£84	£70	All pitches have changing
	Junior	£33.60	£28	
	Mini-soccer	£63.60	£53	
Swale Borough Council	Adult	£67	£67	No block booking reductions
	Junior	£20	£20	
	Mini	£15	£15	
Canterbury City Council	Adult	£73.50	£61.25	
	Junior 11 v 11	£27.60	£23	
	Youth 9 v 9	£27.60	£23	
	Mini-Soccer	£27.60	£23	
Medway Council	Adult	£80	Block bookings only available to teams in local leagues. Charges to individual clubs are made by these leagues	
	Junior	£35		
	Mini	£24.40		

- **'3G' football turf pitches:** Hire charges for selected '3G' football turf pitches in Maidstone and neighbouring areas are tabulated below. The data shows that pitch hire costs in Maidstone are broadly in line with the charges made in neighbouring areas, so there are no cost factors to encourage imported or exported demand.

<i>Pitch Provider</i>	<i>Pitch Size and Description</i>	<i>Price per Match</i>	<i>Price per 10 or more Matches</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Maidstone United FC	Whole pitch	£265 + VAT	Not available	Stadium pitch Includes changing
Maidstone YMCA	One-third pitch	£46 per match	£40 per match	Peak time charges
Swadelands School	Whole pitch	£65 + VAT = £78 per match	£65 per match	Includes changing
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council	Whole pitch	£64.80 per hour = £129.60 per match	£54 per hour = £108 per match	Includes changing
Kings Hill Sports Park, Tonbridge	Whole pitch	£75 per hour = £112.50 per match	Not available	Costs for adult team hire
Hayesbrook School, Tonbridge	Whole pitch	£80 per hour = £120 per match	Not available	Includes changing

- **Consultees' comments on pitch hire charges:**
 - In responding to the club survey 72% of clubs felt that their current pitches offer value for money. This leaves a sizeable minority of 28% who think that charges do not provide good value.
 - Local leagues indicated that the cost of hiring facilities is a factor in the decline of club numbers
 - Club consultees spoke of the difficulty in booking pitches at Mote Park through MBC's contractor Serco and the fact that booked pitches were not always available when teams arrived.
 - School pitch bookings are often problematic for local clubs. Switchboards are not seen as user friendly and there is difficulty getting through to the person responsible for booking.

5.4.10 Ownership, management and security of access

The ownership, management and security of access of all football pitch sites in Maidstone with community use and used is detailed below:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Ownership</i>	<i>Management</i>	<i>Security of access</i>
Allington Primary School	Kent County Council	Allington Primary School	Unsecured
Barming Heath	Barming Parish Council	Barming Parish Council	Secured
Barming Primary School	Kent County Council	Barming Primary School	Unsecured
Beacon Playing Field	Coxheath Parish Council	Coxheath Parish Council	Secured
Bearsted FC	Otham Parish Council	Bearsted FC	Secured

<i>Site</i>	<i>Ownership</i>	<i>Management</i>	<i>Security of access</i>
Bearsted Green	Maidstone Borough Council	Bearsted Parish Council	Secured
Bower Grove School	Kent County Council	Bower Grove School	Unsecured
Chart Sutton Memorial Playing Field	Chart Sutton Parish Council	Chart Sutton Parish Council	Secured
Civil Service Sports & Social Club	Civil Service Sports & Social Club	Civil Service Sports & Social Club	Secured
Cornwallis Academy	Cornwallis Academy	Cornwallis Academy	Unsecured
Elizabeth Harvie Field	Bearsted Parish Council	Bearsted Parish Council	Secured
Elmscroft Park	Maidstone Borough Council	Maidstone Borough Council	Secured
Gatland Recreation Ground	Maidstone Borough Council	Maidstone Borough Council	Secured
Giddyhorn Recreation Ground	Maidstone Borough Council	Maidstone Borough Council	Secured
Headcorn Football Club	Headcorn Football Club	Headcorn Football Club	Secured
Jubilee Playing Field, Staplehurst	Staplehurst Parish Council	Staplehurst Parish Council	Secured
King George V Playing Field, Hunton	Fields in Trust	Hunton Parish Council	Secured
King George V Playing Field, Loose	Fields in Trust	Loose Parish Council	Secured
Kent Police HQ	Kent Police	Kent Police	Secured
Lance Memorial Playing Field, Hollingbourne	Hollingbourne Parish Council	Hollingbourne Parish Council	Secured
Langley Recreation Ground	Langley Parish Council	Langley Parish Council	Secured
Leeds Playing Field	Leeds Parish Council	Leeds Parish Council	Secured
Madginford Primary School	Kent County Council	Madginford Primary School	Unsecured
Maidstone Leisure Centre	Maidstone Borough Council	Serco	Secured
Mallards Way Playing Field	Maidstone Borough Council	Maidstone Borough Council	Secured
Marden Minors FC	Marden Minors FC	Marden Minors FC	Secured
Molehill Copse Primary Academy	Kent County Council	Molehill Copse Primary Academy	Unsecured
New Barming Pavilion	Barming Parish Council	Barming Parish Council	Secured
New Line Learning Academy	New Line Learning Academy	New Line Learning Academy	Unsecured
Oakwood Park Grammar School	Oakwood Park Grammar School	Oakwood Park Grammar School	Unsecured
Parish Recreation and Sports Field	Broomfield and Kingswood Parish Council	Broomfield and Kingswood Parish Council	Secured
Parkwood	Maidstone Borough Council	Maidstone Borough Council	Secured
Roseacre Primary School	Kent County Council	Roseacre Primary School	Unsecured
Shepway Green	Maidstone Borough Council	Maidstone Borough Council	Secured
South Borough Primary School	Kent County Council	South Borough Primary School	Unsecured

<i>Site</i>	<i>Ownership</i>	<i>Management</i>	<i>Security of access</i>
South Park	Maidstone Borough Council	Serco	Secured
Swadelands School	Swadelands School	Swadelands School	Unsecured
The Gallagher Stadium	Maidstone United FC	Maidstone United FC	Secured
The Kintons	Yalding Parish Council	Yalding Parish Council	Secured
The Maplesden Noakes School	The Maplesden Noakes School	The Maplesden Noakes School	Secured
The Orchard Ground	Allington Community Association	Allington Community Association	Secured
Ulcombe Recreation Ground	Ulcombe Parish Council	Ulcombe Parish Council	Secured
Valley Park School	Valley Park School	Valley Park School	Unsecured
War Memorial Playing Field	Sutton Valance Parish Council	Sutton Valance Parish Council	Secured
William Pitt Field	Lenham Parish Council	Lenham Parish Council	Secured
YMCA Maidstone	YMCA Maidstone	YMCA Maidstone	Secured

Security of access for each type of football pitch in Maidstone is summarised below. It shows that just over 75% of football pitches have secured access:

<i>Pitch type</i>	<i>Total pitches</i>	<i>Number secured</i>	<i>% secured</i>
Full-sized '3G'	5	3	60.0%
Adult 11v11	35	31	88.6%
Youth 11v11	10	10	100.0%
Youth 9v9	21	12	57.1%
Mini-soccer 7v7	12	8	66.7%
Mini-soccer 5v5	12	8	66.7%
TOTAL	95	72	75.8%

5.4.11 The views of local stakeholders on pitch supply

Consultation with the FA's Regional Facilities and Investment Manager and the Kent FA's County Development Manager identified the following key issues in relation to Maidstone:

- **'3G' football turf pitches:** All '3G' pitches in Maidstone appear on the FA's National Register apart from the YMCA pitch and are therefore, available for competitive play. 3G pitches are perceived to be expensive to hire. The FA wishes providers to move to a 'Match Day' rate rather than an hourly hiring rate. Three Secondary Schools in Maidstone have invested in their own '3G' pitches which are let to local clubs, but there is no secured community use of the facilities.
- **Grass football pitches:** Maidstone is an active area for football with active Saturday and Sunday adult leagues and a thriving youth, junior and mini-soccer sector. Changes to the pitch requirements for the various age groups have generally been well implemented. The FA has concerns about falling standards of maintenance at local authority (borough and parish council) pitches. There are concerns about the inability of clubs to apply for funding due to a lack of tenure on their home sites

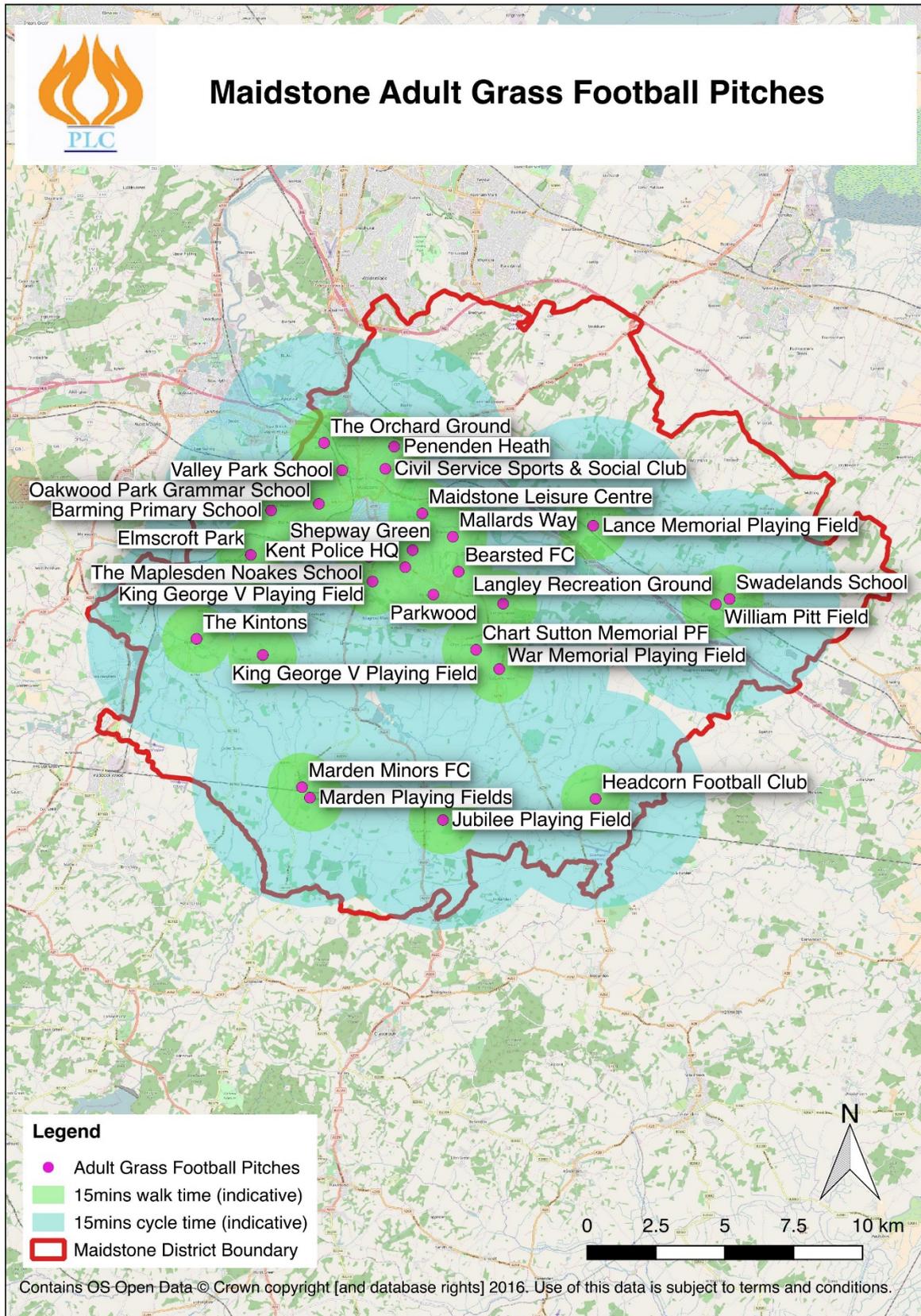
Consultation with FA-affiliated football clubs identified the following issues in relation to Maidstone:

- ***Demand increases:*** MPE FC stated that ‘in general we are happy to use MBC pitches, but some of the private pitches we play away matches on are of a better quality. My concern is that as the number of teams in the league increases, this will put pressure on the availability of MBC pitches’.
- ***‘3G’ pitch provision:*** Vinters FC stated that ‘there is a need for additional ‘3G’ pitches. Maidstone BC's booking system does not work well’. Maidstone Tempest FC also stated that ‘there needs to be more purpose-built facilities, including 3G pitches and more focus on the adult game. Everything is focused on youth football, which is good, but most men’s teams now fold due to lack of players and funds and this is mainly because of the facilities’.
- ***Borough Council pitches:*** Maidstone Tempest FC commented that ‘whilst we understand the challenges of operating and maintaining pitches, the overall standard is very poor. Pitches are generally not well taken care off, at least not for the price we are charged compared to privately owned pitches, which are much better maintained and cared for. However, the lack of available pitches elsewhere means many teams play at council-owned pitches and put up with it, so the council can charge what they want and leave the pitches as they are. There used to be many more pitches at Mote Park but there is now just 2 adult pitches, plus a few smaller pitches. We are grateful to the council for what they offer but it could be much improved’.
- ***Pricing issues:*** Marden Minors FC commented that ‘the borough council gives the impression that they don’t want football on their parks with poor up-keep and over-priced facilities if any’. Maidstone Athletic FC also commented that ‘Maidstone's provision for local football has been in decline for years, to the extent that most teams in Maidstone now seek private hire rather than use the facilities that MBC provide. MBC do not maintain quality pitches, changing facilities or security to go with them, and charge way over the top for their use’.
- ***Pitch shortages in Maidstone:*** Bearsted FC stated that ‘generally there are not sufficient facilities in Maidstone, hence we have to travel to places like Swadelands and Kings Hill that provide training facilities equitable to cost’. Maidstone Athletic FC also commented that ‘although we are essentially a Maidstone based club, we are currently having to travel to Lenham to play due to the poor standard of facilities in Maidstone’.

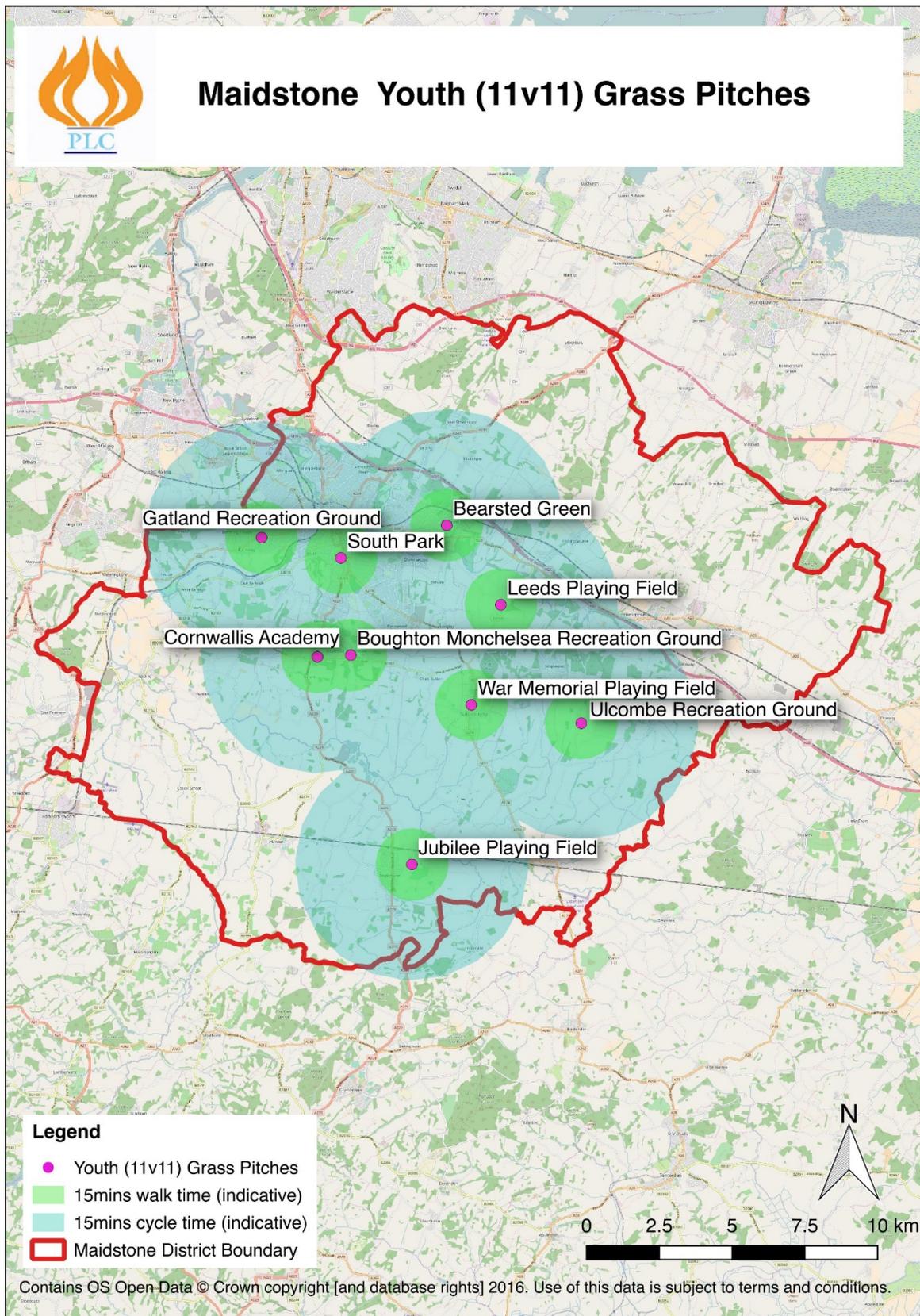
5.5 Geographical distribution

The geographical distribution of football in Maidstone is set out in the maps below. 15-minute walking and cycling time catchments have been marked to illustrate local level accessibility. The 15-minute driving time catchments are not marked, because for all pitch types there is comprehensive drivetime catchment coverage.

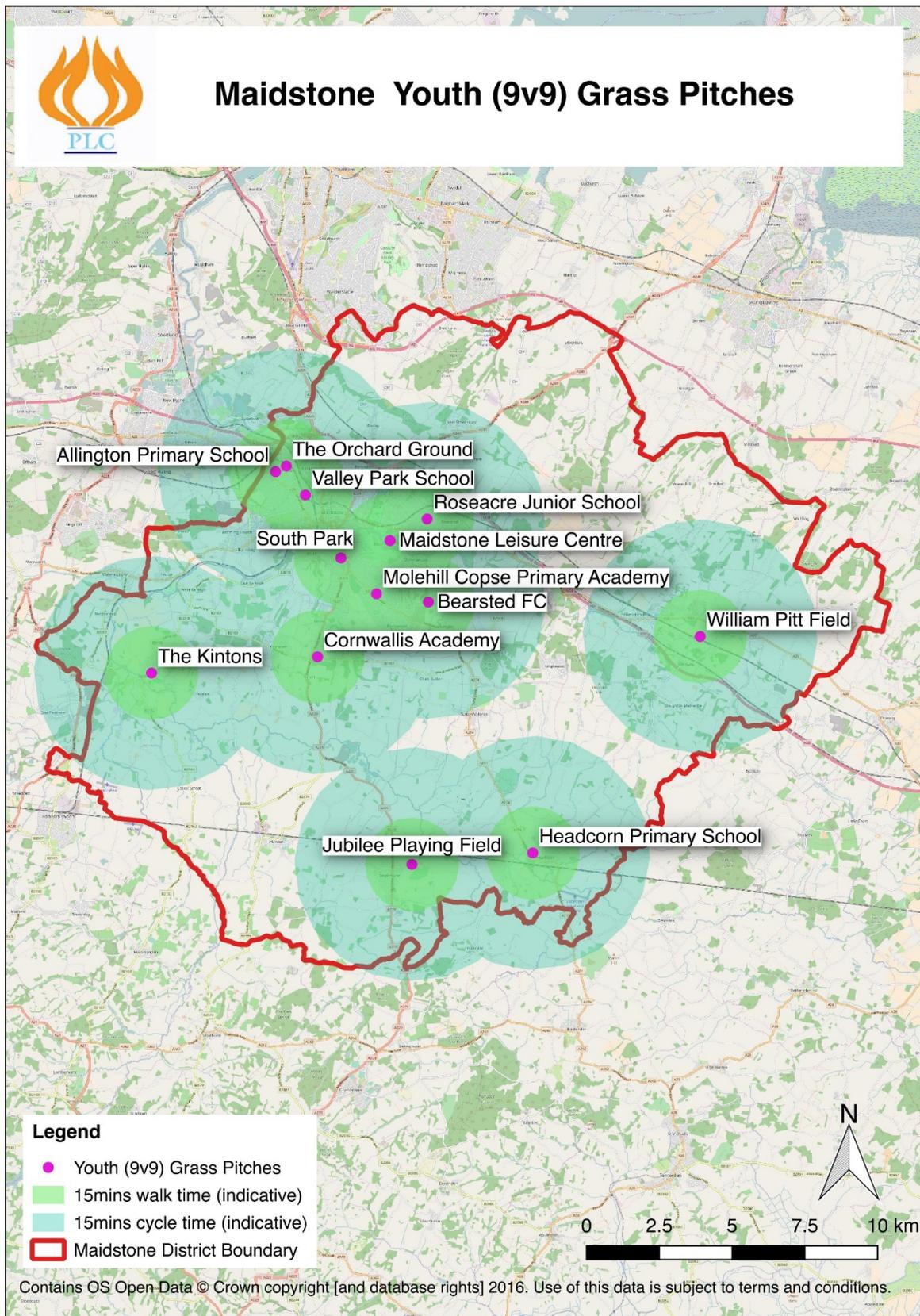
5.5.1 Adult grass pitches



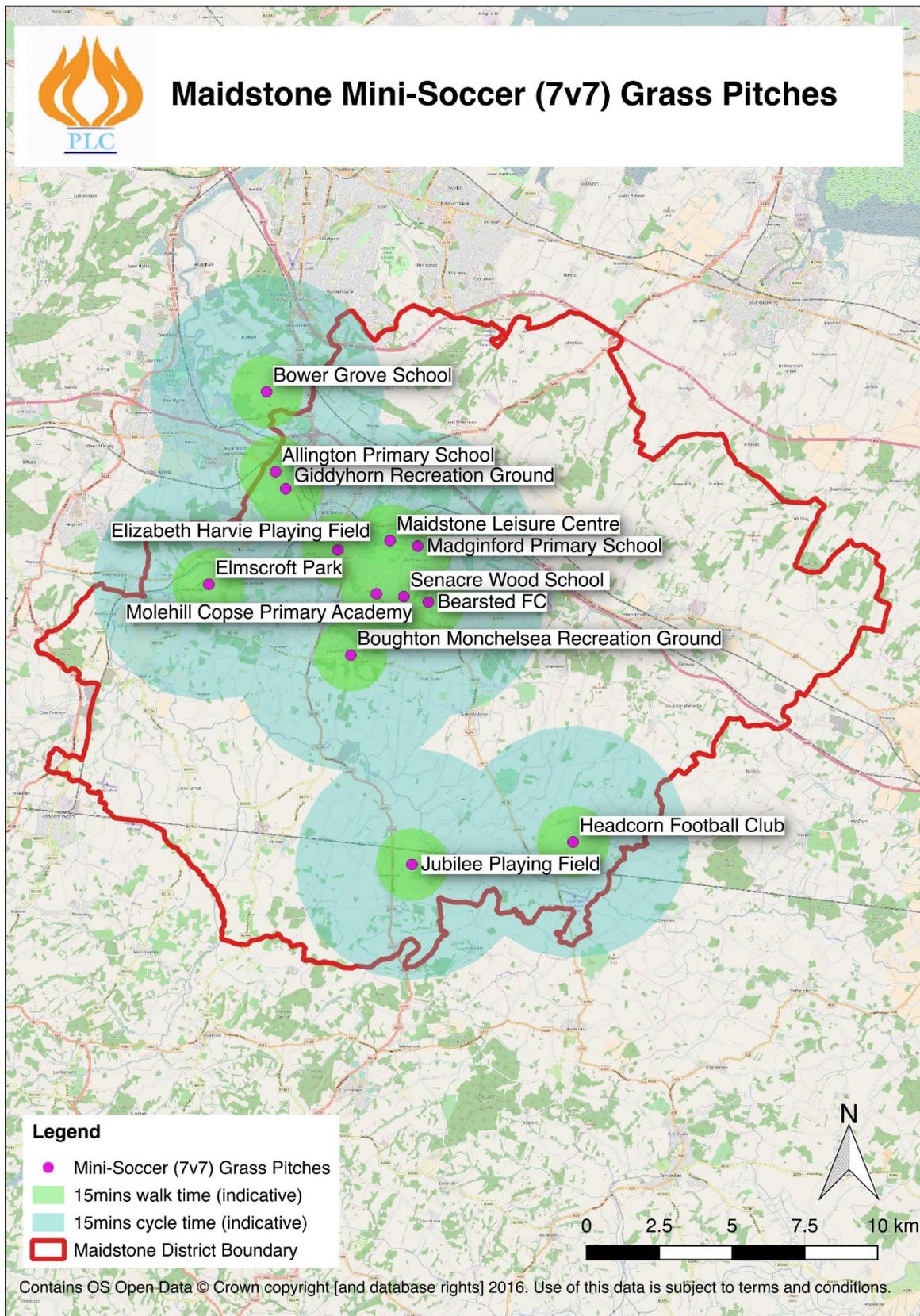
5.5.2 Youth 11v11 grass pitches



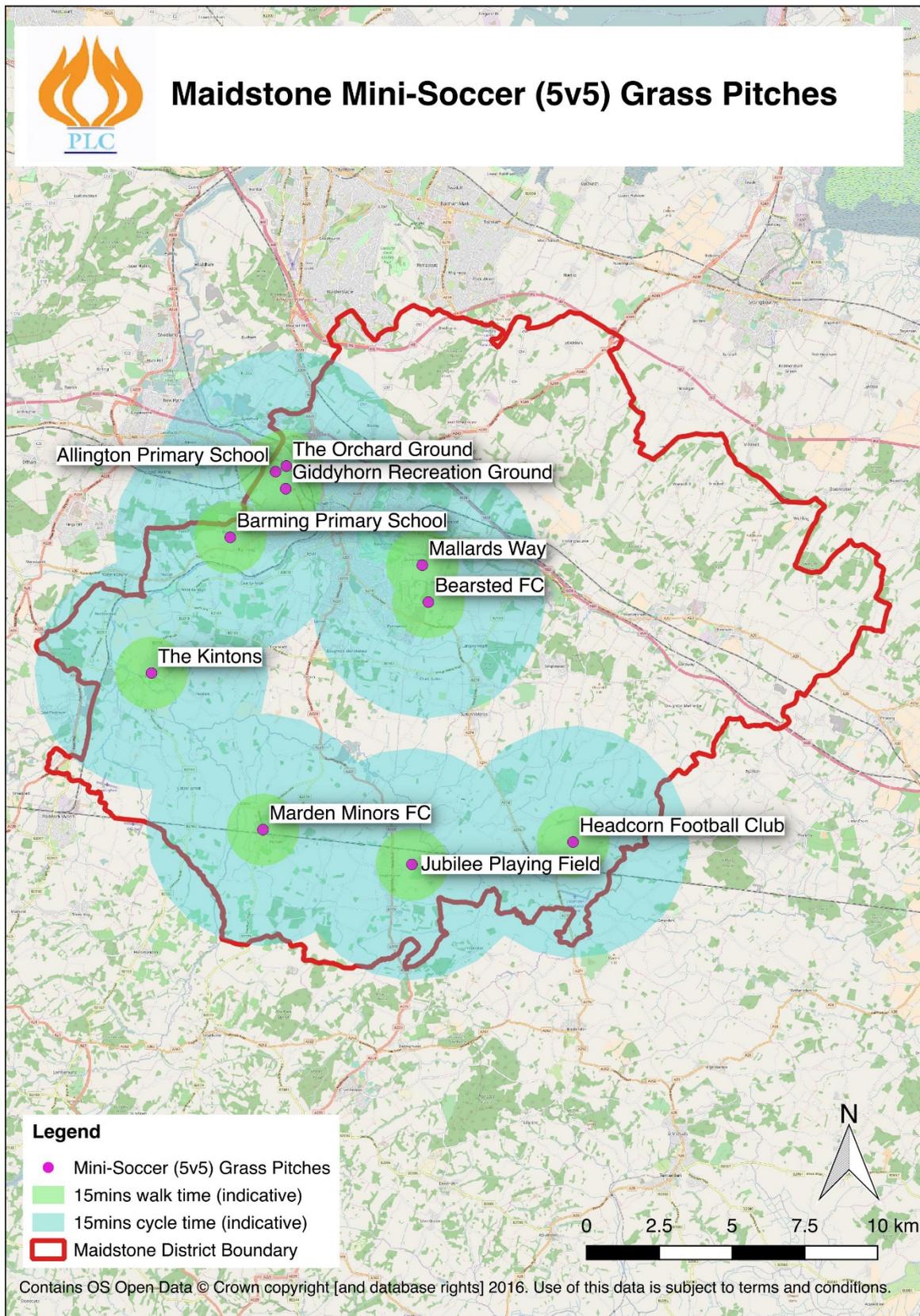
5.5.3 Youth 9v9 grass pitches



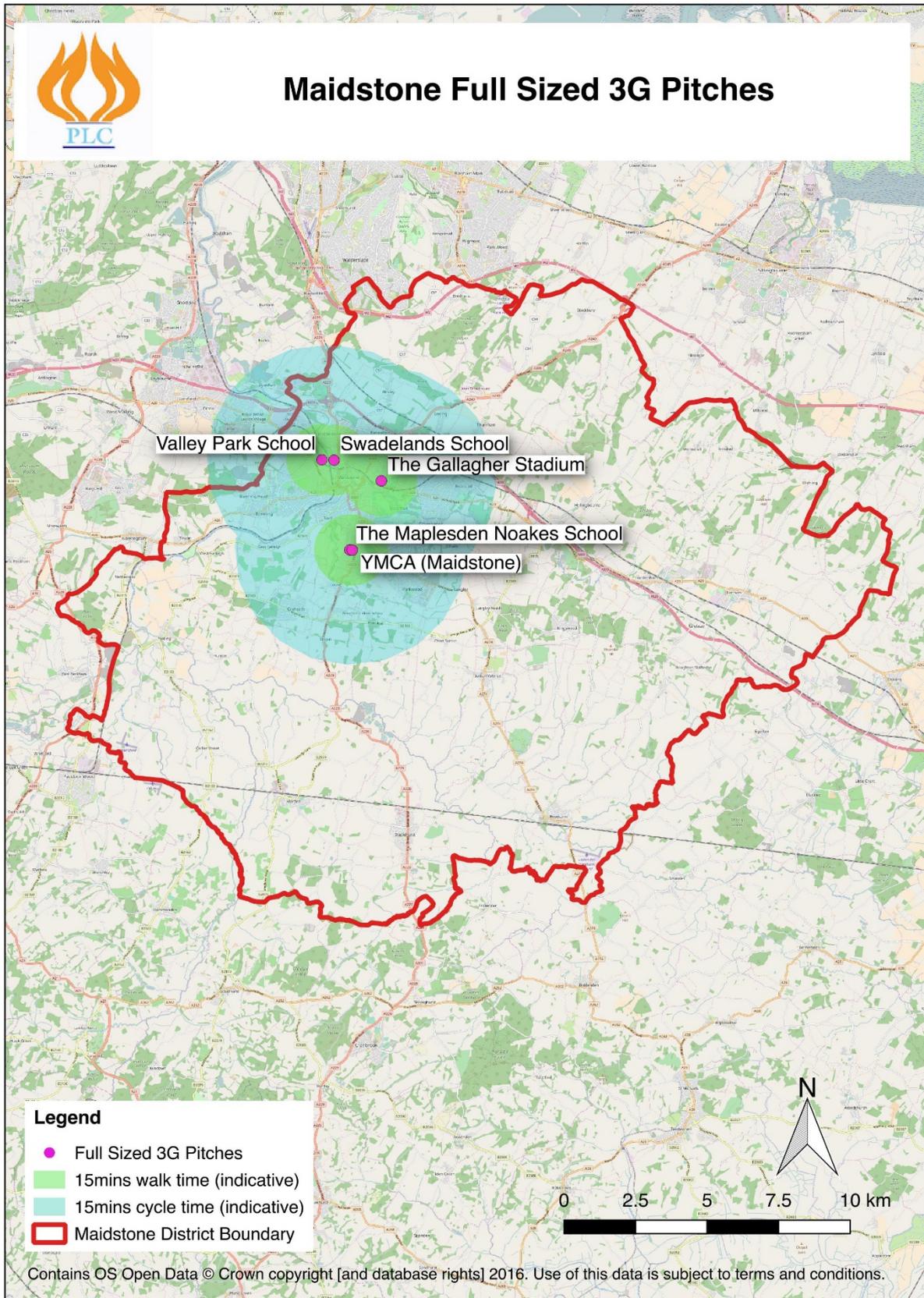
5.5.4 Mini-soccer 7v7 grass pitches



5.5.5 Mini-soccer 5v5 grass pitches



5.5.6 '3G' football turf pitches



The key findings are as follows:

- **Adult grass pitches:** There is comprehensive geographical coverage of the borough.
- **Youth 11v11 grass pitches:** Areas to the south-west and north-east of the borough are the furthest from the nearest pitch, but all are within 15-minutes driving time.
- **Youth 9v9 grass pitches:** Areas to the south-west and north-east of the borough are the furthest from the nearest pitch, but all are within 15-minutes driving time.
- **Mini-soccer 7v7 grass pitches:** Areas to the south-west and east of the borough are the furthest from the nearest pitch, but all are within 15-minutes driving time.
- **Mini-soccer 5v5 grass pitches:** Areas to the east of the borough are the furthest from the nearest pitch, but all are within 15-minutes driving time.
- **Full-sized '3G' football turf pitches:** Provision is concentrated in and around Maidstone, but with road links focused on the town, nowhere within the borough is beyond 15-minutes driving time of the nearest pitch.

5.6 The implications for football in Maidstone

Analysis of local supply of football pitches in Maidstone indicates the following:

- Three adult football, three youth (11v11), one youth (9v9) and eight mini (7v7) pitches in the borough are currently available but unused, which suggests that there is some spare capacity.
- Whilst youth and mini players frequently do not use changing facilities even where they are provided, it is concerning that almost 50% of pitches are served by 'poor' quality or no changing facilities. The adverse impact on user experiences makes it more difficult to recruit and retain new players, particularly women and girls.
- Almost one-quarter of pitches are rated as 'good' quality, with fewer than one-in-ten being assessed as 'poor' quality. Notwithstanding this, there is widespread user criticism of the poor quality of pitches owned by the Borough Council and some evidence that the levels of expenditure on grounds maintenance are below Sport England's recommended levels.
- Just over 75% of pitches have secured community access, but conversely almost 25% do not and as a result access could, in theory, be withdrawn at any time.

5.7 Assessment of current needs

5.7.1 Introduction

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

A comparison between the carrying capacity of a site with how much demand currently takes place there. The carrying capacity of a site is defined as the amount of play it can regularly accommodate without adversely affecting its quality and use. Demand is defined in terms of the number of ‘match equivalent sessions’ at each site.

- An indication of the extent to which pitches are being used during their peak periods.

The site overviews identify the extent to which pitches are:

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

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

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

5.7.2 Adult grass pitches

The supply demand balance is tabulated below. Spare capacity is highlighted by green shading, balanced usage levels are highlighted in yellow and sites that are overused are highlighted in red:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitches</i>	<i>Users</i>	<i>Weekly capacity</i>	<i>Weekly demand</i>	<i>Weekly balance</i>	<i>Peak capacity</i>	<i>Peak demand</i>	<i>Peak balance</i>
Bearsted FC	1	Bearsted FC	3.0	3.0	Balanced	1.0	2.0	-1.0
Chart Sutton Memorial PF	1	Coxheath & Farleigh FC Bearsted FC	1.0	1.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Civil Service Sports & Social Club	1	Park Royal FC	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Elmscroft Park	1	West Farleigh FC	2.0	3.0	-1.0	1.0	2.0	-1.0
Headcorn Football Club	1	Headcorn FC	3.0	3.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Jubilee Playing Field	1	Staplehurst Monarchs FC	1.0	1.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
King George V Playing Field, Hunton	1	Hunton FC	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitches</i>	<i>Users</i>	<i>Weekly capacity</i>	<i>Weekly demand</i>	<i>Weekly balance</i>	<i>Peak capacity</i>	<i>Peak demand</i>	<i>Peak balance</i>
King George V Playing Field, Loose	1	Cross Keys (Sunday) FC	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Kent Police HQ	2	Kent Police FC	6.0	1.0	+5.0	2.0	1.0	+1.0
Lance Memorial Playing Field	1	Hollingbourne FC	3.0	1.5	+1.5	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Langley Recreation Ground	1	Blue Eagles FC	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Maidstone Leisure Centre	2	Maidstone Tempests FC Weaving FC	4.0	2.0	+2.0	2.0	2.0	Balanced
Marden Minors FC	1	Marden Minors FC	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
New Line Learning Academy	2	Whitehawk FC Academy use	4.0	3.5	+0.5	2.0	2.0	Balanced
Oakwood Park Grammar School	1	Maidstone United YFC School use	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	2.0	-1.0
Parish Recreation Ground	1	Roseacre Raiders FC	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Parkwood	1	Maidstone Kestrels FC Parkwood Jupiters FC	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Penenden Heath	1	Vinters FC	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Shepway Green	1	Maidstone International FC	1.0	1.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Swadelands School	2	Kings Park Rangers FC Whitehawk FC School use	4.0	3.0	+1.0	2.0	2.0	Balanced
The Kintons	2	Yalding & Laddingford FC	4.0	3.0	+1.0	2.0	1.0	+1.0
The Maplesden Noakes School	4	Malgo FC School use	8.0	6.5	+1.5	4.0	1.0	+3.0
The Orchard Ground	1	Castle Wanderers FC	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Valley Park School	3	Vinters FC School use	9.0	7.5	+1.5	3.0	3.0	Balanced
War Memorial Playing Field	1	Fisherman's Arms FC Mangravel FC Maidstone Lacrosse Club	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
William Pitt Field	1	Lenham Wanderers FC	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
TOTALS	36	-	77.0	57.0	+20.0	+36.0	+34.0	+2.0

The key findings are:

- Adult teams demand is supplemented by youth (11v11) teams using adult pitches at several sites.
- Peak time utilisation shows an overall deficit at three sites and is balanced at a further 19 sites.

- There is spare capacity at three sites.
- Collective peak time spare capacity in the borough as a whole amounts to 2.0 match equivalent sessions.
- The peak time capacity calculation shows a deficit of 1.0 match equivalent sessions at sites with secured community access.

5.7.3 Youth 11v11 grass pitches

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitches</i>	<i>Users</i>	<i>Weekly capacity</i>	<i>Weekly demand</i>	<i>Weekly balance</i>	<i>Peak capacity</i>	<i>Peak demand</i>	<i>Peak balance</i>
Barming Heath	1	Barming Youth FC	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Beacon Playing Field	1	Coxheath & Farleigh JFC	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Bearsted Green	2	Bearsted FC	4.0	2.0	+2.0	2.0	1.0	+1.0
Gatland Recreation Ground	1	Barming Youth FC	1.0	3.5	-2.5	1.0	4.0	-3.0
Jubilee Playing Field	1	Staplehurst Monarchs FC	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	2.0	-1.0
Leeds Recreation Ground	1	Loose Lions FC	2.0	3.0	-1.0	1.0	2.0	-1.0
The Orchard Ground	1	Castle Colts FC Castle Wanderers FC	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Ulcombe Recreation Ground	1	Headcorn Juniors FC	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
War Memorial Playing Field	1	Loose Lions FC	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
TOTALS	10	-	19.0	19.5	-0.5	10.0	14.0	-4.0

The key findings are:

- Peak time utilisation shows an overall deficit at three sites and is balanced at a further five sites.
- There is spare capacity at one site.
- The collective peak time deficit in the borough to 4.0 match equivalent sessions.
- The collective peak time capacity calculation remains the same if the sites without secured community access is excluded.

5.7.4 Youth 9v9 grass pitches

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitches</i>	<i>Users</i>	<i>Weekly capacity</i>	<i>Weekly demand</i>	<i>Weekly balance</i>	<i>Peak capacity</i>	<i>Peak demand</i>	<i>Peak balance</i>
Allington Primary School	1	Castle Colts FC School use	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Barming Primary School	1	Barming Youth FC	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Beacon Playing Field	1	Coxheath & Farleigh JFC Coxheath Colts	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	2.0	-1.0
Bearsted FC	2	Bearsted FC	12.0	6.0	+6.0	2.0	2.0	Balanced
Cornwallis Academy	1	Maidstone Utd. Ladies FC	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Gatland Recreation Ground	1	Barming Youth FC	1.0	1.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Jubilee Playing Field	1	Staplehurst Monarchs FC	2.0	3.0	-1.0	1.0	2.0	-1.0
Mallards Way	1	MPE FC	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Marden Minors FC	1	Marden Minors FC	4.0	2.0	+2.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Molehill Copse Primary School	1	Loose Lions FC School use	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
New Barming Pavilion	1	Barming Youth FC	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Roseacre Junior School	1	Roseacre Raiders FC School use	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	2.0	-1.0
South Borough Primary School	1	Roseacre Raiders FC School use	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
South Park	1	MPE FC	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
The Orchard Ground	2	Castle Colts FC	4.0	4.0	Balanced	2.0	2.0	Balanced
Valley Park School	3	Vinters FC School use	12.0	10.0	+2.0	3.0	3.0	Balanced
William Pitt Field	1	Lenham Wanderers FC	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
TOTALS	21	-	57.0	45.0	+12.0	21.0	24.0	-3.0

The key findings are:

- Peak time utilisation shows an overall deficit at three sites and is balanced at all other sites.
- There is no peak time spare capacity at any sites.
- The collective peak time deficit in the borough amounts to 3.0 match equivalent sessions.
- The collective peak time capacity calculation shows a deficit of 12.0 match equivalent sessions if the sites without secured community access are excluded.

5.7.5 Mini-soccer 7v7 grass pitches

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitches</i>	<i>Users</i>	<i>Weekly capacity</i>	<i>Weekly demand</i>	<i>Weekly balance</i>	<i>Peak capacity</i>	<i>Peak demand</i>	<i>Peak balance</i>
Allington Primary School	2	Castle Colts FC Castle Wanderers FC School use	8.0	6.0	+2.0	2.0	2.0	Balanced
Barming Primary School	1	Barming Youth FC School use	4.0	4.0	Balanced	1.0	3.0	-2.0
Beacon Playing Field	1	Coxheath & Farleigh JFC	4.0	2.0	+2.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Bearsted FC	1	Bearsted FC	6.0	3.0	+3.0	1.0	2.0	-1.0
Bower Grove School	1	Maidstone Utd. Juniors School use	4.0	3.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Giddyhorn Recreation Ground	1	Maidstone Utd. Ladies FC	4.0	2.0	+2.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Headcorn Football Club	1	Headcorn Juniors FC	4.0	3.0	+1.0	1.0	2.0	-1.0
Jubilee Playing Field	1	Staplehurst Monarchs FC	4.0	2.0	+2.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Madgingford Primary School	1	MPE FC School use	4.0	3.0	+1.0	1.0	2.0	-1.0
Molehill Copse Primary School	1	Loose Lions FC School use	4.0	3.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
The Kintons	1	Yalding & Laddingford FC	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
TOTALS	12	-	48.0	32.0	+16.0	12.0	17.0	-5.0

The key findings are:

- Peak time utilisation shows an overall deficit at four sites and is balanced at all other sites.
- There is no spare capacity at any of the utilised sites.
- The collective peak time deficit in the borough amounts to 5.0 match equivalent sessions.
- The collective peak time capacity calculation shows a deficit of 11.0 match equivalent sessions if the sites without secured community access are excluded.

5.7.6 Mini-soccer 5v5 grass pitches

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitches</i>	<i>Users</i>	<i>Weekly capacity</i>	<i>Weekly demand</i>	<i>Weekly balance</i>	<i>Peak capacity</i>	<i>Peak demand</i>	<i>Peak balance</i>
Allington Primary School	1	Castle Colts FC Castle Wanderers School use	4.0	6.0	-2.0	1.0	3.0	-2.0
Barming Primary School	1	Barming Youth FC School use	4.0	3.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Beacon Playing Field	1	Coxheath & Farleigh JFC	4.0	1.0	+3.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Elizabeth Harvie Field	1	Rosecare Raiders FC	4.0	4.0	Balanced	1.0	2.0	-1.0
Giddyhorn Recreation Ground	2	Barming Youth FC Maidstone Utd. Ladies FC	8.0	4.0	+4.0	2.0	2.0	Balanced
Headcorn FC	1	Headcorn Juniors FC	6.0	2.0	+4.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Jubilee Playing Field	1	Staplehurst Monarchs FC	4.0	1.0	+3.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Mallards Way	1	MPE FC	2.0	4.0	-2.0	1.0	2.0	-1.0
Molehill Copse Primary School	1	Loose Lions FC School use	4.0	3.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
The Kintons	1	Yalding & Laddingford FC	4.0	1.0	+3.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Valley Park School	1	Vinters FC	4.0	4.0	Balanced	1.0	2.0	-1.0
TOTALS	12	-	48.0	33.0	+15.0	12.0	17.0	-5.0

The key findings are:

- Peak time utilisation shows an overall deficit at three sites and is balanced at all other sites.
- There is no spare capacity at any of the utilised sites.
- The collective peak time deficit in the borough amounts to 5.0 match equivalent sessions.
- The collective peak time capacity calculation shows a deficit of 9.0 match equivalent sessions if the sites without secured community access are excluded.

5.7.7 '3G' football turf pitches

The methodology for assessing the used capacity of full-sized artificial turf pitches is based upon their used capacity in the peak period:

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Peak hours</i>	<i>Utilised peak hours</i>	<i>Peak utilisation rate</i>
Swadelands School	17.00 - 21.00 Mon - Fri	15	75%
The Gallagher Stadium	18.00 - 22.00 Mon - Fri	20	100%
The Maplesden Noakes School	17.00 - 21.30 Mon - Fri	18	80%
Valley Park School	18.00 - 21.00 Mon - Fri	12	80%
YMCA (Maidstone)	18.00 - 22.00 Mon - Fri	15	75%

- The Gallagher Stadium pitch is fully utilised in the peak period.
- There is limited spare peak time capacity the other four pitches, which collectively amounts to 17.5 hours per week (equivalent to 0.7 pitches), although this figure reduces to 5 hours per week (equivalent to 0.25 pitches) if the sites without secured community access are excluded.

Another way to assess ‘3G’ pitch needs is to apply the FA’s guide figure of one full-sized pitch per 42 teams. With 232 football teams in Maidstone at present, there is a requirement for 5.52 pitches the borough. Existing provision of five full-sized pitches should meet the needs of 210 teams, although the limited peak time capacity at the Maplesden Noakes facility reduced effective availability to the equivalent of 4.25 pitches. This creates an effective need for 1.27 full-sized ‘3G’ pitches.

5.8 Assessment of future needs

5.8.1 Population growth

MBC’s ‘Strategic Housing Market Assessment’ (2015) confirmed the objectively assessed housing need for the borough over the period 2011 to 2031 as 17,660 dwellings. Of these 8,335 have already been built or granted planning permission. This scale of development will increase the borough’s population by 22,380 to 177,523 people by 2031. This will represent an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.

5.8.2 Potential changes in demand

Changes in demand for football in the in future can also be modelled on a trend-based projection. Three sets of data can help to inform this:

- **‘Active People’ survey:** The national rates of football participation between 2005 and the present, as measured by the ‘Active People’ survey, are as follows:

2005/6	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/1	2011/2	2012/3	2013/4	2014/5	2015/6	% Change
4.97%	5.18%	5.08%	4.96%	4.98%	4.94%	4.25%	4.39%	4.34%	4.28%	-0.69%

- **Local participation trends:** The national trends are reflected in Maidstone where there has been a decline in adult football demand in recent years. For example, the Maidstone and District Football League, which is the grass-roots Saturday competition now has 22 teams in two divisions compared with six divisions of 12 to 14 teams at its height in the late 1980s. Similarly, the Maidstone and Mid-Kent League which plays on a Sunday has reduced from 72 teams in the early 1990s peak, to 32 teams in season 2016/17.
- **FA strategic targets:** The FA’s ‘National Game Strategy 2016 - 2019’ sets the following participation targets:
 - Maintain the existing numbers of adult male, female and disability teams.
 - Increase female youth participation by 11%.

Balancing past trends that identify falling demand against the target increases in participation suggests that projecting future need based in current demand patterns is a reasonable basis for forecasting.

5.8.3 Site-specific pressures

Maidstone Borough Council needs to identify sites upon which it can deliver its housing targets. Whilst planning policy offers protection to playing pitches, those sites that do not currently accommodate formal football activity may be vulnerable unless it can be proved that they are needed to accommodate existing or future shortfalls in supply or serve some other green space functions.

5.8.4 Potential changes in supply

There are no known development threats to any existing pitch sites, including those that are currently disused and no known plans for additional provision. However, there is no secured community use of most of the pitches on school sites and so access could, in theory, be withdrawn at any time. For most types of grass pitch, there is currently sufficient capacity at secured sites to cover this eventuality, apart from:

- **Youth 11v11 pitches:** There would be a small deficit of 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week if access to the pitch on a school site was lost.
- **Youth 9v9 pitches:** There would be a deficit of 7.5 match equivalent sessions per week if sites without secured community access are excluded.
- **Mini-soccer 7v7 pitches:** There would be a small deficit of 7.5 match equivalent sessions per week if sites without secured community access are excluded.

To secure existing pitches to meet both current and future needs, a priority should be to negotiate secured community use agreements with as many schools as possible.

5.8.5 Existing spare capacity

Existing spare football pitch capacity in the peak period has been calculated in section 5.7 above and is as follows:

<i>Pitch type</i>	<i>Match equivalent sessions</i>	<i>Pitch equivalents</i>
Adult	2.0	1.0
Youth 11v11	-4.0	-2.0
Youth 9v9	-3.0	-1.5
Mini-soccer 7v7	-5.0	-1.25
Mini-soccer 5v5	-5.0	-1.25
‘3G’ football turf pitches	14 hours	0.7

5.8.6 Future grass pitch needs

Future formal grass pitch needs to 2031 are modelled below using ‘Team Generation Rates’ (TGRs), which identify how many people in a specified age group in the borough are required to generate one team. These are then applied to projected changes in population to identify the likely number of teams in the future.

<i>Sport</i>	<i>Age range</i>	<i>Current population</i>	<i>Current teams</i>	<i>TGR</i>	<i>Population 2031</i>	<i>Teams 2031</i>	<i>Extra teams</i>	<i>Extra pitches</i>
Adult male football	17-45	28,710	57	1: 504	32,844	65	8	4
Adult female football	17-45	29,280	1	1: 29,280	33,496	1	0	0
Boys youth 11v11 football	12-16	3,984	57	1: 70	4,558	65	8	4
Girls youth 11v11 football	12-16	4,016	1	1: 4,016	4,594	1	0	0
Boys youth 9v9 football	10-11	1,594	38	1: 42	1,824	43	5	3
Girls youth 9v9 football	10-11	1,606	10	1: 161	1,837	11	1	1
Mini-soccer 7v7 (mixed)	8-9	4,039	34	1: 119	4,621	39	5	2
Mini-soccer 5v5 (mixed)	6-7	3,961	34	1: 117	4,531	39	5	2

5.8.7 Future '3G' pitch needs

Future '3G' pitch needs to 2031 are modelled below based upon the following:

- The existing number of FA-affiliated teams seeking access to '3G' pitches in Maidstone at present is 232. On the basis of the FA calculation of 42 teams equating to demand for one '3G' pitch, this creates current demand for 5.52 pitches.
- The projected number of teams seeking access to '3G' pitches in Maidstone in 2031 is 264. On the basis of the FA calculation of 42 teams equating to demand for one '3G' pitch, this creates future demand for 6.29 pitches.

5.9 Key findings and issues

5.9.1 What are the main characteristics of current supply and demand?

- ***Demand trends:*** There has been a long-term decline in adult football in the borough, mirroring wider national trends.
- ***Women and Girls:*** Women and girls football is significantly under-developed in Maidstone, with only one adult women's teams and one girl's youth 11v11 team. However, there are ten girl's youth 9v9 teams and girls are also well represented in mixed mini-soccer teams, so there appears to be an issue with participation drop-off in the older age groups.
- ***Poor quality changing facilities:*** More than one-third of grass football pitches in Maidstone are served by poor quality or no changing facilities. The impact of this on user experiences may be one factor behind the poor rates of female participation.
- ***Perception of poor quality grass pitches:*** Although fewer than 7% of football pitches in the borough were assessed as 'poor' using the FA's pitch quality audit methodology, there is a widespread perception amongst local clubs that the problem is more widespread. This is probably due to the fact that that most borough council owned pitches are towards the lower end of the 'standard' quality rating, but several clubs are opting not to hire council pitches as a result. The pitches at Maidstone Leisure Centre are significantly underused for this reason.

- **Dependence on unsecured school pitches:** Almost 30% of football pitches in the borough are on school sites with no secured community use, so access could in theory be rescinded at any time. The issue is particularly significant for ‘3G’ pitches, where three of the five full-sized pitches are on unsecured education sites.
- **Perception of high pitch prices:** Several local clubs were critical of what they perceive to be high prices for pitch hire. Comparison with the charges in neighbouring areas reveals that pricing levels are comparable, so the perception of high prices perhaps relates more to the value for money in relation to what are frequently regarded as poor-quality pitches and changing facilities.

5.9.2 Is there enough accessible and secured community use to meet current demand?

- **Adult grass pitches:** There is collective spare capacity of 2.0 weekly match equivalent sessions at accessible, community-secured sites, which equates to one ‘standard’ quality pitch. The three sites with spare capacity are spread throughout the borough, offering local potential to accommodate additional use, as are a further four pitches available for community use but currently unused.
- **Youth 11v11 pitches:** There is a deficit of 4.0 weekly match equivalent sessions at the community-secured sites, which equates to 2.0 ‘standard’ quality pitches.
- **Youth 9v9 pitches:** There is a deficit of 12.0 weekly match equivalent sessions at community-secured sites, which equates to around 6.0 ‘standard’ quality pitches.
- **Mini-soccer 7v7 pitches:** There is a deficit of 11.0 weekly match equivalent sessions at community-secured sites, which equates to around 3.0 ‘standard’ quality pitches.
- **Mini-soccer 5v5 pitches:** There is collective spare capacity of 9.0 weekly match equivalent sessions at the community-secured sites, which equates to 3.0 ‘standard’ quality pitches.
- **‘3G’ football turf pitches:** At sites with secured community access, there is 35 hours of peak time use. Total current demand is for 66 hours of peak use per week, so if access to the pitches on education sites was to be withdrawn, there would be a shortfall of 31 hours of peak time usage per week.

5.9.3 Is the accessible provision of suitable quality and appropriately maintained?

- **Quality:** Pitch quality was rated ‘poor’ at only seven out of 91 football pitches in the borough. However, quality is at the lower end of ‘standard’ at a further eight pitches, many of which are likely to fall into the ‘poor’ category in the future, without enhanced maintenance.
- **Maintenance:** Consultation with pitch providers indicates that current annual expenditure is typically in the range of £4,000 to £5,000 per pitch, with several sites relying on volunteer labour to maintain standards. These figures compare with Sport England’s latest cost guidance of £11,700 per annum for an adult football pitch and £9,600 per annum for a youth football pitch.

- ***Fewer but better:*** Notwithstanding the above, a case can be made for concentrating grounds maintenance resources on fewer, but better quality pitches, to provide a similar or better carrying capacity. The advantages of this approach would be that football hub sites could be developed, ideally based on the FA's model of focusing '3G' and good quality grass pitches at a limited number of sites to deliver a more sustainable operation.

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

- ***Population growth:*** The borough's population is projected to increase by 22,380 to 177,523 people by 2031. This will represent an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.
- ***Changes in demand:*** Balancing past trends that identify falling demand against the target increases in participation suggests that projecting future need based on current demand patterns is a reasonable basis for forecasting.
- ***Changes in supply:*** There are no known development threats to any existing pitch sites, including those that are currently disused. However, there is no secured community use of any of the pitches on school sites and so access could, in theory, be withdrawn at any time.
- ***Existing spare capacity:*** Apart from adult grass pitches, where collective spare capacity in the borough is equivalent to one full pitch or more, all the other pitch types have a current shortfall in provision.
- ***Future needs:*** Based on projected population growth, these have been assessed as follows:
 - Adult grass pitches: 4 additional pitches.
 - Youth 11v11 grass pitches: 4 additional pitches.
 - Youth 9v9 grass pitches: 4 additional pitches.
 - Mini-soccer 7v7 pitches: 2 additional pitches.
 - Mini-soccer 5v5 pitches: 2 additional pitches.
 - '3G' football turf pitches: 0.77 additional pitches.

5.9.5 Is there enough accessible and secured provision to meet future demand?

The situation at community accessible pitches in the borough is summarised below. Match equivalent sessions have been converted into pitch requirements:

<i>Pitch type</i>	<i>Current Secured pitches</i>	<i>Current secured Peak spare pitch capacity</i>	<i>Current Peak needs</i>	<i>Extra peak by 2031</i>	<i>Total peak by 2031</i>	<i>Additional Extra secured pitch needs</i>
Adult football	27	1.0	26	4	30	5
Youth 11v11	10	-2.0	12	4	16	8
Youth 9v9	12	-6.0	18	4	22	11
Mini 7v7	8	-3.0	11	2	13	5
Mini 5v5	8	-3.0	11	2	13	5
'3G'	4.5*	-1.02	5.52	0.77	6.29	1.79

* Includes all pitches with community access

5.10 Scenario Testing

5.10.1 Introduction

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

5.10.2 Scenario 1: Re-instating un-used and disused pitches

- Rationale:** There are eight un-used or disused adult football pitches (with collective weekly capacity of 16.0 match equivalent sessions), six youth 11v11 pitches (with collective weekly capacity of 12.0 match equivalent sessions), five youth 9v9 pitches (with collective weekly capacity of 10.0 match equivalent sessions) and 17 mini 7v7 pitches (with collective weekly capacity of 34.0 match equivalent sessions). It would therefore make sense to resume use and/or reinstate these pitches to meet additional future demand, rather than making entirely new provision.
- Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:

 - Most pitches were used until recently, so could be reinstated at relatively low cost.
 - Eight of the have secured community access so usage would be assured.
- Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of this scenario are as follows:

 - Usage was discontinued at all the sites because of localised falling demand and despite capacity issues at many of the currently used sites in Maidstone, clubs and teams have declined to take advantage of the available alternatives at present.
 - Use at some sites was discontinued because of pitch quality issues which will need to be addressed if the pitch capacity is to be maximised and users attracted back.
 - Some of the school sites with previous community use permitted access on a temporary basis and may not be prepared to re-instate it.
- Conclusions:** This scenario offers some advantages for enhancing local pitch capacity on a relatively cost-effective basis and should therefore be examined further on a site-by-site basis.

5.10.3 Scenario 2: Accessing pitches on education sites

- **Rationale:** Four adult football pitches (with collective weekly capacity of 8.0 match equivalent sessions), three youth 11v11 pitches (with collective weekly capacity of 6.0 match equivalent sessions) and six mini-soccer 7v7 pitches (with collective weekly capacity of 12.0 match equivalent sessions) are on school sites with no current community access. These represent one option for expanding current and future pitch capacity.
- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - The pitches already exist and therefore could be brought into use at little or no additional cost.
 - There would be opportunities to establish closer school-club links if community-based clubs were playing on school sites.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - None of the schools has community use at present, so there is no guarantee that they would be prepared to commence such an arrangement.
 - None of the sites has a formal Community Use Agreement, so continued access would not be secured.
- **Conclusions:** This scenario offers some advantages for enhancing local pitch capacity on a relatively cost-effective basis and should therefore be examined further on a site-by-site basis.

5.10.4 Scenario 3: De-commission all council-operated football pitches

- **Rationale:** Maidstone Borough Council provides 13 football pitches at eight sites in the borough in the borough, all which are either poor quality, or towards the lower end of 'standard' quality. In addition, six further pitches at Council-owned sites are currently unused. Additionally:
 - Five Council sites have only a single used pitch, which creates a relatively expensive maintenance regime.
 - Local demand for adult pitches has been falling and the first sites where usage has been discontinued are Council-owned, because they are perceived to be relatively poor quality and comparatively expensive.
 - The quality of Council-owned pitches is believed by local clubs to have fallen in recent years, which suggest that additional expenditure on maintenance will be required if usage levels are to be sustained in the future.

Providing pitches is a permissive rather than a statutory requirement for local authorities, therefore Maidstone Borough Council is under no obligation to provide pitches. If alternatives were available therefore, the Council could decommission all its pitches.

- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - The table below models the effects of removing Council pitches, but re-instating un-used and disused pitches, plus those on school sites with no current community access. The data shows that with some rationalisation (conversion of some pitch types which show a surplus to those types showing a deficit), all current football needs could theoretically be met without using Council-owned pitches.

<i>Pitch type</i>	<i>Secured non-MBC pitches</i>	<i>Current peak needs</i>	<i>Deficit at non-MBC pitches</i>	<i>Unused non-MBC pitches</i>	<i>Pitches with no access</i>	<i>Position including unused/no access pitches</i>
Adult football	26	26	0	3	4	+7
Youth 11v11	9	12	-3	2	3	+2
Youth 9v9	9	18	-9	2	0	-7
Mini 7v7	7	11	-4	10	6	+12
Mini 5v5	6	11	-5	0	0	-5

- There would be significant pitch maintenance cost savings for the Council.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - As indicated in Scenario 1 above, some of the disused pitches were abandoned because of their poor quality and therefore there would be capital cost implications in re-instating them to a standard that would sustain sufficient use to compensate for the loss of the Council pitches.
 - As indicated in Scenario 2 above, schools are under no obligation to hire their pitches for community use and many are unwilling to do so for a variety of reasons including wear-and-tear to the playing surfaces that impacts adversely upon education use and logistical problems of accessing school fields out of hours. For this reason, no assumptions could be made about community accessibility to school pitches.
- **Conclusions:** It would be unacceptably risky to decommission all the Council’s football pitches, given the high degree of uncertainty over the quality of the currently unused pitch stock and the difficulties of securing community use of school pitches. However, the Council should keep the position under regular review and could decommission pitches at the single pitch sites should demand patterns permit, which would improve the logistics of its grounds maintenance regime. Furthermore, any sites with decommissioned pitches should be kept as public open space, to allow for the re-instatement of pitches in the future, in response to increases in demand.

5.11 Policy recommendations

5.11.1 Introduction

The recommendations in relation to football are made in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 74, which stipulates that existing open space including playing pitches, should not be built upon unless:

- An assessment has taken place which has clearly shown the open space to be surplus to requirements, or;
- The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality, in a suitable location, or;
- The development is for alternative sport and recreation provision, the needs for which clearly outweighs the loss.

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

5.11.2 Protect

Recommendation 1 - Safeguarding existing provision: The Maidstone Playing Pitch Strategy comprises a robust and evidence-based assessment of current and future needs for football in the borough. The Strategy has identified a need for all current and disused football pitch sites to be retained, on the basis of the specific identified roles that each can play in delivering the needs of the sport and/or other wider open space functions in Maidstone both now and in the future. It is therefore recommended that existing planning policies continue to support the retention of all sites, based upon the evidence in the Playing Pitch Strategy. In the event that any pitch sites do become the subject of development proposals, this will only be permissible they are replaced and meet policy exception E4 of Sport England’s Playing Fields Policy. This states that ‘the playing field or playing fields which would be lost as a result of the proposed development must be replaced by a playing field or playing fields of an equivalent or better quality and of equivalent or greater quantity, in a suitable location and subject to equivalent or better management arrangements, prior to the commencement of development’.

Recommendation 2 - Security of tenure: Almost 25% of football pitches with community use in Maidstone do not have security of tenure, principally those that are on school sites. The absence of a secured Community Use Agreement at a school site makes it impossible to assume the continued availability of the pitches for the community. It also makes it impossible for a school to apply for external grant funding to improve their facilities. This will include the receipt of funds from developer contributions. It is therefore recommended that efforts are made to achieve security of Community Use Agreements at sites without them at present.

5.11.3 Enhance

Recommendation 3 - Improving existing ‘poor’ quality provision: Six pitches (6.7%) in the borough are rated as ‘poor’ quality and several more are rated at the lower end of ‘standard’ quality. Additionally, 33 pitches (37.1%) are served by ‘poor’ quality or no changing facilities. This reduces the quality of playing experience, may present child protection issues in relation to simultaneous male and female and adult and junior use of changing provision and may deter some potential participants. Subject to security of tenure issues, it is recommended that:

- Site owners concerned should be supported to apply for external funding for facility enhancements, including the receipt of developer contributions (see below) where the usage capacity would be enhanced.

- If funding is not available, sites could be designated as exclusively adult or youth sites, to avoid the problems of mixed adult-youth changing areas.
- Sites with poor playing surfaces should apply to be part of the FA Pitch Improvement Programme, which will offer a programme to improve the short, medium and long-term maintenance of pitches to improve pitch quality.

Recommendation 4 - Developer contributions (enhancements): Some of the additional demand for football arising from the proposed housing development in Maidstone to 2031, should be accommodated through enhancements to existing pitches and facilities. It is recommended that the site-specific action plan in the Maidstone Playing Pitch Strategy be used as the basis for determining facility enhancements that demonstrably relate to the scale and location of specific developments and that an appropriate level of financial contributions be sought under CIL arrangements, to cover the capital and revenue implications of the enhancements. To facilitate this, specific larger playing pitch projects should be listed as ‘relevant infrastructure’, under CIL Regulation 123.

5.11.4 Provide

Recommendation 5 - ‘3G’ football turf pitches: There is a current shortfall of one full-sized ‘3G’ pitch in the borough, with demand equivalent to a further full-sized pitch being generated by population growth by 2031. ‘3G’ pitches are an important component of football provision, because their all-weather nature and floodlights enable a high volume of play to be accommodated on good quality playing surfaces. The provision of additional ‘3G’ pitches to meet needs identified in the Maidstone Playing Pitch Strategy, should be supported as a priority in appropriate locations.

Recommendation 6 - Developer contributions (new provision): Most of the extra demand for football arising from the proposed housing development in Maidstone to 2031, will need to be accommodated through the provision of new pitches and facilities. It is recommended that the site-specific action plan in the Maidstone Playing Pitch Strategy be used as the basis for determining which proposed new facilities demonstrably relate to the scale and location of specific developments and that an appropriate level of financial contributions be sought under Section 106 or CIL arrangements, to cover their capital and revenue cost implications. To facilitate this, specific larger playing pitch projects should be listed as ‘relevant infrastructure’, under CIL Regulation 123.

5.12 Action Plan

5.12.1 Introduction

In the context of the high-level recommendations above, the tables below set out the football site-specific action plan to guide the implementation of the strategy. The abbreviations stand for MBC - Maidstone Borough Council and FA - Football Association. The capital cost estimates are based upon Sport England’s ‘Facility Costs - Second Quarter of 2016’ (2016).

5.12.2 Key strategic actions

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Cost estimates</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Community access to education pitches	Pursue formal Community Use agreements at all existing and any future proposed pitches on education sites.	MBC	Academies and schools	Possible funding for improvements to site accessibility.	High
Securing developer contributions	Ensure that policy provision is made to secure developer contributions towards new and improved football facilities.	MBC	Developers	-	High

5.12.3 Site specific actions - Sites with community use and used

- ***'3G' football turf pitches:***

<i>Site</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Cost estimates</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Swadelands School	No secured community use	Pursue Community Use Agreement	MBC	Swadelands School	-	Medium
The Gallagher Stadium	Future pitch resurfacing may preclude community use	Keep the situation under review	Maidstone United FC	-	-	Low
Maplesden Noakes School	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-
Valley Park School	No secured community use	Pursue Community Use Agreement	MBC	Valley Park School	-	Medium
YMCA (Maidstone)	Pitch dimensions too small for adult 11v11	Prioritise youth, mini-soccer and small-sided games.	YMCA	-	-	Low

- ***Grass football pitches:***

<i>Site</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Cost estimates</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Allington Primary School	No secured community use	Pursue Community Use Agreement	MBC	Allington Primary School	-	Medium
Barming Heath	No on-site changing	Review need for changing facilities	Barming Parish Council	User clubs	-	Medium
Barming Primary School	No secured community use	Pursue Community Use Agreement	MBC	Barming Primary School	-	Medium
Beacon Playing Field	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-
Bearsted FC	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-
Bearsted Green	No accessible changing facilities	Negotiate access to cricket pavilion	Bearsted FC	Bearsted CC	-	Medium
Bower Grove School	No secured community use	Pursue Community Use Agreement	MBC	Bower Grove School	-	Medium

<i>Site</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Cost estimates</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Chart Sutton Memorial PF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor quality pitch • Poor quality changing 	Feasibility study for pitch and changing improvements	Chart Sutton PC	-	£7,500	High
Civil Service S&SC	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-
Cornwallis Academy	No secured community use	Pursue Community Use Agreement	MBC	Cornwallis Academy	-	Medium
Elizabeth Harvie Field	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-
Elmscroft Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pitches used to over capacity • No on-site changing 	Feasibility study for pitch improvements	MBC	-	£5,000	High
Gatland Recreation Ground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor quality pitches used to over capacity • No on-site changing 	Feasibility study for pitch improvements	MBC	-	£5,000	High
Giddyhorn Recreation Ground	No on-site changing	Review need for changing facilities	MBC	User clubs	-	Medium
Headcorn FC	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-
Jubilee Playing Field	Poor quality adult pitch	Feasibility study for pitch improvements	Staplehurst Parish Council	-	£5,000	High
KGV Playing Field, Hunton	Poor quality changing	Feasibility study for changing improvements	Hunton Parish Council	-	£7,500	High
KGV Playing Field, Loose	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-
Kent Police HQ	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-
Lance Memorial Playing Field	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-
Langley Recreation Ground	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-
Leeds Playing Field	Pitches used to over capacity	Feasibility study for pitch improvements	Leeds PC	-	£5,000	High
Madginford Primary School	No secured community use	Pursue Community Use Agreement	MBC	Madginford Primary School	-	Medium
Maidstone Leisure Centre	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-
Mallards Way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor quality mini-soccer pitch used to over capacity • No on-site changing 	Feasibility study for pitch improvements	MBC	-	£5,000	High

<i>Site</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Cost estimates</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Marden Minors FC	Poor quality changing	Improve changing facilities	Marden Minors FC	Football Foundation	£200,000	High
Molehill Copse Primary Academy	No secured community use	Pursue Community Use Agreement	MBC	Molehill Copse Primary Academy	-	Medium
New Barming Pavilion	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-
New Line Learning Academy	No secured community use	Pursue Community Use Agreement	MBC	New Line Learning Academy	-	Medium
Oakwood Park Grammar School	No secured community use	Pursue Community Use Agreement	MBC	Oakwood Park Grammar School	-	Medium
Parish Recreation & Sports Field	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-
Parkwood	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-
Roseacre Junior School	No secured community use	Pursue Community Use Agreement	MBC	Roseacre Junior School	-	Medium
Shepway Green	Poor quality pitch	Feasibility study for pitch improvements	MBC	-	£5,000	High
South Borough Primary School	No secured community use	Pursue Community Use Agreement	MBC	South Borough Primary School	-	Medium
South Park	No on-site changing	Review need for changing facilities	MBC	User clubs	-	Medium
Swadelands School	No secured community use	Pursue Community Use Agreement	MBC	Swadelands School	-	Medium
The Kintons	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-
Maplesden Noakes School	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-
The Orchard Ground	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-
Ulcombe Recreation Ground	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-
Valley Park School	No secured community use	Pursue Community Use Agreement	MBC	Valley Park School	-	Medium
War Memorial Playing Field	Poor quality changing	Improve changing facilities	Sutton Valance Parish Council	-	£200,000	High
William Pitt Field	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-

6 CRICKET NEEDS IN MAIDSTONE

6.1 Key stakeholders

The key stakeholders delivering football in Maidstone are:

- **Kent Cricket:** The Community Team of Kent Cricket manages recreational cricket in the county, from its grass-roots foundations through to the interface with the first-class game and beyond. Its mission is to encourage, support and promote participation and development of the game at all levels, ages and abilities and to promote excellence in playing, coaching, officiating and the quality of both playing surfaces and social accommodation facilities.
- **Kent Cricket-affiliated clubs:** There are 18 affiliated clubs in Maidstone, who collectively run 45 adult and 32 junior teams.
- **Pitch providers:** All the pitches in the borough are managed and maintained by cricket clubs.

6.2 Strategic context

6.2.1 National cricket strategy

The England and Wales Cricket Board’s strategy for 2016 - 2020 ‘Cricket Unleashed’ (2016) contains the following priorities of relevance to Maidstone

<p>Clubs and leagues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promoting player driven formats of the game in leagues.• Providing more opportunities to play across the whole league structure.• Delivering a new club affiliation core offer.• Delivering new training opportunities for coaches, officials and groundstaff.• Delivering a volunteer offer to drive recruitment, retention and recognition. <p>Kids:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developing an ability-based pathway for children aged 5-12 for adoption in clubs, schools and youth organisations.• In partnership with Chance to Shine, expanding the reach of the game into all schools across the country through a combination of bat and ball opportunities, a national teacher ambassador programme and curriculum-aligned classroom resources.• Creating a seamless transition across the age groups and different formats to reduce the current drop out at key ages.• Promoting shorter pitch lengths for younger age groups. <p>Communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implementing inclusion and engagement strategies to deliver welcoming environments and opportunities for players of diverse backgrounds.• Prioritising additional investment in coaches for women’s, girl’s, multicultural groups and disability cricket.
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- Increasing the opportunities for people with a disability to take part and play cricket at all levels.
- Maximising the impact of hosting ICC global events to inspire a more diverse participation base to play cricket.
- Delivering and investing in cricket programmes that are specifically designed to bring communities together and improve physical and mental wellbeing.

Casual:

- Delivering simple and enjoyable casual cricket offers.
- Developing a 5 or 6-a-side version of cricket, played on artificial wickets to engage players at all ages and levels.
- Supporting innovation such as Last Man Stands, Indoor, Tape-ball and Beach Cricket.
- Creating a year-round participation programme using artificial wickets, indoor centres and other indoor spaces to allow all-year round play.
- Driving availability of bats and balls for unstructured play.

6.2.2 Neighbouring local authorities

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

Ashford

The Council is in the final stages of producing a new playing pitch strategy. Draft findings include:

- All current demand can be met from within current provision.
- Existing facilities have the capacity to meet the needs of anticipated population growth, with some small capacity improvements.
- There is no evidence of any imported cricket demand from Maidstone, nor any exported demand to Maidstone.

Medway

The council has an adopted strategy dating from 2012 which it plans to revise in 2018. The strategy identified:

- There is a current need for an additional 4 cricket pitches.
- Future demand will increase the shortfall to 5 pitches by 2028.
- There is no evidence of any imported cricket demand from Maidstone, nor any exported demand to Maidstone.

Swale

The council has an adopted playing pitch strategy dating from 2015. It identifies:

- A current shortage of 6 cricket pitches.
- Future demand will increase the shortfall to 10 pitches by 2025.
- There is no evidence of any imported cricket demand from Maidstone, nor any exported demand to Maidstone.

Tonbridge and Malling

The council does not have a playing pitch strategy but plans to draft one in the near future. Its most recent assessment states that:

- Cricket is 'favourably provided for'.
- There is no evidence of any imported cricket demand from Maidstone, nor any exported demand to Maidstone.

Tunbridge Wells

The council is finalising a playing pitch strategy in 2018. However, there is no evidence of any imported cricket demand from Maidstone, nor any exported demand to Maidstone.

6.2.3 Implications of the strategic context

The implications of the strategic context for cricket in Maidstone are as follows:

- ***Wider agendas:*** Given the increasing limitations on public finances, demonstrating the role that cricket can play in delivering wider agendas such as health and wellbeing is a key requirement for attracting investment.
- ***Policy shifts:*** The move in national sports policy towards prioritising new participants will create a challenge for cricket to demonstrate that it can attract new and lapsed participants. Recent innovations such as Last Man Stands and Tape-ball might prove more attractive than the more traditional model.
- ***Neighbouring areas:*** There are assessed deficiencies in cricket pitch provision in two neighbouring areas, which may lead to imported demand into Maidstone if they are not rectified.

6.3 Cricket demand in Maidstone

6.3.1 Affiliated clubs and teams

A questionnaire survey of clubs affiliated to Kent Cricket produced responses from seven clubs, collectively representing 30 teams, or 36.6% of the 82 affiliated teams in Maidstone. The following clubs responded:

- Bearsted Cricket Club
- Blue House Cricket Club
- Detling Cricket Club
- Headcorn Cricket Club
- Hunton Wanderers Cricket Club
- Marden Cricket Club
- Staplehurst Cricket Club

The survey was supplemented by on-site consultations with four further clubs (Leeds and Broomfield Cricket Club, Hollingbourne Cricket club, Linton Park Cricket Club and The Mote Cricket Club), which increased the collective response rate from cricket clubs in the borough to 64 teams, or 78% of the 82 affiliated teams in Maidstone. The following clubs that are based in Maidstone borough affiliate to Kent Cricket.

<i>Club</i>	<i>Home Ground</i>	<i>Adult Teams</i>	<i>Junior Teams</i>
Bearsted Cricket Club	Bearsted Green	4	4
Blue House Cricket Club	Mile Bush Lane, Marden	1	0
Detling Cricket Club	Pilgrims Way, Detling	2	0
East Sutton Cricket Club	East Sutton Cricket Club	1	0
Harrietsham Cricket Club	Booth Field, Harrietsham	2	0
Headcorn Cricket Club	Lenham Road, Headcorn	3	0
Hollingbourne Cricket Club	Pilgrims Way, Hollingbourne	2	1
Hunton Wanderers Cricket Club	West Street, Hunton	3	0
Leeds and Broomfield CC	Burberry Lane, Leeds	4	9
Lenham Cricket Club	Lenham Cricket Ground	2	1
Linton Park Cricket Club	Linton Park, Maidstone	6	4
Loose Cricket Club	White Horse Lane, Otham	1	0
Marden Cricket Club	Albion Road, Marden	3	3
Otterden Place Cricket Club	Otterden Place	1	0
Rumwood Cricket Club	White Horse Lane, Otham	1	0
Staplehurst Cricket Club	Frittenden Road, Staplehurst	3	4
Stockbury with Hartlip CC	Stockbury Sports Ground	2	0
Teston Cricket Club	Barham Court, Teston	2	1
The Mote Cricket Club	Mote Park, Maidstone	5	3
West Farleigh Cricket Club	Church Lane, West Farleigh	2	0
Yalding Cricket Club	The Kintons, Yalding	1	1
TOTALS	-	51	31

6.3.2 Demand trends

The ECB's most recent 'National Cricket Playing Survey' (2015) identified a 7% decrease in player numbers between 2013 and 2014, although taken over a four-year period, the decline in adult participation was minimal. Of the 850,000 players nationally, 250,000 are 'core' players (playing at least 12 times per season), 400,000 are 'occasional' players (playing between three and 11 times per season) and 200,000 are 'cameo' players (playing once or twice per season). 5% of all organised fixtures were cancelled in 2014 because at least one of the teams was unable to field eleven players. The survey also revealed that 30 per cent of grassroots cricketers are drawn from ethnic minorities.

6.3.3 Displaced demand

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

- Maidstone-based clubs responding to the club's survey collectively draw all their membership from within the borough.
- There is no evidence of imported demand to Maidstone from neighbouring areas.

6.3.4 Unmet demand

Unmet demand takes a number of forms:

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

Consultation with local clubs and cricket leagues indicated that there is no unmet demand in Maidstone at present.

6.3.5 Latent demand

Latent demand is demand that may be generated from the current population if they had access to more or better provision. Clubs' survey identified a trend for static or falling membership, despite good levels of available provision, which suggests that there is no local latent demand.

6.4 Cricket supply in Maidstone

6.4.1 Outdoor cricket facilities

Provision of cricket pitches in Maidstone is set out below:

- *Available for community use and used:*

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Grass Wickets</i>	<i>Artificial wickets</i>
Bearsted Green	Bearsted Green, Bearsted ME14 4EF	10	1
Blue House Cricket Club	Milebush Lane, Marden TN12 9AS	6	-
Detling Cricket Club	Pilgrims Way, Detling ME14 3JY	6	-
East Sutton Cricket Club	East Sutton Road, East Sutton ME17 3DT	12	-
Headcorn Cricket Club	Lenham Road, Headcorn TN27 9LE	12	-
Hollingbourne Cricket Club	Pilgrims Way, Hollingbourne ME17 1UW	14	-
Hunton Cricket Club	West Street, Hunton ME15 0RR	8	-
Leeds and Broomfield CC	Burberry Lane, Leeds ME17 1PL	14	1
Lenham Cricket Club	Ham Lane, Lenham ME17 2QB	10	-
Linton Park Cricket Club	Linton Park, Maidstone ME17 4HT	15	1
Marden Cricket Club	Albion Road, Marden TN12 9EF	13	-
Otterden Place Cricket Club	Otterden Place ME13 0BU	8	-
Rumwood Cricket Club	White Horse Lane, Otham ME15 8RG	10	-
Staplehurst Cricket Club	Frittenden Road, Staplehurst TN12 0DH	12	-
Stockbury Cricket Club	The Street, Stockbury ME9 7UD	5	-
Teston Cricket Club	Barham Court, Teston ME18 5BZ	8	-
The Booth Field	Church Road, Harrietsham ME17 1AP	8	-
The Mote Cricket Club	Mote Park, Maidstone ME15 7RN	30	-
West Farleigh Cricket Club	Church Lane, West Farleigh ME15 0DT	8	-
Yalding Cricket Club	The Kintons, Yalding ME18 6DP	14	-
TOTALS	-	221	3

- *Available for community use and not used:*

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Grass Wickets</i>	<i>Artificial wickets</i>
Lenham School	Ham Lane, Lenham ME17 2LL	0	1
Maidstone Grammar School	Barton Road, Maidstone ME15 7BT	14	2
New Line Learning Academy	Boughton Lane, Maidstone ME15 9QL	0	1
Oakwood Park Grammar School	Oakwood Park, Maidstone ME16 8AH	8	1
St Augustine Academy	Oakwood Park, Maidstone ME16 8AE	6	0
St Simon Stock School	Oakwood Park, Maidstone ME16 0JP	12	0
Valley Park School	Huntsman La., Maidstone ME14 5DT	0	1
TOTALS	-	40	6

- *Not available for community use:*

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Grass Wickets</i>	<i>Artificial wickets</i>
Sutton Valence School	North Street, Sutton Valence ME17 3HN	12	1
Sutton Valence Prep School	Chart Road, Sutton Valence ME17 3HL	6	0
TOTALS	-	18	1

- *Not available as disused:*

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Grass Wickets</i>	<i>Artificial wickets</i>
Loose Cricket Club	Lancet Lane, Loose ME15 8SH	10	1
Ulcombe Cricket Club	Headcorn Road, Ulcombe ME17 1EB	6	-
TOTALS	-	16	1

6.4.2 Cricket facilities quality

The qualitative analysis of pitches in Maidstone involved visits to all cricket pitches during the playing season, to undertake the sport-specific non-technical visual inspections produced by the ECB for Sport England's *Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance* (2013). The assessment generated 'scores' for each site by evaluating the condition of:

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

The assessment generates a ‘score’ for each site by evaluating the condition of the wickets, outfield, ancillary facilities and practice nets. Blank cells in the table mean that the feature concerned is absent from the site in question. The ratings for each cricket pitch site in Maidstone based upon the application of the ECB assessment methodology are as follows, with features rated as ‘good’ highlighted in green, ‘standard’ in yellow and ‘poor’ in red.:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Grass wicket</i>	<i>Artificial wicket</i>	<i>Outfield</i>	<i>Pavilion</i>	<i>Practice nets</i>
Bearsted Green	Good	Good	Good	Good	-
Blue House Cricket Club	Standard	-	Standard	Poor	-
Detling Cricket Club	Good	-	Good	Poor	-
East Sutton Cricket Club	Good	-	Standard	Standard	Poor
Headcorn Cricket Club	Good	-	Good	Good	Standard
Hollingbourne Cricket Club	Good	-	Good	Good	-
Hunton Cricket Club	Good	-	Good	Good	-
Leeds and Broomfield CC	Good	Good	Good	Standard	Good
Lenham Cricket Club	Good	-	Good	Good	Standard
Linton Park Cricket Club	Good	Good	Good	Standard	-
Marden Cricket Club	Good	-	Good	Good	Poor
Otterden Place Cricket Club	Good	-	Standard	Standard	-
Rumwood Cricket Club	Good	-	Good	Poor	-
Staplehurst Cricket Club	Good	-	Good	Good	-
Stockbury Cricket Club	Good	-	Good	Standard	-
Teston Cricket Club	Good	-	Good	Good	-
The Booth Field	Good	-	Good	Good	-
The Mote Cricket Club	Good	-	Good	Standard	Poor
West Farleigh Cricket Club	Standard	-	Standard	Standard	-
Yalding Cricket Club	Standard	-	Standard	Poor	-

6.4.3 Pitch carrying capacity

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

- A ‘good’ quality wicket will accommodate five, a ‘standard’ quality wicket will accommodate four and a ‘poor’ quality wicket will accommodate three matches per season.
- ‘Good’ and ‘Standard’ quality artificial turf wickets accommodate 35 matches per season.
- The seasonal pitch carrying capacity of each cricket site in Maidstone is as follows:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Grass wicket carrying capacity</i>	<i>Artificial wicket carrying capacity</i>	<i>Total carrying capacity</i>
Bearsted Green	50	35	85
Blue House Cricket Club	24	-	24
Detling Cricket Club	30	-	30
East Sutton Cricket Club	60	-	60
Headcorn Cricket Club	60	-	60
Hollingbourne Cricket Club	70	-	70

<i>Site</i>	<i>Grass wicket carrying capacity</i>	<i>Artificial wicket carrying capacity</i>	<i>Total carrying capacity</i>
Hunton Cricket Club	40	-	40
Leeds and Broomfield CC	70	35	105
Lenham Cricket Club	50	-	50
Linton Park Cricket Club	75	35	110
Marden Cricket Club	65	-	65
Otterden Place Cricket Club	40	-	40
Rumwood Cricket Club	50	-	50
Staplehurst Cricket Club	60	-	60
Stockbury Cricket Club	25	-	25
Teston Cricket Club	50	-	50
The Booth Field	40	-	40
The Mote Cricket Club	150	-	150
West Farleigh Cricket Club	32	-	32
Yalding Cricket Club	56	-	56

6.4.4 Pitch maintenance

Most cricket pitches with community use and used in Maidstone are maintained by the incumbent clubs themselves, although a minority of clubs hire external contractors.

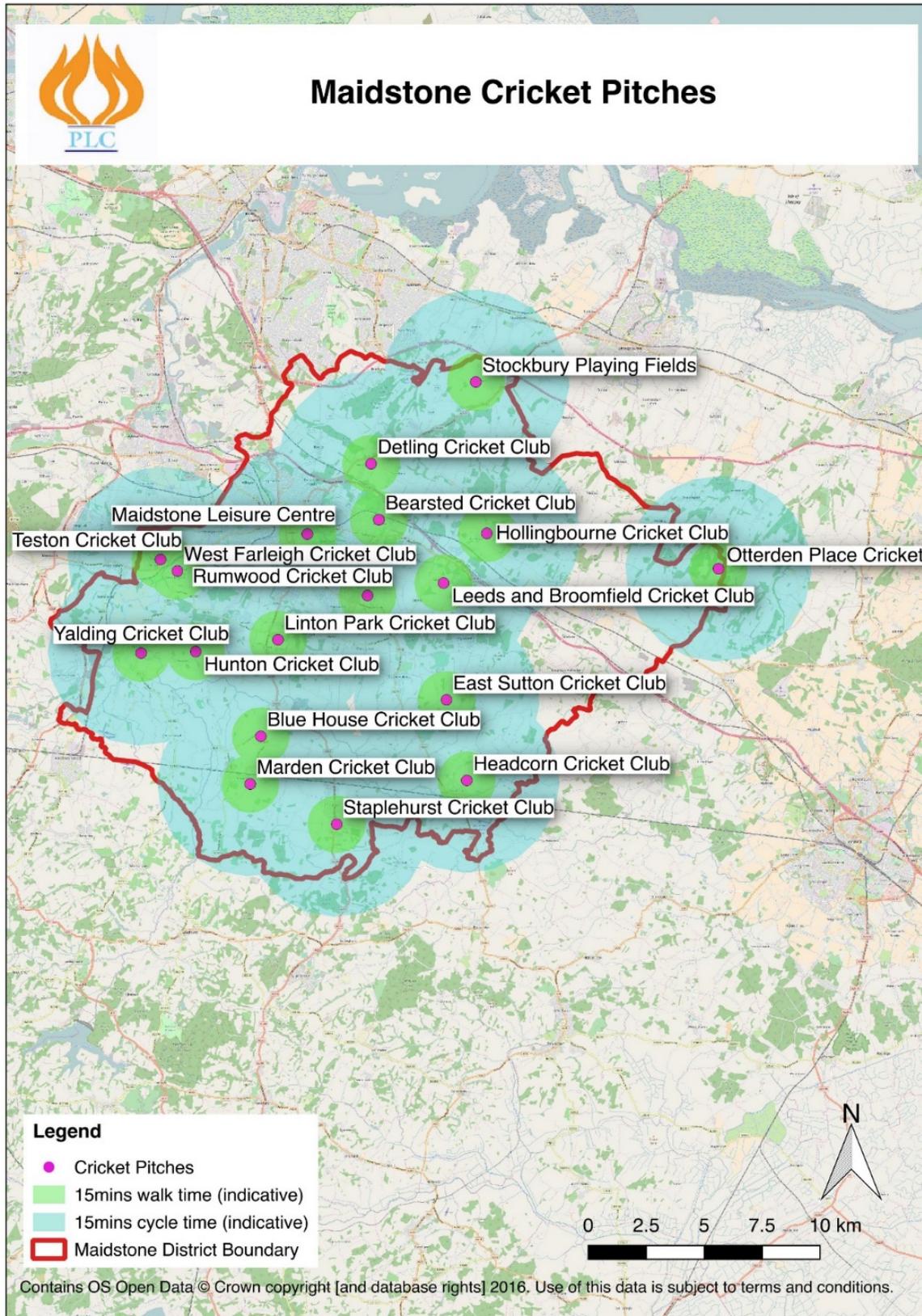
6.4.5 Ownership, management and security of access

The ownership, management and security of access of all cricket pitch sites in Maidstone with community use and used is detailed below:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Ownership</i>	<i>Management</i>	<i>Security of access</i>
Bearsted Green	Bearsted Parish Council	Bearsted Cricket Club	Secured
Blue House Cricket Club	Private	Blue House Cricket Club	Unsecured
Detling Cricket Club	Detling Cricket Club	Detling Cricket Club	Secured
East Sutton Cricket Club	East Sutton Parish Council	East Sutton Cricket Club	Secured
Headcorn Cricket Club	Headcorn Cricket Club	Headcorn Cricket Club	Secured
Hollingbourne Cricket Club	Hollingbourne CC	Hollingbourne Cricket Club	Secured
Hunton Cricket Club	Fields in Trust	Hunton Cricket Club	Secured
Leeds and Broomfield CC	Leeds Castle estate	Leeds and Broomfield CC	Unsecured
Lenham Cricket Club	Lenham Parish Council	Lenham Cricket Club	Secured
Linton Park Cricket Club	Linton Park	Linton Park Cricket Club	Unsecured
Marden Cricket Club	Marden Cricket Club	Marden Cricket Club	Secured
Otterden Place Cricket Club	Private Estate	Otterden Place CC	Unsecured
Rumwood Cricket Club	Rumwood Cricket Club	Rumwood Cricket Club	Secured
Staplehurst Cricket Club	Staplehurst Cricket and Tennis Club	Staplehurst Cricket and Tennis Club	Secured
Stockbury Cricket Club	Stockbury Parish Council	Stockbury Cricket Club	Secured
Teston Cricket Club	Private	Teston Cricket Club	Unsecured
The Booth Field	Harrietsham Parish Council	Harrietsham Cricket Club	Secured
The Mote Cricket Club	The Mote Trust	The Mote Cricket Club	Secured
West Farleigh Cricket Club	West Farleigh Parish Council	West Farleigh Cricket Club	Secured
Yalding Cricket Club	Yalding Parish Council	Yalding Cricket Club	Secured

6.4.6 Geographical distribution

The geographical distribution of cricket pitches in Maidstone is set out in the map below.



6.4.7 The views of stakeholders on pitch supply

Consultation with Kent Cricket's Director of Community Cricket identified the following key issues in relation to Maidstone:

- **Local demand:** Local cricket participation is high, with Kent having the second highest level of participation of any English county.
- **Facilities priorities:** The emphasis in recent times has been on preserving the quality of grounds, developing and supporting structures such as pavilions and nets and working to improve security of tenure.
- **Types of play:** Formal match play is the only form of the game played in Maidstone at present, with no informal versions like 'Last Man Stands' played in the borough.
- **Women and girls:** Only one club, Leeds and Broomfield, has a Women and Girls section.
- **Schools pitches:** None of the school cricket pitches in Maidstone is used by community-based clubs.

Consultation with affiliated cricket clubs identified the following issues in relation to Maidstone:

- **Preferred sites:** All clubs are playing at their preferred sites.
- **Security of tenure:** 13 clubs either own the freehold or have a long lease at their pitch sites. The remaining clubs do not have formal security of tenure but have used their ground for a long time under informal agreements with the landlord.
- **Club size:** Hunton Cricket Club commented that 'we are generally very happy with our main playing facility. We are however seeing clubs fold all around us and our main concern is our ability to retain players and/or grow the club. We see the main obstacle to this being our current Saturday league structure and the requirements of Clubmark, both of which favour large well-established clubs at the expense of village clubs with fewer members and volunteers'.

6.5 The implications for cricket in Maidstone

Analysis of local supply of cricket pitches in Maidstone indicates the following:

- Two former club sites are currently available but unused, as are cricket pitches on seven school sites, which suggests that there is some current spare capacity.
- Whilst the standard of the playing surfaces is high with 16 of 19 wickets rated as good, the pavilions show far greater variety in style and quality. Most clubs are tenants at their sites and therefore reliant on buildings provided by landlords. Most do not have the resources to undertake major building work to refurbish or renovate their built facilities. As a result, many pavilions do not meet modern standards of space with poor access for disabled players and spectators. Changing for officials is inadequate and few pavilions are able to accommodate female changing.

- Only 13 out of 18 pitch sites have secured community access, which makes it difficult for the five clubs based at the unsecured sites to apply for external funding to improve facilities, because they have insufficient security of tenure.

6.6 Assessment of current needs

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

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

The site overviews identify the extent to which pitches are

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

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

- Overall capacity is expressed as match equivalents per **season**, as opposed to per **week** for all other pitch types.
- The number of wickets at each site is shown below. Artificial turf wickets are listed in brackets.
- In line with the guidance it has been assumed that a ‘good’ quality wicket will accommodate five matches per season, a ‘standard’ quality wicket will accommodate four and a ‘poor’ quality wicket will accommodate three matches per season.
- Adult teams account for an average of 0.5 ‘home’ games per week and junior teams for 0.35 ‘home’ games per week.
- Artificial turf wickets will accommodate 35 matches per season.
- Aspects of each site shaded in red indicate a deficiency, those shaded in yellow indicate that supply and demand are balanced and those shaded in green have some spare capacity.

<i>Site</i>	<i>Wickets</i>	<i>Users</i>	<i>Seasonal capacity</i>	<i>Seasonal demand</i>	<i>Seasonal balance</i>	<i>Peak capacity</i>	<i>Peak demand</i>	<i>Peak balance</i>
Bearsted Green	10(1)	Bearsted Cricket Club	85	80	+10	1	2	-1.0
Blue House Cricket Club	6	Blue House Cricket Club	24	10	+14	1	0.5	+0.5
Detling Cricket Club	6	Detling Cricket Club	30	20	+10	1	1	Balanced
East Sutton Cricket Club	12	East Sutton Cricket Club	60	10	+50	1	0.5	+0.5
Headcorn Cricket Club	12	Headcorn Cricket Club	60	30	+30	1	1	Balanced
Hollingbourne Cricket Club	14	Hollingbourne Cricket Club	70	70	Balanced	1	2	-1.0
Hunton Cricket Club	8	Hunton Cricket Club	40	30	+10	1	1	Balanced
Leeds and Broomfield CC	14(1)	Leeds & Broomfield CC	105	120	-15	1	2	-1.0
Lenham Cricket Club	10	Lenham Cricket Club	50	30	+20	1	1.5	-0.5
Linton Park Cricket Club	15(1)	Linton Park Cricket Club	110	80	+30	1	2	-1.0
Marden Cricket Club	13	Marden Cricket Club	65	60	+5	1	1	Balanced
Otterden Place Cricket Club	8	Otterden Place Cricket Club	40	10	+30	1	0.5	+0.5
Rumwood Cricket Club	10	Rumwood Cricket Club Loose Cricket Club	50	20	+30	1	0.5	+0.5
Staplehurst Cricket Club	12	Staplehurst Cricket Club	60	70	-10	1	1	Balanced
Stockbury Cricket Club	5	Stockbury Cricket Club	25	20	+5	1	1	Balanced
Teston Cricket Club	8	Teston Cricket Club	50	20	+30	1	1	Balanced
The Booth Field	8	Harrietsham Cricket Club	40	20	+20	1	1	Balanced
The Mote Cricket Club	30	The Mote Cricket Club	150	70	+80	2	2	Balanced
West Farleigh Cricket Club	8	West Farleigh Cricket Club	32	20	+12	1	1	Balanced
Yalding Cricket Club	14	Yalding Cricket Club	56	40	+16	1	0.5	+0.5
TOTALS	221(3)	-	1,202	830	+372	21.0	23.0	-2.0

The key findings are as follows:

- Two sites show a small seasonal deficit with usage balanced at one further site, although collectively there is significant seasonal spare capacity in the borough as a whole.
- Five sites show a peak time deficit, although this is generally managed by fixture scheduling. Peak usage is balanced at nine further sites and there is a collective peak time deficit of 2.0 match equivalent sessions in the borough as a whole.

- Seasonal spare capacity at secured community access sites only reduces to 258 match equivalent sessions.
- The peak time spare capacity at secured sites only reduces to a precise balance between supply and demand.

6.7 Assessment of future needs

6.7.1 Population growth

MBC's *'Strategic Housing Market Assessment'* (2015) confirmed the objectively assessed housing need for the borough over the period 2011 to 2031 as 17,660 dwellings. Of these 8,335 have already been built or granted planning permission. This scale of development will increase the borough's population by 22,380 to 177,523 people by 2031. This will represent an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.

6.7.2 Potential changes in demand

Changes in demand for cricket in the future can be modelled on a trend-based projection. Two sets of data can help to inform this:

- **'Active People' survey:** The national rates of cricket participation between 2005 and the present, as measured by the 'Active People' survey, are as follows:

2005/06	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	% Change
0.48%	0.49%	0.49%	0.41%	0.51%	0.43%	0.34%	0.37%	0.32%	0.42%	-0.06%

- **National cricket playing survey:** The ECB's most recent *'National Cricket Playing Survey'* (2016) identified a 7% decrease in player numbers between 2014 and 2015.

Balancing past trends that identify falling demand against target increases in participation suggests that projecting future need based on static demand patterns is a reasonable basis for forecasting.

6.7.3 Site-specific pressures

Maidstone Borough Council needs to identify sites upon which it can deliver its housing targets. Whilst planning policy offers protection to playing pitches, those sites that do not currently accommodate formal cricket activity may be vulnerable unless it can be proved that they are needed to accommodate existing or future shortfalls in supply or serve some other green space functions.

6.7.4 Potential changes in supply

There are no known development threats to any existing pitch sites, including those that are currently disused.

6.7.5 Existing spare capacity

Existing spare cricket pitch capacity has been calculated in section 6.7 above and indicates seasonal spare capacity of 372 match equivalent sessions at all sites and 258 match equivalent sessions at sites with secured community use. This equates to 74 good quality grass wickets or 11 artificial turf wickets at all sites or 49 good quality grass wickets or seven artificial turf wickets at secured sites. However, if weekly peak time capacity is considered, there is a deficit of 2.0 match equivalents, which means that there is no effective spare capacity as present.

6.7.6 Future cricket pitch needs

Future cricket pitch needs to 2031 are modelled below using ‘Team Generation Rates’ (TGRs), which identify how many people in a specified age group in the borough are required to generate one team. These are then applied to projected changes in population to identify the likely number of teams in the future. The extra wickets calculation is based upon the seasonal capacity of a ‘good’ quality grass wicket.

<i>Team type</i>	<i>Age range</i>	<i>Current population</i>	<i>Current teams</i>	<i>TGR</i>	<i>Population 2031</i>	<i>Teams 2031</i>	<i>Extra teams</i>	<i>Extra wickets</i>
Adult males	16-55	42,828	50	1: 857	48,995	57	7	14
Adult females	16-55	43,172	1	1: 43,174	49,389	1	0	0
Junior males	10-15	5,976	29	1: 206	6,837	33	4	8
Junior females	10-15	6,024	2	1: 3,012	6,891	2	0	0

6.8 Key findings and issues

6.8.1 What are the main characteristics of current supply and demand?

- ***Demand trends:*** There has been a long-term decline in cricket participation nationally, which has been mirrored to a lesser extent in the borough.
- ***Women and Girls:*** Only Leeds and Broomfield Cricket Club has women and girls’ teams.
- ***Spare capacity:*** Two former club sites are currently available but unused, as are cricket pitches on seven school sites, which confirms that there is some current spare capacity.
- ***Changing facilities:*** Whilst the standard of the playing surfaces is high with 16 of 19 wickets rated as good, many changing pavilions do not meet modern standards of space with poor access for disabled players and spectators. Changing for officials is frequently inadequate and few pavilions are able to accommodate female changing.
- ***Security of tenure:*** Only 15 out of 20 pitch sites have secured community access, which makes it difficult for the five clubs based at the unsecured sites to apply for external funding to improve facilities, because they have insufficient security of tenure.

6.8.2 Is there enough accessible and secured community use to meet current demand?

- **Seasonal pitch capacity:** Two sites show a small seasonal deficit with usage balanced at one further site, although collectively there is seasonal spare capacity of 372 matches in the borough as a whole. Seasonal spare capacity just at secured community access sites reduces to 258 match equivalent sessions.
- **Peak time pitch capacity:** Four sites show a peak time deficit, although this is managed by fixture scheduling. Peak usage is balanced at nine further sites and there is a collective peak time deficit of 2.0 match equivalent sessions in the borough as a whole. The collective peak time spare capacity just at secured sites reduces to a precise balance between supply and demand.

6.8.3 Is the accessible provision of suitable quality and appropriately maintained?

- **Quality:** All cricket pitches on secured sites with community use and used are ‘good’ or ‘standard’ quality, but changing facilities are rated as ‘poor’ at four sites.
- **Maintenance:** All club cricket pitches in the borough are appropriately maintained, although the quality of maintenance of some school pitches is generally lower than would be required to sustain use by external clubs.

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

- **Population growth:** The borough’s population is projected to increase by 22,380 to 177,523 people by 2031. This will represent an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.
- **Changes in demand:** Balancing past trends that identify falling demand against the target increases in participation suggests that projecting future need based on current demand patterns is a reasonable basis for forecasting.
- **Changes in supply:** There are no known development threats to any existing pitch sites, including those that are currently disused.
- **Existing spare capacity:** Existing collective seasonal spare capacity amounts to 372 match equivalents, which equates to 74 good quality grass wickets or 11 artificial turf wickets. However, weekly peak time supply and demand are effectively balanced, which means that there is no current spare capacity.
- **Future needs:** Based on projected population growth, there will be additional demand from 11 extra cricket teams by 2031, which is equivalent to 22 good quality grass wickets (equivalent to three pitches) or three artificial turf wickets.

6.8.5 Is there enough accessible and secured provision to meet future demand?

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

- Utilising provision at the two sites with community access that are currently unused, which collectively comprise 16 grass and one artificial turf wicket.
- Enhancing capacity at existing secured club sites with community use and used, such as the addition of artificial turf wickets. This is preferable to creating new sites in housing developments in areas with no established teams.

6.9 Scenario Testing

6.9.1 Introduction

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

6.9.2 Scenario 1: Re-instating disused pitches

- **Rationale:** The pitches at Loose Cricket Club (ten grass wickets and one artificial wicket comprising 65 seasonal match equivalent sessions) and Ulcombe Cricket Club (six grass wickets comprising 18 seasonal match equivalent sessions) are both currently unused and it would therefore make sense to reinstate both facilities to meet additional future demand, rather than providing entirely new provision:
- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - Both pitches were recently abandoned due to localised falling demand, so could be reinstated at relatively low cost.
 - There is sufficient collective capacity at both sites to cater for the needs of up to 11 teams, which is the projected additional number of teams by 2031.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - With no established club at either site, new clubs would need to be formed from demand arising from new housing development. It is generally more difficult to organise a new club from scratch, as opposed to adding teams to a club with an established operational structure.
 - Re-instatement costs are likely to escalate the longer the facilities remain unused and given that the increase in demand will be gradual to 2031, future restoration may not be as economically viable as current restoration.
 - The Ulcombe pitch in particular is not well-located in relation to proposed new housing developments.
- **Conclusions:** Whilst this scenario offers some advantages, it would be preferable to pursue other options for enhancing local pitch capacity.

6.9.3 Scenario 2: Accessing pitches on education sites

- **Rationale:** A total of 40 grass wickets and six artificial grass wickets (collectively comprising 330 seasonal match equivalent sessions) are available for community use on school sites but are currently unused by external clubs. These represent one option for expanding current and future pitch capacity.
- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - The pitches already exist and in most cases there is established community use of other facilities at the respective sites.
 - There would be opportunities to establish closer school-club links if community-based clubs were playing on school sites.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - The quality of maintenance of most school pitches falls below the standard required for competitive club cricket.
 - None of the sites has a formal Community Use Agreement, so continued access would not be secured.
 - School cricket pitches are only available for a relatively short period during the summer term (April to July), whereas the club cricket season extends to September.
- **Conclusions:** The poor quality and limited availability of cricket pitches on school sites makes this scenario an inferior option to the other scenarios considered.

6.9.4 Scenario 3: Expanding capacity at existing sites

- **Rationale:** Accommodating the additional demand arising from housing at existing cricket pitch sites is the most effective, efficient and economic way of catering for extra participants. The type of measures that will improve capacity include the installation of artificial wickets, extending the existing pitch to include additional grass wickets, provision of an additional junior pitch on the current outfield (where there is sufficient space and expanding changing and ancillary facilities).
- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - The demand arising from new housing normally builds over a protracted period and it may be a period of years before there is sufficient critical mass to form a new club at a new site. Joining an existing club allows new members to be integrated immediately into an organised team set up.
 - The established administrative structures of clubs at existing sites provide an effective operational model for managing cricket facilities, particularly the grounds maintenance implications.

- Expanding capacity at existing sites, is a more cost-effective way of accommodating additional demand than providing an entirely new facility, particularly given the large land take involved with cricket pitches.
- An influx of new members will secure the long-term viability of existing clubs.
- There is a wide geographical spread of clubs throughout the district, so implementing capacity improvements at sites that are closely related to the location of new housing developments is relatively straightforward.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - Because of the configuration of cricket pitches, only one wicket per site can be used for a game in the peak period, so even if overall site capacity is expanded, the ability to accommodate additional teams will depend upon scheduling activity outside of the peak periods.
 - Five sites do not have security of tenure so investing developer contributions in facility improvements without secured access would be problematic at those sites.
- **Conclusions:** Expanding the capacity of cricket pitches and ancillary facilities at established club sites in Maidstone should be considered as the default option for meeting the additional demand arising from new housing developments, unless site-specific issues are identified which establish that this is not feasible at particular sites, at which stage the option for new provision should be examined.

6.9.5 Scenario 4: Installing artificial wickets in parks

- **Rationale:** All the pitch sport governing bodies have developed and are promoting innovative and informal variations of their games, to attract new and lapsed participants. Cricket has developed shortened versions of the game (twenty over matches and 'Last Man Stands') and soft ball variants including tape ball cricket and has promoted play in non-formal pitch settings ('cage cricket' on multi-use games areas and casual play in parks). Installing artificial turf wicket at appropriate locations in parks and open spaces would provide for and encourage informal play.
- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - An artificial wicket can be installed at relatively low cost (£8,000 - £10,000) and can sustain high levels of use compared with natural grass.
 - Maintenance costs are minimal.
 - It would provide an 'entry level' route into cricket, either through informal casual participation or through promotional events run by cricket clubs.
- **Disadvantages:** The only disadvantage of this scenario is that facilities like artificial wickets in areas with unrestricted public access might be prone to vandalism and misuse.

- **Conclusions:** Providing artificial wickets in appropriate locations within parks and open spaces conforms with sports development trends in seeking to attract new and lapsed participants in informal settings.

6.10 Policy recommendations

6.10.1 Introduction

The recommendations in relation to cricket are made in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 74, which stipulates that existing open space including playing pitches, should not be built upon unless:

- An assessment has taken place which has clearly shown the open space to be surplus to requirements, or;
- The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality, in a suitable location, or;
- The development is for alternative sport and recreation provision, the needs for which clearly outweighs the loss.

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

6.10.2 Protect

Recommendation 1 - Safeguarding existing provision: The Maidstone Playing Pitch Strategy comprises a robust and evidence-based assessment of current and future needs for cricket in the borough. The Strategy has identified a need for all current and disused cricket pitch sites to be retained, on the basis of the specific identified roles that each can play in delivering the needs of the sport in Maidstone both now and in the future. It is therefore recommended that existing planning policies continue to support the retention of all sites, based upon the evidence in the Playing Pitch Strategy. In the event that any pitch sites do become the subject of development proposals, this will only be permissible they are replaced and meet policy exception E4 of Sport England’s Playing Fields Policy. This states that ‘the playing field or playing fields which would be lost as a result of the proposed development must be replaced by a playing field or playing fields of an equivalent or better quality and of equivalent or greater quantity, in a suitable location and subject to equivalent or better management arrangements, prior to the commencement of development’.

Recommendation 2 - Security of tenure: The users of five of the 20 pitch sites with community use in Maidstone do not have security of tenure. Whilst most have occupied the respective sites for many years and are under no known threats of eviction, the absence of a long-term (minimum 25-year) lease makes it impossible for the clubs concerned to apply for external funding to improve their facilities. This will include the receipt of funds from developer contributions. It is therefore recommended that:

- Efforts are made to achieve security of tenure at the five sites without such status at present.

- Arrangements are reviewed at other sites where leases have less than 25-years to run, to extend the current periods.

6.10.3 Enhance

Recommendation 3 - Improving existing ‘poor’ quality provision: Four sites in the borough have pavilions and changing facilities that are rated as ‘poor’ quality and two sites have ‘poor’ quality practice nets. This reduces the quality of playing experience, may present child protection issues in relation to simultaneous adult and junior use of changing provision and may deter some potential participants. Subject to security of tenure issues, it is recommended that the clubs concerned should be supported to apply for external funding for facility enhancements, including the receipt of developer contributions (see below) where the usage capacity would be enhanced.

Recommendation 4 - Developer contributions (enhancements): Most of the additional demand for cricket arising from the proposed housing development in Maidstone to 2031, should be accommodated through enhancements to existing pitches and facilities. It is recommended that the site-specific action plan in the Maidstone Playing Pitch Strategy be used as the basis for determining facility enhancements that demonstrably relate to the scale and location of specific developments and that an appropriate level of financial contributions be sought under Section 106 or CIL arrangements, to cover the capital and revenue implications of the enhancements. To facilitate this, specific larger playing pitch projects should be listed as ‘relevant infrastructure’, under CIL Regulation 123.

6.10.4 Provide

Recommendation 5 - Artificial wickets for informal play: The provision of artificial turf wickets in MBC-owned parks and open spaces will encourage informal and casual participation in cricket and provide opportunities for an initial introduction to the game. It is therefore recommended that:

- Opportunities for providing artificial wickets are investigated in MBC-owned parks and open spaces, with particular attention paid to siting them in proximity to thoroughfares used by young people, to maximise visibility and accessibility.
- The provision of appropriately located artificial wickets is included within the open space obligations of developers, either through off-site financial contributions or direct on-site provision.

Recommendation 6 - Developer contributions (new provision): Some of the extra demand for cricket arising from the proposed housing development in Maidstone to 2031, will need to be accommodated through the provision of new pitches and facilities. It is recommended that the site-specific action plan in the Maidstone Playing Pitch Strategy be used as the basis for determining which proposed new facilities demonstrably relate to the scale and location of specific developments and that an appropriate level of financial contributions be sought under Section 106 or CIL arrangements, to cover their capital and revenue cost implications. To facilitate this, specific larger playing pitch projects should be listed as ‘relevant infrastructure’, under CIL Regulation 123.

6.11 Action Plan

6.11.1 Introduction

In the context of the high-level recommendations above, the tables below set out the cricket action plan to guide the implementation of the strategy. The abbreviations stand for MBC - Maidstone Borough Council, ECB - England and Wales Cricket Board and KC - Kent Cricket. The capital cost estimates are based upon Sport England's *Facility Costs - Second Quarter of 2016* (2016).

6.11.2 Key strategic actions

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Cost estimates</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Artificial wickets in MBC-owned parks and open spaces	Identify suitable sites in MBC-owned parks and open spaces for artificial wickets and install	MBC	KC ECB	£8,000 per wicket	High
Securing developer contributions	Ensure that policy provision is made to secure developer contributions towards new and improved cricket facilities.	MBC	Developers	-	High

6.11.3 Site specific actions

<i>Site</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Cost estimates</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Bearsted Green	Site overused in the peak period.	Expand pitch capacity with additional grass wickets.	Bearsted PC	Bearsted CC KC ECB	£50,000	High
Blue House Cricket Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No security of tenure Poor quality changing facilities 	Investigate security of tenure with landowner Improve pavilion	Landowner	Blue House Cricket Club KC ECB	£200,000 for improved pavilion	High
Detling Cricket Club	Poor quality changing facilities.	Improve pavilion	Detling Cricket Club	KC ECB	£200,000	High
East Sutton Cricket Club	Poor quality practice nets	Provide new practice nets	East Sutton PC	East Sutton Cricket Club KC ECB	£20,000	Medium
Headcorn Cricket Club	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-
Hollingbourne Cricket Club	Site overused in the peak period.	Expand pitch capacity with artificial grass wicket.	Hollingbourne Cricket Club	KC ECB	£8,000	High
Hunton Cricket Club	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-
Leeds and Broomfield CC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No security of tenure Site overused seasonally and in the peak period 	Investigate security of tenure with landowner Expand pitch capacity with additional grass wickets.	Leeds Castle Estate	Leeds and Broomfield CC KC ECB	£50,000	High

<i>Site</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Cost estimates</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Lenham Cricket Club	Site overused in the peak period.	Expand pitch capacity with artificial grass wicket.	Lenham PC	Lenham Cricket Club KC ECB	£8,000	High
Linton Park Cricket Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No security of tenure • Site overused in the peak period 	Investigate security of tenure with landowner Expand pitch capacity with additional grass wickets.	Leeds Castle Estate	Linton Park Cricket Club CC KC ECB	£50,000	High
Marden Cricket Club	Poor quality practice nets	Provide new practice nets	Marden CC	KC ECB	£20,000	Medium
Otterden Place Cricket Club	No security of tenure	Investigate security of tenure with landowner	Landowner	Otterden Place CC	-	Medium
Rumwood Cricket Club	Poor quality changing facilities.	Improve pavilion	Rumwood CC	KC ECB	£200,000	High
Staplehurst Cricket Club	Site overused seasonally	Expand pitch capacity with additional grass wickets.	Staplehurst Cricket Club	KC ECB	£8,000	High
Stockbury Cricket Club	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-
Teston Cricket Club	No security of tenure	Investigate security of tenure with landowner	Landowner	Teston CC	-	Medium
The Booth Field	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-
The Mote Cricket Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing facilities need upgrading • Poor quality practice nets 	Improve pavilion Improve practice nets	The Mote Trust	The Mote Cricket Club KC ECB	£200,000 to improve pavilion £20,000 for practice nets	High
West Farleigh Cricket Club	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-
Yalding Cricket Club	Poor quality changing facilities.	Improve pavilion	Yalding PC	Yalding CC KC ECB	£200,000	High

7 RUGBY UNION NEEDS IN MAIDSTONE

7.1 Organisational context

- **Rugby Football Union:** The RFU is the governing body of the sport and supports the development of the game in Maidstone.
- **RFU-affiliated clubs:** There are two clubs based in the borough, who collectively field six adult teams, five junior teams and six mini-rugby teams.

7.2 Strategic context

7.2.1 National rugby facilities strategy

The RFUs *National Facilities Strategy for Rugby Union in England 2013 - 2017* (2013) provides a framework for facility provision.

- Increase the provision of integrated changing facilities that are child friendly and can sustain concurrent male and female activity at the club.
- Improve the quality and quantity of natural turf pitches.
- Increase the number of Artificial Turf Pitches.
- Improve social, community and catering facilities, which can support diversification and the generation of additional revenues.
- Invest in facility upgrades which result in an increase in energy-efficiency, in order to reduce the running costs of clubs.

7.2.2 Neighbouring local authorities

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

Ashford

The Council is in the final stages of producing a new playing pitch strategy. Draft findings include:

- All current demand can be met from within existing provision.
- Four additional grass rugby pitches or one rugby-compliant artificial turf pitch will be required to meet the needs of anticipated population growth.
- There is no evidence of any imported rugby demand from Maidstone, nor any exported demand to Maidstone.

Medway

The council has an adopted strategy dating from 2012 which it plans to revise in 2018. The strategy identified:

- All current demand can be met from within existing provision.
- One additional pitch will be needed to meet extra demand by 2028.
- There is no evidence of any imported rugby demand from Maidstone, nor any exported demand to Maidstone.

Swale

The council has an adopted playing pitch strategy dating from 2015. It identifies:

- A current surplus of one adult and 2.8 mini-rugby pitches.
- Future demand by 2025 can be accommodated by the existing spare capacity.
- There is no evidence of any imported rugby demand from Maidstone, nor any exported demand to Maidstone.

Tonbridge and Malling

The council does not have a playing pitch strategy but plans to draft one in the near future. Its most recent assessment states that:

- Rugby is ‘much less well provided for than the country as a whole, which is a constraint on the growth of club rugby’.
- There is no evidence of any imported rugby demand from Maidstone, nor any exported demand to Maidstone.

Tunbridge Wells

- The council is finalising a playing pitch strategy in 2018. However, there is no evidence of any imported rugby demand from Maidstone, nor any exported demand to Maidstone.

7.2.3 Implications of the strategic context

The implications of the strategic context for rugby union in Maidstone are:

- **Existing deficits:** There are either identified surpluses or modest deficits in rugby pitch provision in neighbouring areas, which is likely to have no significant impact on provision within Maidstone.
- **Future deficits:** In all cases where a detailed assessment has been undertaken, rugby pitch shortfalls are projected to increase in the future. Artificial Grass Pitches may offer some additional capacity, but these need to comply with a specification based on World Rugby’s Regulation 22 to accommodate competitive play and contact training.

7.3 Rugby Union demand

7.3.1 RFU-affiliated clubs and teams

The following clubs affiliate to the RFU:

Club	Home ground	Adult male teams	Adult female teams	Junior male teams	Junior female teams	Mini teams
Maidstone Rugby Club	Mote Park	5	0	5	0	6
Weaving Warriors RFC	Park Wood Recreation Ground	1	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	-	6	0	5	0	6

7.3.2 Demand trends

Sport England's 'Active People' survey national data for rugby union indicates that the percentage of adults (16+) who played rugby the four weeks prior to each survey has remained static in the period since 2005.

2005/6	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/1	2011/2	2012/3	2013/4	2014/5	2015/6	% Change
0.46%	0.56%	0.50%	0.46%	0.42%	0.42%	0.37%	0.43%	0.40%	0.46%	0.00%

7.3.3 Displaced demand

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

- Both the Maidstone-based rugby union clubs draw all their membership from within the borough.
- There is no evidence of imported demand to Maidstone from neighbouring areas.

7.3.4 Unmet demand

Unmet demand takes a number of forms:

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

Consultation with the local clubs indicated that the quality of pitches and facilities is appropriate to the standards of play and that there is currently sufficient capacity to accommodate some additional demand, should it arise.

7.3.5 Latent demand

Whereas unmet demand is known to currently exist latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from the current population should they have access to more or better provision. There are currently no women's or girl's rugby teams in Maidstone, although Maidstone Rugby Club has organised a female section in the recent past. It is likely that latent demand for women's rugby still exists in the borough and that the lack of spare pitch capacity is one factor inhibiting greater participation.

7.4 Rugby union supply in Maidstone

7.4.1 Quantity

Provision of rugby union pitches in Maidstone is set out below:

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

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Floodlit Pitches</i>	<i>Non-floodlit pitches</i>	<i>Floodlit training areas</i>
Mote Park	Willow Way, Maidstone ME15 7RN	1	2	1
Park Wood Recreation Ground	Bicknor Road, Maidstone ME15 9PS	0	1	0
TOTAL	-	1	3	1

- **Available for community use and not used:**

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Non-floodlit pitches</i>
Lenham School	Ham Lane, Lenham ME17 2LL	1
Maidstone Grammar School	Barton Road, Maidstone ME15 7BT	2
New Line Learning Academy	Boughton Lane, Maidstone ME15 9QL	1
Oakwood Park Grammar School	Oakwood Park, Maidstone ME16 8AH	1
St Augustine Academy	Oakwood Park, Maidstone ME16 8AE	1
Simon Stock School	Oakwood Park, Maidstone ME16 0JP	1
The Maplesden Noakes School	Great Buckland, Maidstone ME16 0TJ	1
Valley Park School	Huntsman Lane, Maidstone ME14 5DT	1
TOTAL	-	9

- **Not available for community use:**

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Non-floodlit pitches</i>
Sutton Valance School	North St., Sutton Valance ME17 3NH	6
Sutton Valance Prep. School	Chart Rd., Sutton Valance ME17 3RF	4
TOTAL	-	10

- **Not available as disused:** There are no rugby pitches that are available for community use and not used.

7.4.2 Grass pitch quality

The qualitative analysis involved visits to both rugby union sites with community use and used during the playing season, to undertake the sport-specific non-technical visual inspections produced by the RFU for Sport England's 'Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance' (2013). The assessment generated 'scores' for each site by evaluating the condition of:

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

The scores for each rugby union pitch in Maidstone with community use and used are as follows. 'Good' ratings are highlighted in green and 'Adequate' in yellow.

<i>Site</i>	<i>Drainage</i>	<i>Maintenance</i>
Mote Park Pitch One	D2	M2
Mote Park Pitch Two	D1	M1
Mote Park Pitch Three	D1	M1
Park Road Recreation Ground	D1	M1

7.4.3 Grass pitch carrying capacity

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

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

The weekly collective carrying capacity of the rugby union pitches at each site with community use and used in Maidstone is as follows:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Capacity</i>
Mote Park	5.0
Park Road Recreation Ground	1.0
TOTALS	6.0

7.4.4 Changing quality

The quality of changing facilities at each rugby union site with community use and used was assessed in terms of changing accommodation for players and officials, disability access and building layout:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Rating</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Mote Park	Poor	The capacity of the changing facilities is inadequate if all pitches are in use and there is a lack of segregation for simultaneous adult and youth usage.
Park Road Recreation Ground	Poor	The changing facilities are ageing and too small. There is no provision for use by women or youth players.

7.4.5 Pitch maintenance

Pitch maintenance arrangements at the two sites with community use and used are as follows:

- **Mote Park:** Maidstone Rugby Club maintains the two pitches on the cricket ground part of the site, whilst the council's grounds maintenance contractor maintains the adjacent pitch on the leisure centre part of the site.
- **Park Road Recreation Ground:** The pitch is maintained by the council's grounds maintenance contractor.

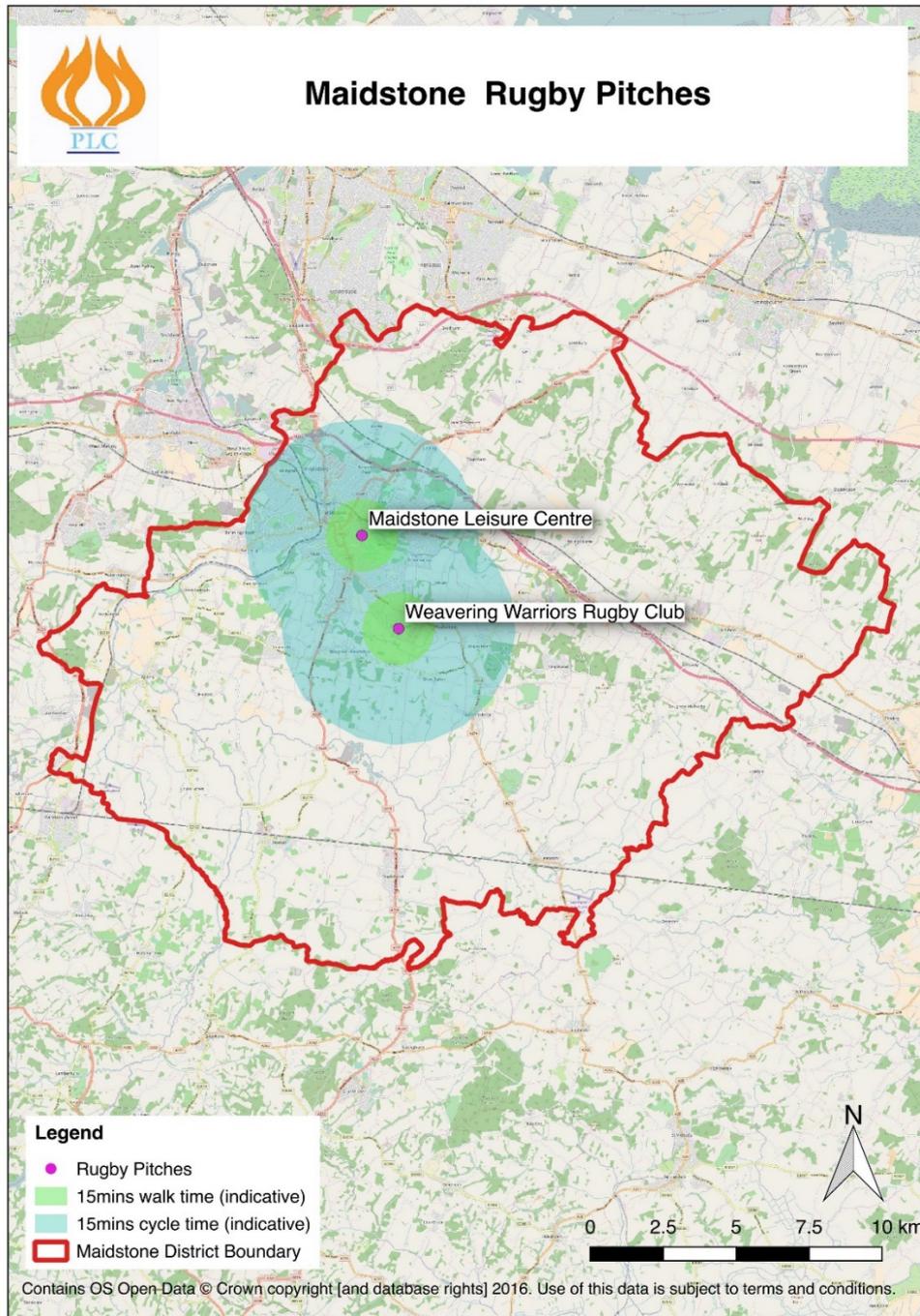
7.4.6 Ownership, management and security of access

Neither of the rugby clubs has security of tenure at their home sites.

<i>Site</i>	<i>Ownership</i>	<i>Management</i>	<i>Security of access</i>
Mote Park	The Mote Trust	The Mote Trust	Unsecured
Park Road Recreation Ground	Maidstone BC	Maidstone BC	Unsecured

7.4.7 Geographical distribution

The geographical distribution of rugby union pitches in Maidstone is set out in the map below.



7.4.8 The views of stakeholders on pitch supply

Consultation with the RFU's Regional Facilities Manager and Rugby Development Officer identified the following key issues in relation to Maidstone:

- **Maidstone Rugby Club:** The Club was founded in 1880 and has played at its current ground at Mote Park since the early 1950s under an arrangement with the Mote Cricket Club. The RFU supported the club by funding for floodlights on their training pitch. The club is negotiating with the Mote Trust to extend its lease, but in the long term is seeking a purpose-built rugby centre on a different site. The RFU's view is that pitches, especially the training ground, are overplayed. As a result, pitches other than the main pitch are deteriorating. Changing accommodation at Mote Park does not meet modern standards for space, provision for female players and officials, disabled access and the ability to separate adult and junior players
- **Weaving Warriors RFC:** The club was established in 2004 with a single league team playing in the Premier 2 division of the Kent Rural League and occasional 2nd XV who play friendlies. It has no junior section. At present, it has no security of tenure at its home ground at Park Wood Recreation Ground which is an obstacle to their long-term ability to grow.

Consultation with affiliated rugby clubs identified the following issues in relation to Maidstone:

- **The local demand profile:** Both clubs report increased membership over the last two years, although the women and girls' sections at Maidstone RFC have declined.
- **Maidstone RFC:** The club leases its main home ground from the Mote Cricket Club, which holds the ground in trust. The rugby club's lease has expired and it is currently negotiating a five-year extension. In the medium term, the club would like to move to new, wholly owned premises and it is actively investigating options at present. The club also hires pitches from time to time from Maidstone Council at Mote Park
- **Weaving Warriors:** The club plays at the council-owned recreation ground at Park Road. It would like to secure a lease on the ground but has not yet been able to do so.

7.5 The implications for rugby union in Maidstone

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

- The two sites with community use and used are both served by poor standard changing facilities, which are particularly poorly suited to accommodating use by women and juniors.
- There are nine further pitches on school sites that are available for community use, but which are unused. This is primarily because of the cohesive nature of club rugby, which generally favours a single site delivery model.
- Neither of the key sites has secured community use, which hampers the ability of both clubs to secure external investment for facilities improvements.

7.6 Assessment of current needs

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

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

The site overviews identify the extent to which pitches are

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

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

Site	Pitches	Users	Weekly capacity	Weekly demand	Weekly balance	Peak capacity	Peak demand	Peak balance
Mote Park	3	Maidstone RFC	4.5	4.5	-0.5	3.0	5.5	-2.5
Park Road Rec.	1	Weaving Warriors RFC	1.0	1.0	Balanced	1.0	0.5	+0.5

The key findings are:

- The weekly supply and demand figures at Mote Park both indicate a deficit, but there is a small peak demand surplus at Park Road Recreation Ground.
- The floodlit training area at Mote Park adds some capacity to the three formal pitches at that site.

7.7 Assessment of future needs

7.7.1 Population growth

MBC’s ‘Strategic Housing Market Assessment’ (2015) confirmed the objectively assessed housing need for the borough over the period 2011 to 2031 as 17,660 dwellings. Of these 8,335 have already been built or granted planning permission. This scale of development will increase the borough’s population by 22,380 to 177,523 people by 2031. This will represent an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.

7.7.2 Potential changes in demand

Sport England's 'Active People' survey national data for rugby union indicates that the percentage of adults who played rugby the four weeks prior to each survey has remained static in the period since 2005. This suggests that projecting needs based on current demand patterns is a reasonable basis for forecasting.

7.7.3 Site-specific pressures

Maidstone Borough Council needs to identify sites upon which it can deliver its housing targets. Whilst planning policy offers protection to playing pitches, any sites that do not currently accommodate formal rugby activity may be vulnerable unless it can be proved that they are needed to accommodate existing or future shortfalls in supply, or serve some other green space functions.

7.7.4 Potential changes in supply

Maidstone Rugby Club has aspirations to move from its current site, which is owned by the Mote Trust and is shared with the Mote Cricket Club, to a dedicated rugby facility with additional pitch capacity. However, no specific site has yet been identified.

7.7.5 Existing spare capacity

There is no collective peak time spare capacity, with a deficit at Mote Park only partially offset by a surplus at Park Road Recreation Ground.

7.7.6 Future rugby pitch needs

Future rugby pitch needs are modelled below using 'Team Generation Rates' (TGRs), which identify how many people in a specified age group in the borough are required to generate one team. These are then applied to projected changes in population to identify the likely number of teams in the future.

- Team numbers are based on the participation data supplied by the RFU.
- The extra pitches calculation is based upon the weekly capacity of a pipe-drained grass pitch with standard maintenance.

<i>Team type</i>	<i>Age range</i>	<i>Current population</i>	<i>Current teams</i>	<i>TGR</i>	<i>Population 2031</i>	<i>Teams 2031</i>	<i>Extra teams</i>	<i>Extra pitches</i>
Adult males	19-45	26,660	6	1: 4,443	30,499	7	1	0.5
Adult females	19-45	27,467	0	-	31,422	0	0	0
Junior males	13-18	5,282	5	1: 1,056	6,043	6	1	0.5
Junior females	13-18	5,304	0	-	6,068	0	0	0
Mini-rugby (mixed)	7-12	11,200	6	1: 1,887	12,813	8	2	0.5

7.8 Key findings and issues

7.8.1 What are the main characteristics of current supply and demand?

- **Women and girls rugby:** Despite a number of past initiatives to develop women and girls rugby in the borough, none has resulted in sustainable teams. In part, this reflects the lack of pitch capacity, but the quality and layout of changing facilities at both clubs is also an inhibiting factor.
- **Pitch capacity:** The existing grass pitches are currently used to their sustainable capacity in the peak periods. Pitch drainage and maintenance could be improved to enhance overall weekly capacity, but this would not solve the issue of the deficit in the peak demand period.

7.8.2 Is there enough accessible and secured community use to meet current demand?

There is some limited weekly spare capacity, but supply and demand are balanced in the peak periods. Neither site has secured community access for either rugby club.

7.8.3 Is the accessible provision of suitable quality and appropriately maintained?

Three of the four pitches with community use and used are of ‘standard’ quality, which is appropriate to the nature of their use. The changing facilities at both sites are rated as poor quality and each has limited capacity to accommodate female and youth players.

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

- **Population growth:** The population of the borough is projected to increase by 22,380 people by 2031. This represents an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.
- **Changes in demand:** The projected increase in population will generate one additional adult male team, one junior male team and two mixed mini-rugby teams by 2031.
- **Changes in supply:** There are no known prospective changes in rugby pitch supply, although neither club has security of tenure of their respective sites so access could, in theory be withdrawn.
- **Existing spare capacity:** There is no current spare pitch capacity.
- **Future needs:** Additional future needs equate to demand for 1.5 extra rugby pitches.

7.8.5 Is there enough accessible and secured provision to meet future demand?

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

- Enhancing the carrying capacity of the existing grass rugby pitches, with drainage and maintenance improvements.
- Converting one or more of the under-utilised adult football pitches at Mote Park to rugby.

- Achieving security of tenure at the two existing sites, to at least secure current provision.
- Negotiating secured access to existing rugby pitches on school sites in the borough, although this would be the least satisfactory option from the point of view of the operational cohesiveness of single site rugby club operations.
- Installing a World Rugby Regulation 22-compliant artificial grass pitch (which could also cater for local rugby league and American football needs).

7.9 Scenario Testing

7.9.1 Introduction

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

7.9.2 Scenario 1: Enhancing grass pitch carrying capacity

- **Rationale:** Improving the drainage and maintenance of the existing pitches could theoretically add capacity equivalent to 8.0 weekly match equivalent sessions.
- **Advantages:** The advantage of this scenario is that improvements could be made at the existing sites.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - The overall weekly carrying capacity would be increased but peak-time demand is defined by the number, rather than the quality of pitches and this would be unaffected by the quality improvements.
 - The increased costs with a more intensive grounds maintenance regime may be unaffordable for a single team club like Weaving Warriors.
 - The lack of security of tenure at both sites would make it difficult to secure external funding for the improvements.
- **Conclusions:** It would be preferable to pursue other options for enhancing local pitch capacity.

7.9.3 Scenario 2: Converting football to rugby pitches at Mote Park

- **Rationale:** There is some spare capacity at adult football pitches at Mote Park, so converting one pitch to rugby would improve capacity adjacent to Maidstone Rugby Club's site.
- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - The conversion of a football pitch to rugby could be achieved relatively cheaply, without detriment to current football needs.

- The extra pitch would enhance peak-time capacity by 1.0 match equivalent, which is where the greatest deficit exists at present.
- This would offer a straightforward temporary solution that would not compromise Maidstone Rugby Club's desire to move from the site in the medium term by investing in a high-cost solution.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - The peak-time deficit at Mote Park is 2.5 match equivalents, so the provision of one extra pitch would not solve all Maidstone Rugby Club's needs.
 - The pitch is likely to be needed to meet increasing demand for football in the future, unless alternative provision is made.
- **Conclusions:** This offers a pragmatic short-term solution to meeting some of Maidstone Rugby Club's immediate needs.

7.9.4 Scenario 3: Security of tenure at existing sites

- **Rationale:** The absence of security of tenure at both sites is an impediment to long-term planning for both clubs, so achieving a long-term lease would overcome this. The loss of rugby use of both the current sites would place the future of both clubs in jeopardy.
- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are that both clubs could plan for the future with greater certainty and apply for external funding for pitch and facility improvements.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - Mote Park is not an ideal site for Maidstone Rugby Club because of the shortage of pitch capacity and inadequate changing facilities. Seeking long-term security of tenure at a sub-optimal site would therefore not best serve their needs, providing that a better alternative site can be identified.
 - Maidstone Borough Council may be reluctant to grant a long-term lease to Weaving Warriors at Park Road Recreation Ground, although subject to some investment in improving the pitch and changing facilities, the site would meet the club's current and future needs.
- **Conclusions:** The constraints of the Mote Park site mean that it cannot meet all of Maidstone Rugby Club's needs, so seeking security of tenure at the site would not be a sensible priority. However, security of tenure at Park Road Recreation Ground would allow Weaving Warriors the scope to seek funding bids for improved provision at a site that could meet their long-term needs.

7.9.5 Scenario 4: Securing access to school rugby pitches

- **Rationale:** There are nine rugby pitches on school sites, several of which have community access for other pitch sport users. It would be sensible to investigate whether these pitches might offer an alternative means of expanding local pitch capacity.

- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - The pitches are already there, so would require little or no investment to facilitate community use.
 - Several of the schools already accommodate community use for other pitch sports.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - Spreading matches and/or training across more than one site would threaten the cohesiveness of club operations.
 - Some schools only mark out rugby pitches for a single term, so their availability would be time-limited within the rugby season.
- **Conclusions:** There is little current appetite from either of the local rugby clubs to access school rugby pitches, mainly because of the single site with a clubhouse model of operation favoured by most clubs.

7.9.6 Scenario 5: Provision of a rugby-compliant artificial grass pitch

- **Rationale:** Artificial grass pitches that are compliant with the World Rugby Regulation 22 specification can be used for rugby training and matches. As all-weather floodlit facilities, they can accommodate a least 35-hours per week of peak-time usage. Current collective demand in Maidstone for 21 hours of use per week could thus be accommodated with flexible programming, as could the additional 7 hours per week of projected future demand.
- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - All local rugby demand could be accommodated at a single pitch site.
 - There would be sufficient spare capacity also to accommodate local rugby league and American Football needs.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - Neither of the current rugby club sites would be physically suitable to accommodate an artificial grass pitch (and neither has security of tenure), so a new site would need to be identified.
 - The capital cost of provision is high - in the order of £850,000.
- **Conclusions:** Further feasibility work would need to be undertaken to establish whether this option is viable, but it might provide one operational model for Maidstone Rugby Club in particular to consider in relation to its proposed ground move.

7.10 Policy recommendations

7.10.1 Introduction

The recommendations in relation to rugby union are made in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 74, which stipulates that existing open space including playing pitches, should not be built upon unless:

- An assessment has taken place which has clearly shown the open space to be surplus to requirements, or;
- The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality, in a suitable location, or;
- The development is for alternative sport and recreation provision, the needs for which clearly outweighs the loss.

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

7.10.2 Protect

Recommendation 1 - Safeguarding existing provision: The Maidstone Playing Pitch Strategy comprises a robust and evidence-based assessment of current and future needs for rugby union in the borough. The Strategy has identified a need to increase local rugby pitch capacity and to this extent, it will be important for both current community used rugby pitch sites to be retained. However, there are issues relating to the suitability of both sites and the options for moving to sites with security of tenure and additional capacity are being investigated. It is therefore recommended that existing planning policies continue to support the retention of all sites, based upon the evidence in the Playing Pitch Strategy. In the event that proposals to move rugby pitches from the sites do come forward, this will only be permissible they are replaced and meet policy exception E4 of Sport England’s Playing Fields Policy. This states that ‘the playing field or playing fields which would be lost as a result of the proposed development must be replaced by a playing field or playing fields of an equivalent or better quality and of equivalent or greater quantity, in a suitable location and subject to equivalent or better management arrangements, prior to the commencement of development’.

Recommendation 2 - Security of tenure: Neither of the rugby pitch sites with community use in Maidstone has security of tenure. Whilst this is less of an issue at Mote Park, where Maidstone Rugby Club is actively seeking to move, it is more significant for Weaving Warriors. Whilst there are no known threats of eviction, the absence of a long-term (minimum 25-year) lease makes it impossible for the club to apply for external funding to improve the facilities at Park Road Recreation Ground. This will include the receipt of funds from developer contributions. It is therefore recommended that:

- Efforts are made to achieve security of tenure at Park Road Recreation Ground
- Adequate security of tenure should be a condition at any site to which Maidstone Rugby Club might move.

7.10.3 Enhance

Recommendation 3 - Improving existing ‘poor’ quality provision: Both club sites in the borough have pavilions and changing facilities that are rated as ‘poor’ quality. This reduces the quality of playing experience and may deter some potential participants. Subject to resolving the security of tenure issues, it is recommended that both clubs concerned should be supported to apply for external funding for facility enhancements, including the receipt of developer contributions (see below) where the usage capacity would be enhanced. In the case of Maidstone Rugby Club, this is likely to involve provision at a new site.

Recommendation 4 - Developer contributions (enhancements): Some of the additional demand for rugby arising from the proposed housing development in Maidstone to 2031, should be accommodated through enhancements to provision at the rugby club sites. It is recommended that the action plan in the Maidstone Playing Pitch Strategy be used as the basis for determining facility enhancements that demonstrably relate to the scale and location of specific developments and that an appropriate level of financial contributions be sought under Section 106 or CIL arrangements, to cover the capital and revenue implications of the enhancements. To facilitate this, specific larger playing pitch projects should be listed as ‘relevant infrastructure’, under CIL Regulation 123.

7.10.4 Provide

Recommendation 5 - New facilities: Given the lack of capacity at its current site and the limited options at Mote Park to improve the situation, Maidstone Rugby Club is actively seeking to find a new site where it can provide better quality facilities with sufficient capacity to cater for existing and future needs. It is therefore recommended that the club be supported in their efforts.

Recommendation 6 - Developer contributions (new provision): Some of the extra demand for rugby arising from the proposed housing development in Maidstone to 2031, will need to be accommodated through the provision of new pitches and facilities. It is recommended that the action plan in the Maidstone Playing Pitch Strategy be used as the basis for determining which proposed new facilities demonstrably relate to the scale and location of specific developments and that an appropriate level of financial contributions be sought under Section 106 or CIL arrangements, to cover their capital and revenue cost implications. To facilitate this, specific larger playing pitch projects should be listed as ‘relevant infrastructure’, under CIL Regulation 123.

7.11 Action Plan

7.11.1 Introduction

In the context of the high-level recommendations above, the tables below set out the rugby union action plan to guide the implementation of the strategy. The abbreviations stand for MBC - Maidstone Borough Council and RFU - Rugby Football Union. The capital cost estimates are based upon Sport England’s ‘*Facility Costs - Second Quarter of 2016*’ (2016).

7.11.2 Key strategic actions

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Cost estimates</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Securing developer contributions	Ensure that policy provision is made to secure developer contributions towards new and improved rugby facilities.	MBC	Rugby Clubs	-	High

7.11.3 Site specific actions

<i>Site</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Cost estimates</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Maidstone Rugby Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No security of tenure • Poor quality changing facilities • Site overused in the peak period 	Investigate alternative sites. Obtain secured tenure at preferred site. Provide new pitches clubhouse and ancillary facilities with increased capacity.	Maidstone RFC	MBC RFU	TBA	High
Weaving Warriors Rugby Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No security of tenure • Poor quality changing facilities 	Investigate security of tenure Provide new or improved changing facilities	Weaving Warriors Rugby Club	MBC RFU	£350,000	High

8 RUGBY LEAGUE NEEDS IN MAIDSTONE

8.1 Organisational context

- **Rugby Football League:** The RFL is the governing body of the sport and supports the development of the game in Maidstone.
- **London Rugby League Foundation:** The Foundation is a charitable trust established to increase participation and engagement in rugby league in London and the surrounding counties. The Foundation supports the development of rugby league in Maidstone.
- **Invicta Panthers RLC:** Invicta Panthers is the only rugby league club in the borough and currently fields one adult team, two junior teams and two mini-rugby teams. The Club is based at the New Line Learning Academy in Maidstone.

8.2 Strategic context

8.2.1 National rugby league facilities strategy

The RFL’s ‘Community Rugby League Facilities Strategy - England’ (2011) sets out the priorities and targets for developing facilities provision.

- The need for clubs to acquire security of tenure to secure grant funding.
- The need to improve club management.
- The need to improve pitch and clubhouse quality.
- The need to access economically priced ‘3G’ pitches.
- The need to develop the appropriate facilities to develop the game in primary and secondary schools.

The RFL is currently commissioning a new national strategy to lead its facilities development programme. This is seeking to maximise the anticipated legacy arising from them winning the rights to stage the 2021 World Cup. As part of the award the RFL have secured a £10 million capital legacy infrastructure fund which should enable investment into the community game. However, Maidstone lies outside what the RFL’s ‘Emerging Affinity Areas’ and it therefore unlikely that any investment will be made in the borough.

8.2.2 Neighbouring local authorities

The situation regarding rugby league in neighbouring boroughs is as follows:

- Ashford**
There is no rugby league activity in the borough.
- Medway**
The Medway Dragons RLC is based at the Garrison Stadium in Gillingham and runs one adult and six junior teams.

Swale

There is no rugby league activity in the borough.

Tonbridge and Malling

There is no rugby league activity in the borough.

Tunbridge Wells

There is no rugby league activity in the borough.

8.2.3 Implications of the strategic context

Rugby league is a minority pitch sport in Kent, but the Invicta Panthers provide local opportunities to play the game. Their lack of security of tenure of the pitch they use at the New Line Learning Academy runs counter to the RFL's strategic objectives for club facilities.

8.3 Rugby League demand

8.3.1 RFL-affiliated clubs and teams

Invicta Panthers RLC affiliates to the RFL:

<i>Club</i>	<i>Home ground</i>	<i>Adult male teams</i>	<i>Adult female teams</i>	<i>Junior male teams</i>	<i>Junior female teams</i>	<i>Mini teams</i>
Invicta Panthers RLC	New Line Learning Academy	1	0	2	0	2

8.3.2 Demand trends

- **National trends:** Sport England's 'Active People' survey national data for rugby union indicates that the percentage of adults (16+) who played rugby league in the four weeks prior to each survey has fallen in the period since 2005.

<i>2005/06</i>	<i>2013/14</i>	<i>2014/15</i>	<i>2015/16</i>	<i>% Change</i>
0.18%	0.09%	0.09%	0.12%	-0.06%

- **Local trends:** Invicta Panthers has been established for only three years and has 150 juniors and 40 adult members. Membership has increased steadily year-on-year.

8.3.3 Displaced demand

Almost all of the Invicta Panthers membership is drawn from within Maidstone borough and there is no evidence of exported demand to the Medway Dragons club.

8.3.4 Unmet demand

Unmet demand takes a number of forms:

- Teams may have access to a pitch for matches but nowhere to train or vice versa.

- Some pitches may be unavailable to the community.
- The poor quality and consequent limited capacity of pitches in the area and/or a lack of provision and ancillary facilities which meet a certain standard of play/league requirement.

The pitch used by Invicta Panthers at New Line Learning Academy is poor quality and the site lacks any ability to generate revenue through the sale of refreshments. The London Rugby League Foundation advocates the need for a training pitch to supplement match play and this is not available at the current site. These deficiencies have hampered the further expansion of the club and therefore there is some local unmet demand.

8.3.5 Latent demand

Whereas unmet demand is known to currently exist, latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from the current population should they have access to more or better provision. The current facility deficiencies outlined above suggest that there is an element of latent demand within the local population, that would be realised with more and better provision.

8.4 Rugby league pitch supply

8.4.1 Quantity

Provision of rugby league pitches in Maidstone is set out below:

- **Available for community use:**

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Non-floodlit pitch</i>
New Line Learning Academy	Boughton Lane, Maidstone ME15 9QL	1

- **Available for community use and not used:** There are no rugby league pitches that are available for community use and not used.
- **Not available for community use:** There are no rugby league pitches that are not available for community use.
- **Not available as disused:** There are no rugby league pitches that are not available for community use because they are disused.

8.4.2 Pitch quality

The qualitative analysis involved visits to both rugby union sites with community use and used during the playing season, to undertake the sport-specific non-technical visual inspections produced by the RFL for Sport England's *Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance* (2013). The assessment generated 'scores' for each site by evaluating the condition of:

- **Pitch drainage:** Inadequately naturally drained (scores D0), adequately naturally drained (scores D1) pipe drained (scores (D2) and pipe and slit drained pitches (scores D3).

- **Grounds maintenance:** Frequency of aeration, sand-dressing, fertilising, weed killing and chain harrowing. This generates scores of ‘Poor’ (M0), ‘Adequate’ (M1) and ‘Good’ (M2).

The scores for the pitch at the New Line Learning Academy are as follows.

<i>Site</i>	<i>Drainage</i>	<i>Maintenance</i>
New Line Learning Academy	D0	M1

8.4.3 Pitch carrying capacity

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

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

The weekly carrying capacity of the pitch at the New Line Learning Academy is therefore 1.0 match equivalent session.

8.4.4 Changing quality

The quality of changing facilities the New Line Learning Academy was assessed terms of changing accommodation for players and officials, disability access and building layout and were rated as ‘good’ quality.

8.4.5 Pitch maintenance

The pitch is maintained by the New Line Learning Academy.

8.4.6 Pitch hire charges

The Invicta Panthers pay £40 to hire the pitch for each 2.5 hour session.

8.4.7 Ownership, management and security of access

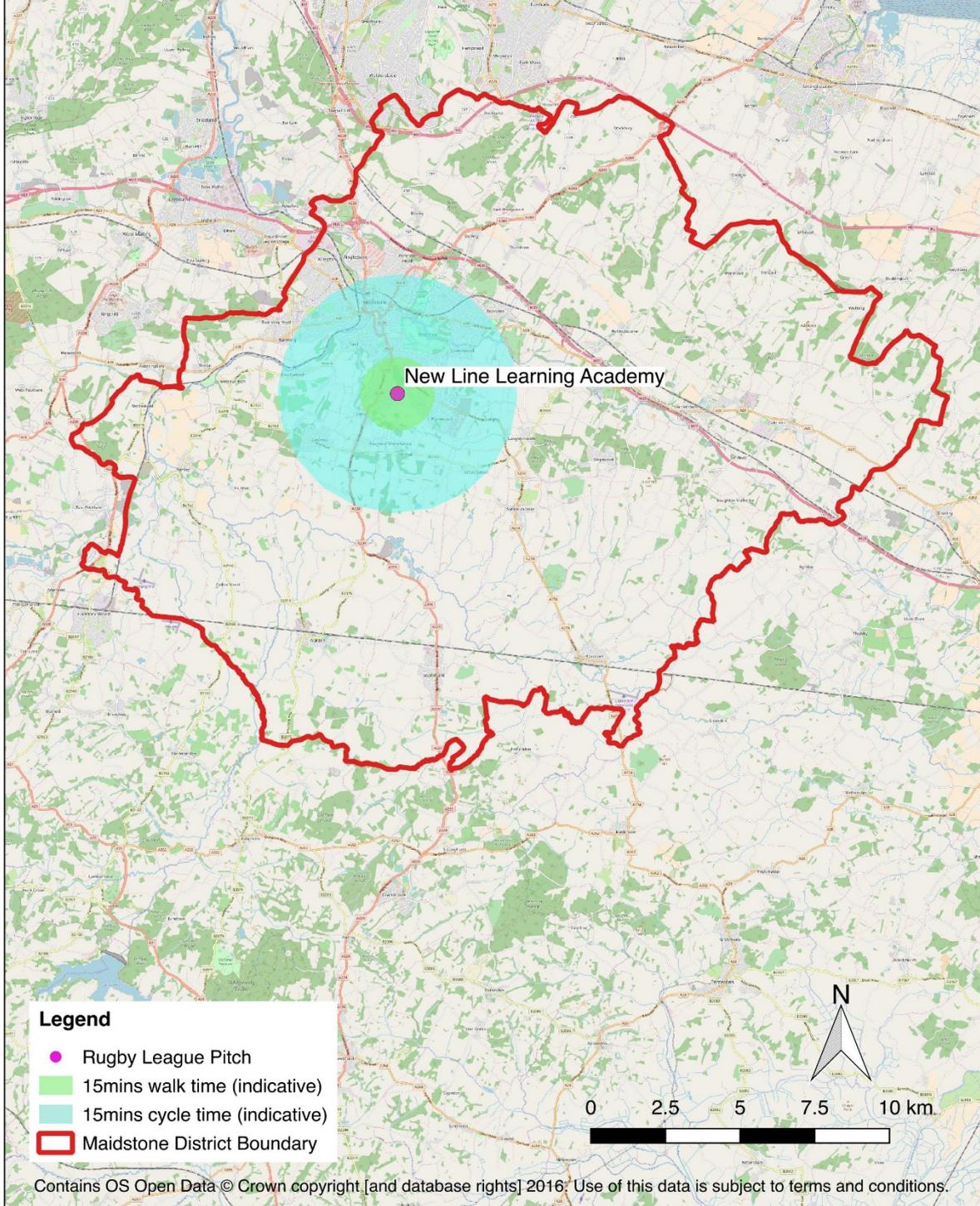
<i>Site</i>	<i>Ownership</i>	<i>Management</i>	<i>Security of access</i>
New Line Learning Academy	New Line Learning Academy	New Line Learning Academy	Unsecured

8.4.8 Geographical distribution

To location of the rugby league pitch in Maidstone is set out in the map below. The single site is located relatively centrally to the borough.



Maidstone Rugby League Pitches



8.4.9 The views of stakeholders on pitch supply

Consultation with the London Rugby League Foundation's Director identified the following key issues in relation to Maidstone:

- **Local demand:** Invicta Panthers are a young, enthusiastic and ambitious club with a senior team supported by a strong youth programme. The playing season is March to July
- **Facilities priorities:** Current requirements are for secured access to a competition pitch and training pitch. This will allow the club to grow organically and in the long term look to acquire its own facilities

Consultation with Invicta Panthers RLC identified the following issues in relation to Maidstone:

- **Current facilities:** The club uses the New Line Learning Academy pitch for both training and matches. The pitch is uneven and rated by the club as poor. Plans by the Academy to develop an artificial grass pitch for rugby league and American football have been put on hold.
- **Future facilities:** The club would ideally like to secure a home site with a clubhouse to act as a base and to sell refreshments. It had found what it considered an ideal site at Boughton Monchelsea Recreation Ground, although this would involve displacing existing football pitch users. The Club is also looking to establish a wheelchair rugby league team at a sports hall in the borough.

8.5 The implications for rugby league in Maidstone

Analysis of local supply of rugby league pitches in Maidstone indicates the following:

- The New Line Learning Academy pitch is inadequate to meet the current needs of the Invicta Panthers.
- Unmet and latent demand is equivalent to one more adult team, one junior team and one mini-rugby team.
- The quality of the pitch is poor and the site does not have secured community access.

8.6 Assessment of current needs

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

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

The site overviews identify the extent to which pitches are

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

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

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitches</i>	<i>Users</i>	<i>Weekly capacity</i>	<i>Weekly demand</i>	<i>Weekly balance</i>	<i>Peak capacity</i>	<i>Peak demand</i>	<i>Peak balance</i>
New Line Learning Academy	1	Invicta Panthers RLC	1.0	3.0	-2.0	1.0	2.0	-1.0

8.7 Assessment of future needs

8.7.1 Population growth

MBC’s ‘Strategic Housing Market Assessment’ (2015) confirmed the objectively assessed housing need for the borough over the period 2011 to 2031 as 17,660 dwellings. Of these 8,335 have already been built or granted planning permission. This scale of development will increase the borough’s population by 22,380 to 177,523 people by 2031. This will represent an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.

8.7.2 Potential changes in demand

Sport England’s ‘Active People’ survey national data for rugby league indicates that the percentage of adults who played rugby league in the four weeks prior to each survey has fallen in the period since 2005.

<i>2005/06</i>	<i>2013/14</i>	<i>2014/15</i>	<i>2015/16</i>	<i>% Change</i>
0.18%	0.09%	0.09%	0.12%	-0.06%

However, there is local evidence of both unmet and latent demand, equivalent to one adult, one junior and one mini-rugby team and this demand should be factored in to assessments of current and future needs.

8.7.3 Site-specific pressures

The overuse of the grass pitch at the New Line Learning Academy will prevent it from accommodating additional future demand without increases in capacity. This could be achieved through improved grass pitch quality (which would be unlikely to provide sufficient capacity), or the provision of an artificial turf pitch (which if floodlit and compliant with the relevant RFL performance specification, would meet all needs).

8.7.4 Potential changes in supply

There are no known potential changes to rugby league pitch supply, although the Academy's proposal for an artificial grass pitch would provide sufficient capacity for all the needs of the Invicta Panthers.

8.7.5 Existing spare capacity

There is no spare capacity at present.

8.7.6 Future pitch needs

Future rugby league pitch needs are modelled below using 'Team Generation Rates' (TGRs), which identify how many people in a specified age group in the borough are required to generate one team. These are then applied to projected changes in population to identify the likely number of teams in the future. The team numbers include an assessment of the additional teams that would be generated if identified unmet and latent demand were met, to give a more accurate representation of local demand levels:

<i>Team type</i>	<i>Age range</i>	<i>Current population</i>	<i>Current teams</i>	<i>TGR</i>	<i>Population 2031</i>	<i>Teams 2031</i>	<i>Extra teams</i>	<i>Extra pitches</i>
Adult males	19-45	26,660	2	1: 13,330	30,499	2	0	0
Adult females	19-45	27,467	0	-	31,422	0	0	0
Junior males	13-18	5,282	3	1: 1,321	6,043	5	2	1.0
Junior females	13-18	5,304	0	-	6,068	0	0	0
Mini-rugby (mixed)	7-12	11,200	3	1: 2,800	12,813	5	2	0.5

8.8 Key findings and issues

8.8.1 What are the main characteristics of current supply and demand?

The poor quality of the pitch at the New Line Learning Academy means that it is already being used to beyond its sustainable capacity to accommodate existing expressed demand. Latent and unmet demand collectively amounts to one further adult, one junior and one mini-rugby team.

8.8.2 Is there enough accessible and secured community use to meet current demand?

There is insufficient grass pitch capacity to meet current needs and community use of the pitch is also unsecured.

8.8.3 Is the accessible provision of suitable quality and appropriately maintained?

The grounds maintenance schedule at the New Line Learning Academy is not currently adequate to sustain current levels of rugby league usage.

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

- **Population growth:** The population of the borough is projected to increase by 22,380 people by 2031. This represents an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.
- **Changes in demand:** The projected increase in population will generate one additional adult male team, two junior male teams and two mixed mini-rugby teams by 2031.
- **Changes in supply:** There are no known potential changes to rugby league pitch supply, although the Academy's proposal for an artificial grass pitch would provide sufficient capacity for all the needs of the Invicta Panthers.
- **Existing spare capacity:** There is no current spare pitch capacity.
- **Future needs:** Additional future needs equate to demand for an additional 1.5 rugby league pitches.

8.8.5 Is there enough accessible and secured provision to meet future demand?

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

- Converting one or two adult football pitches with spare capacity at a site elsewhere in the borough to rugby league pitches.
- Providing an artificial turf pitch at New Line Learning Academy, which if floodlit and compliant with the relevant RFL performance specification, would meet all needs.
- Providing an artificial turf pitch at another site also serving football, rugby union and American Football's needs for additional '3G' pitches, which if floodlit and compliant with the relevant RFL performance specification, would meet all needs.

8.9 Scenario Testing

8.9.1 Introduction

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

8.9.2 Scenario 1: Securing access to school rugby pitches

- **Rationale:** There are nine rugby pitches on school sites (collectively providing 18.0 weekly match equivalent sessions), several of which have community access for other pitch sport users. It would be sensible to investigate whether these pitches might offer an alternative means of expanding local pitch capacity.
- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:

- The pitches are already there, so would require little or no investment to facilitate community use.
- Several of the schools already accommodate community use for other pitch sports.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - None of the schools in Maidstone currently has secured community access to their pitches so there would be no security of tenure for the Invicta Panthers.
 - Some schools only mark out rugby pitches for a single term during the winter months, so their availability does not correspond with the spring/summer rugby league season.
- **Conclusions:** The Rugby League summer playing season does not fit with the availability of school rugby pitches.

8.9.3 Scenario 2: Converting football pitches to rugby league

- **Rationale:** There is some spare capacity at adult football pitches at several community-accessible sites in Maidstone, including the site at Boughton Monchelsea Recreation Ground which was formerly used by the Invicta Panthers and is currently unused for football, so converting two pitches for rugby league would improve capacity.
- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - The conversion of football pitches to rugby league could be achieved relatively cheaply, without detriment to current football needs.
 - The conversion could be effected at a site with secured community use, thereby solving the lack of security of tenure at the club's current site.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - Although there is some current peak time spare capacity at adult football pitches in the borough, deficits of youth football and mini-soccer pitches mean that conversion for other local football needs is a higher priority.
 - All existing football pitches are likely to be needed to meet increasing demand for football in the future, unless alternative provision is made.
- **Conclusions:** Whilst this scenario offers a pragmatic and cost-effective solution to meeting some short-term rugby league needs, it is not the preferred longer-term solution.

8.9.4 Scenario 3: Providing an Artificial Grass Pitch suitable for rugby league at New Line Learning Academy

- **Rationale:** Enhancing pitch capacity at the existing site used for rugby league would avoid the disruption of a ground move and would also serve a range of needs for other sports.

- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - Whilst demand for rugby league alone would be insufficient to justify its provision, there is a deficit in artificial grass provision for football in the borough and a range of local needs for rugby union and American Football could also be met by a pitch with a specification acceptable to all the governing bodies of the sports concerned.
 - The pitch could meet a range of educational needs for the New Line Learning Academy.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - There is no secured community use of the site at present, although this could be rectified through conditions attached to planning consent and/or external funding.
 - The capital cost of provision is high - in the order of £850,000.
- **Conclusions:** Further feasibility work will need to be undertaken to establish whether this option is viable.

8.9.5 Scenario 4: Artificial grass pitch suitable for rugby league elsewhere in Maidstone

- **Rationale:** Providing an artificial grass pitch at an alternative site in Maidstone might better meet the needs of rugby league and other sports. For example, were Maidstone Rugby Club to provide an artificial turf pitch as part of their proposed ground move, rugby league's summer playing season would dovetail well with the rugby union winter season to facilitate shared usage.
- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - Whilst demand for rugby league alone would be insufficient to justify its provision, there is a deficit in artificial grass provision for football in the borough and a range of local needs for rugby union and American Football could also be met by a pitch with a specification acceptable to all the governing bodies of the sports concerned.
 - Meeting a range of pitch sport needs at a single site would create a critical mass of activity and improve the viability of the operation.
 - Locating an artificial turf pitch at a site with secured community access would overcome any security of tenure issues associated with school sites.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantage of this scenario is the capital cost of provision is high - in the order of £850,000.
- **Conclusions:** Further feasibility work will need to be undertaken to establish whether this option is viable, but subject to the outcome, this would appear to be the most advantageous longer-term option.

8.10 Policy recommendations

8.10.1 Introduction

The recommendations in relation to rugby league are made in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 74, which stipulates that existing open space including playing pitches, should not be built upon unless:

- An assessment has taken place which has clearly shown the open space to be surplus to requirements, or;
- The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality, in a suitable location, or;
- The development is for alternative sport and recreation provision, the needs for which clearly outweighs the loss.

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

8.10.2 Protect

Recommendation 1 - Safeguarding existing provision: The Maidstone Playing Pitch Strategy comprises a robust and evidence-based assessment of current and future needs for rugby league in the borough. The Strategy has identified a need to increase local rugby league pitch capacity and to this extent, it will be important for the current site at New Line Learning Academy to be retained. However, a number of alternative site options are being investigated because the current pitches do not meet all the Invicta Panthers needs. It is therefore recommended that existing planning policies continue to support the retention of all sites, based upon the evidence in the Playing Pitch Strategy. Given the general shortfall in rugby pitch provision in the borough, any loss of existing pitches will only be permissible they are replaced and meet policy exception E4 of Sport England’s Playing Fields Policy. This states that ‘the playing field or playing fields which would be lost as a result of the proposed development must be replaced by a playing field or playing fields of an equivalent or better quality and of equivalent or greater quantity, in a suitable location and subject to equivalent or better management arrangements, prior to the commencement of development’.

Recommendation 2 - Security of tenure: Invicta Panthers have no security of tenure at New Line Learning Academy at present. Whilst the club is not committed to remaining at the site, doing so with facilities enhancements is one option under consideration. It is therefore recommended that efforts are made to achieve security of tenure at New Line Learning Academy.

8.10.3 Enhance

Recommendation 3 - Improving existing ‘poor’ quality provision: Pitch drainage is poor at New Line Learning Academy, which compromises usage capacity. Subject to resolving the security of tenure issues, it is recommended that the Academy should be supported to apply for external funding for pitch capacity enhancements, including the receipt of developer contributions (see below).

Recommendation 4 - Developer contributions (enhancements): Some of the additional demand for rugby arising from the proposed housing development in Maidstone to 2031, should be accommodated through enhancements to provision at the rugby club sites. It is recommended that the action plan in the Maidstone Playing Pitch Strategy be used as the basis for determining facility enhancements that demonstrably relate to the scale and location of specific developments and that an appropriate level of financial contributions be sought under Section 106 or CIL arrangements, to cover the capital and revenue implications of the enhancements. To facilitate this, specific larger playing pitch projects should be listed as ‘relevant infrastructure’, under CIL Regulation 123.

8.10.4 Provide

Recommendation 5 - New facilities: Given the lack of capacity at its current site, Invicta Panthers are seeking to secure access to new facilities, either at their current site or elsewhere. It is therefore recommended that the club be supported in their efforts.

Recommendation 6 - Developer contributions (new provision): All of the extra demand for rugby league arising from the proposed housing development in Maidstone to 2031, will need to be accommodated through the provision of new pitches and facilities. It is recommended that the action plan in the Maidstone Playing Pitch Strategy be used as the basis for determining which proposed new facilities demonstrably relate to the scale and location of specific developments and that an appropriate level of financial contributions be sought under Section 106 or CIL arrangements, to cover their capital and revenue cost implications. To facilitate this, specific larger playing pitch projects should be listed as ‘relevant infrastructure’, under CIL Regulation 123.

8.11 Action Plan

In the context of the high-level recommendations above, the table below sets out the rugby league action plan to guide the implementation of the strategy. The abbreviations stand for MBC - Maidstone Borough Council, LRLF - London Rugby League Foundation and RFL - Rugby Football League. The capital cost estimates are based upon Sport England’s *Facility Costs - Second Quarter of 2016* (2016).

Issues	Action	Lead	Partners	Cost estimates	Priority
Securing developer contributions	Ensure that policy provision is made to secure developer contributions towards new and improved rugby league facilities.	MBC	Invicta Panthers RLC	-	High
Increasing short-term pitch capacity	Convert unused football pitches at Boughton Monchelsea Recreation Ground into two rugby league pitches.	Boughton Monchelsea PC	Invicta Panthers RLC	£2,000 for two sets of rugby posts.	High
Increasing long-term pitch capacity	Commission a feasibility study to establish the options for expanding local pitch capacity.	MBC	Governing bodies of sport)	£20,000 for feasibility study to cover all sports.	High
Increasing long-term pitch capacity	Feasibility study into an ATP shared with other sports and provision at New Line Learning Academy (NLL). Subject to the outcome of study provide new community-secured facilities	RFL & NLL	LRLF Invicta Panthers	£850,000 for new artificial grass pitch. £500,000 for changing facilities.	High

9 HOCKEY NEEDS IN MAIDSTONE

9.1 Organisational context

- **England Hockey:** England Hockey is the governing body of the sport and supports the development of the game in Maidstone.
- **Affiliated Hockey Clubs:** There are three England Hockey-affiliated clubs in Maidstone, Maidstone HC, Sutton Valance HC and Marden Russets HC.

9.2 Strategic context

9.2.1 National hockey strategy

England Hockey's strategic plan 2013 - 2017 '*A Nation Where Hockey Matters*' (2013) contains the following priorities of relevance to Maidstone:

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

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

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

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

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

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

9.2.2 Hockey facilities strategy

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

- **Protect - To conserve the existing hockey provision:** There are currently over 800 pitches that are used by hockey clubs (club, school, universities.) The current provision must be retained where appropriate, to ensure that hockey is maintained across the country.

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

9.2.3 Neighbouring local authorities

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

Ashford

The Council is in the final stages of producing a new playing pitch strategy. Draft findings include:

- All current hockey pitches in the borough should be protected.
- An additional artificial grass pitch for hockey should be provided at Ashford HC.
- There is no evidence of any imported hockey demand from Maidstone, nor any exported demand to Maidstone.

Medway

The council has an adopted strategy dating from 2012 which it plans to revise in 2018. The strategy identified:

- All current demand can be met from within existing provision.
- 0.5 additional pitches will be needed to meet extra demand by 2028.
- There is no evidence of any imported hockey demand from Maidstone, nor any exported demand to Maidstone.

Swale

The council has an adopted playing pitch strategy dating from 2015. It identifies:

- A small current and future shortage of artificial grass pitches for hockey, equivalent to 0.2 pitches.
- This can be met through transferring current football use of artificial grass pitches for hockey to proposed new '3G' football turf pitches.
- There is no evidence of any imported hockey demand from Maidstone, nor any exported demand to Maidstone.

Tonbridge and Malling

The council does not have a playing pitch strategy but plans to draft one in the near future. Its most recent assessment states that:

- Hockey is underdeveloped in the borough due in part to a shortage of pitches.
- There is some evidence of exported hockey demand to Maidstone, with use of the Sutton Valance School pitch by Cobdown HC from Aylesford.

Tunbridge Wells

The council is finalising a playing pitch strategy in 2018. However, there is no evidence of any imported hockey demand from Maidstone, nor any exported demand to Maidstone.

9.2.4 Implications of the strategic context

There is no significant spare capacity at artificial grass pitches for hockey in neighbouring areas that could accommodate additional users from Maidstone.

9.3 Hockey demand

9.3.1 England Hockey-affiliated clubs and teams

The following clubs affiliate to England Hockey:

<i>Club</i>	<i>Home ground</i>	<i>Adult male teams</i>	<i>Adult female teams</i>	<i>Adult mixed teams</i>	<i>Junior male teams</i>	<i>Junior female teams</i>	<i>Junior mixed teams</i>
Maidstone HC	South Park, Maidstone	6	4	0	3	2	1
Marden Russets HC	Marden Cricket and Hockey Club	4	3	1	5	5	0
Sutton Valance HC	Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre Sutton Valance Prep School	5	1	1	0	3	1
TOTALS	-	15	8	2	8	10	2

9.3.2 Demand trends

- National trends:** Sport England's 'Active People' survey national data indicates that the percentage of adults who played hockey in the four weeks prior to each survey has fallen in the period since 2005.

<i>2005/6</i>	<i>2007/8</i>	<i>2008/9</i>	<i>2009/10</i>	<i>2010/1</i>	<i>2011/2</i>	<i>2012/3</i>	<i>2013/4</i>	<i>2014/5</i>	<i>2015/6</i>	<i>% Change</i>
0.23%	0.23%	0.24%	0.23%	0.21%	0.19%	0.25%	0.20%	0.20%	0.20%	-0.03%

National affiliation data for hockey club members provided by England Hockey reveals a different picture compared with the 'Active People' survey, recording successive increases in the period since 2010 as follows:

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

- Local trends:** All three local clubs report increased membership over the last two years particularly amongst junior members. Adult membership is stable or slightly increasing.

9.3.3 Displaced demand

Consultation with local clubs indicated that there is no evidence of any displaced demand for hockey currently being met by clubs and facilities outside the borough.

9.3.4 Unmet demand

Unmet demand takes a number of forms:

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

Consultation with England Hockey and the local clubs indicated that there is no evidence of any unmet demand in the borough at present, with some spare pitch capacity available to accommodate any extra demand that might arise.

9.3.5 Latent demand

Whereas unmet demand is known to currently exist latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from the current population should they have access to more or better provision. Consultation with England Hockey and the local clubs indicated that there is no evidence of any latent demand in the borough at present.

9.4 Hockey pitch supply in Maidstone

9.4.1 Quantity

Provision of artificial turf pitches for Hockey (sand-filled and sand-based surfaces) in Maidstone is below:

- *Available for community use and used:*

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Size</i>	<i>Surface</i>	<i>Year built</i>
Marden Cricket and Hockey Club	Maidstone Road, Marden TN12 9AE	100m x 60m 100m x 60m	Sand-dressed Sand-dressed	2017
South Park, Maidstone	Armstrong Rd., Maidstone ME15 6AZ	97m x 60m	Sand-dressed	2007
Sutton Valence Prep. School	Chart Rd., Sutton Valence ME17 3RF	98m x 61m	Sand-dressed	2004
Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre	North St., Sutton Valence ME17 3HN	100m x 60m	Sand-dressed	2005

- *Available for community use and used:*

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Size</i>	<i>Surface</i>	<i>Year built</i>
Invicta Grammar School	Huntsman Lane, Maidstone ME14 5DS	80m x 50m	Sand-filled	2015

9.4.2 Hockey pitch quality

The qualitative analysis of pitches in Maidstone involved visits to all hockey pitches, to undertake the sport-specific non-technical visual inspections produced by England Hockey for Sport England's *Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance* (2013).

The assessment generates an overall 'score' for each pitch by evaluating the condition of the playing surface, fencing, floodlighting, disability access and changing provision. The overall scores for each artificial grass pitch for hockey use with community use and used in Maidstone are as follows:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitch</i>	<i>Changing</i>
Marden Cricket and Hockey Club	Good	Good
South Park, Maidstone	Standard	Good
Sutton Valence Prep. School	Standard	None
Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre	Standard	Good

9.4.3 Pitch maintenance

The maintenance of pitches suitable for hockey use in the borough is organised by the managers of each facility.

9.4.4 Pitch hire charges

Marden Russets HC and Maidstone HC own their own facilities and so do not pay hire charges. Sutton Valence HC pay seasonal fees to Sutton Valence School of around £7,000.

9.4.5 Ownership, management and security of access

Half the hockey pitches in the borough are on sites without secured community access.

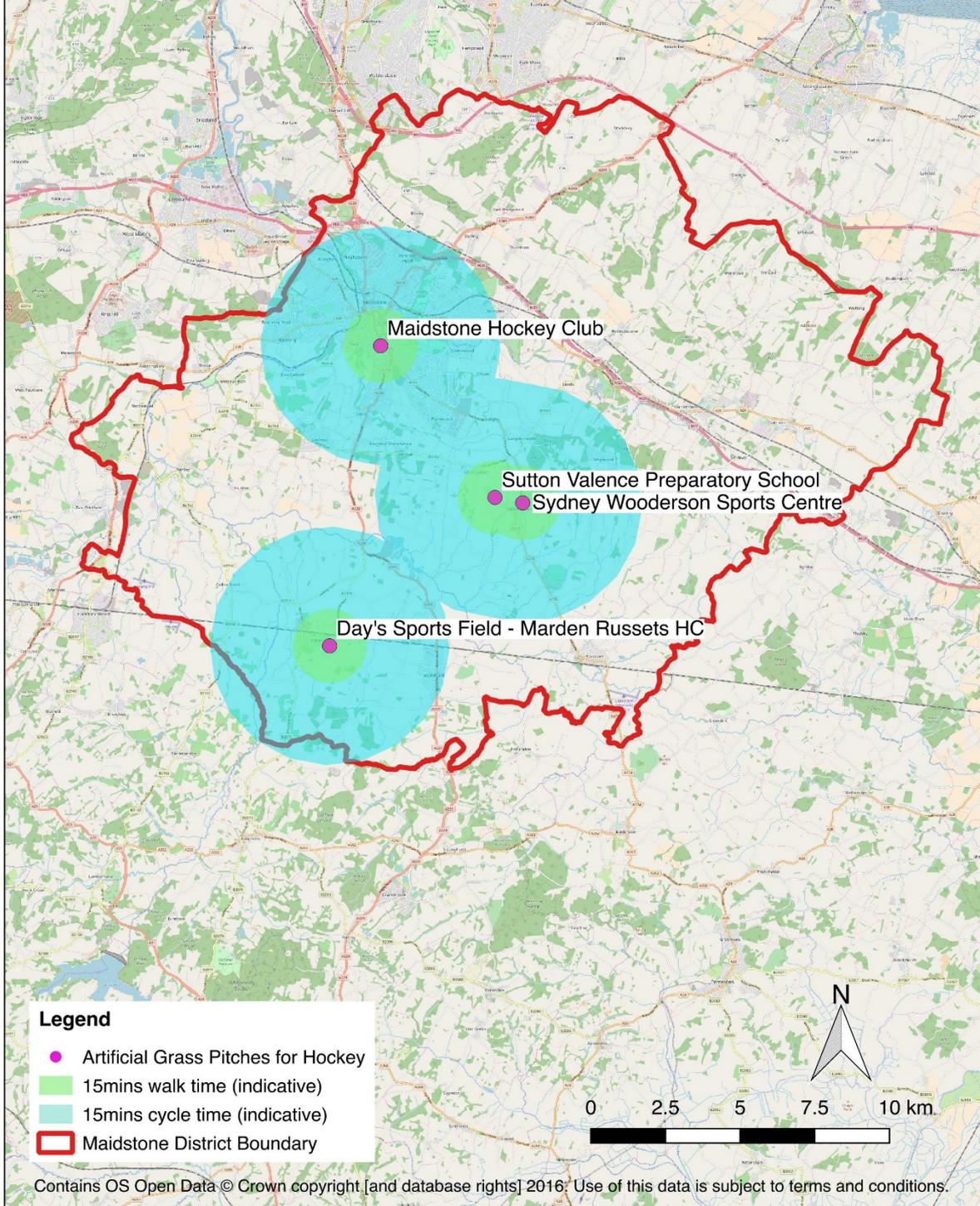
<i>Site</i>	<i>Ownership</i>	<i>Management</i>	<i>Security of access</i>
Marden Cricket and Hockey Club	Marden Cricket & HC	Marden Cricket & HC	Secured
South Park, Maidstone	Maidstone BC	Maidstone Hockey Club	Secured
Sutton Valence Prep. School	Sutton Valence Prep. Sch.	Sutton Valence Prep. Sch.	Unsecured
Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre	Sutton Valence School	Sutton Valence School	Unsecured

9.4.6 Geographical distribution

The geographical spread of artificial turf pitches with surfaces suitable for hockey in Maidstone, is set out in the map below.



Maidstone Artificial Grass Pitches for Hockey



9.4.7 The views of stakeholders on pitch supply

Consultation with England Hockey's Relationship Manager for Kent identified the following key issues in relation to Maidstone:

- **Key objective:** England Hockey's key facilities objective in Maidstone is to protect and enhance the current facilities.
- **Demand profile:** Hockey participation is increasing in the borough.
- **Imported demand:** Cobdown HC from Aylesford in Tonbridge and Malling uses the pitch at Sutton Valence School for training.
- **Informal demand:** 'Back to Hockey' sessions are run by Marden Russets HC during the summer months and by Maidstone HC on a year-round basis, in both cases during midweek evenings. This supplements the demand by formal established teams.
- **Maidstone HC:** England Hockey is aware of some peak period capacity issues at the club but believes that this could be resolved with greater flexibility of match start times.
- **Overall capacity:** England Hockey does not see a need for additional facilities in the Maidstone area.
- **Participation trends:** Since 2012, hockey has seen a 65% increase of U16 players taking up Hockey within the club environment. This is increase across all age groups expected to continue especially with the success of Rio Olympics. England Hockey is also hosting the Vitality Hockey Women's World Cup in July 2018 and it is hoped that the event will also create a springboard for the game across all ages, but especially amongst young females.
- **Pitches suitable for hockey:** Unlike some sports, hockey can only be played competitively on sand or water-based artificial grass pitches. Water-based pitches are not common and only found at elite sites, whereas as in Runnymede sand-based/sand dressed pitches can be found on school sites, leisure centres and higher education establishments.
- **Pitch re-surfacing:** The popularity of artificial grass pitches on school sites is due to the surface being able is used for a number of sports to be played and taught. However, many schools do not financially plan to replace the pitch surface, or carpet as it is called. A carpet has roughly a 10-year life span dependant on use.
- **The impact of '3G' pitches:** Since the introduction of the Third Generation ('3G') artificial grass pitches catering for football and rugby, some pitch providers have been attracted by the concept of replacing sand-based/filled carpets with a '3G' surface, to generate greater income levels from hire to football clubs/commercial football providers. Because hockey cannot be played on '3G' surfaces, it has had a detrimental effect on the game in some areas causing teams to be displaced to different areas or even to disband completely.

- **Pitch surface conversion:** Any providers proposing to change the type of surface on their artificial grass pitch should take advice from the appropriate sports' governing bodies or refer to Sport England's guidance. Due to the impact on hockey, it is important to ensure that sufficient sand-based pitches are retained for playing and developing hockey within each local authority area. To that end, any proposed change of an artificial grass pitch's surface or carpet should require a planning application and as part of the process, the applicants will need to show that there is sufficient alternative provision available for hockey in the locality if the surface is changed. Advice from Sport England and England Hockey should be sought prior to any planning application being submitted.

Consultation with affiliated hockey clubs identified the following issues in relation to Maidstone:

- **Maidstone HC:** The club has a long lease on its pitch, with the site owned by the council. There is a lack of capacity at the peak time on Saturdays and consequently the club wishes to build a second pitch immediately adjacent to its clubhouse to the north of Armstrong Road on South Park. This will require support from the council as land owner and planning authority. The club is aware that the carpet on its current pitch is coming to the end of its design life and will need replacing in the next two seasons. The club is already making financial provision to achieve this. The club currently has 265 members.
- **Marden Russets HC:** The club has relocated to a two-pitch complex on Maidstone Road in Marden at the start of the 2017/18 season, although the current clubhouse will continue to be used until the new one opens in 2018. The new facilities were funded by sale of the current ground for housing. It will own the freehold of the site through the Marden Cricket and Hockey Club. The club currently has 453 members.
- **Sutton Valence HC:** The club has no security of tenure on the Sutton Valence School sites but has a long-standing arrangement to hire facilities from the school. The club is content with the quality of maintenance of the playing surfaces but has had problems with some floodlights being out of action. The club currently has 140 members.

9.5 Assessment of current needs

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

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

The site overviews identify the extent to which pitches are

- **Being overplayed:** Where use exceeds the carrying capacity.
- **Being played to the level the site can sustain:** Where use matches the carrying capacity.

- **Potentially able to accommodate some additional play:** Where use falls below the carrying capacity.

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

<i>Site</i>	<i>Users</i>	<i>Peak capacity</i>	<i>Peak demand</i>	<i>Peak balance</i>
Marden Cricket and Hockey Club	Marden Russets HC	50.0	27.0	+23.0
South Park, Maidstone	Maidstone HC	25.0	22.5	-5.5
	Football users		8.0	
Sutton Valence Prep. School	Sutton Valence HC	25.0	11.0	+14.0
Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre	Sutton Valence HC	25.0	8.5	+9.5
	Cobdown HC		5.0	
	Maidstone Lacrosse		2.0	

The assessment shows that the South Park pitches are overused in the peak period, which is managed by scheduling activity in timeslots immediately adjacent to the peak period. There is some spare capacity at the Marden and Sutton Valence pitches.

9.6 Assessment of future needs

9.6.1 Population growth

MBC's 'Strategic Housing Market Assessment' (2015) confirmed the objectively assessed housing need for the borough over the period 2011 to 2031 as 17,660 dwellings. Of these 8,335 have already been built or granted planning permission. This scale of development will increase the borough's population by 22,380 to 177,523 people by 2031. This will represent an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.

9.6.2 Potential changes in demand

Notwithstanding the data from the 'Active People' survey, which shows a fall in adult participation in the game since 2005, England Hockey's national membership figures show an increase of 13% in the past four years and local club membership has increased in the same period. However, in the absence of any unmet or latent demand in Maidstone, it seems reasonable to project future needs based upon current demand levels.

9.6.3 Site-specific pressures

The pitch surfaces at South Park and both the Sutton Valence facilities are all ten years old or more, which exceeds the normal life expectancy of pitch carpets. All the facilities will need to be refurbished in the near future to ensure their continued availability.

9.6.4 Potential changes in supply

Following the recent provision of a second artificial turf pitch for hockey at the new Marden Cricket and Hockey Club site, there are no other known proposed changes to pitch supply.

9.6.5 Existing spare capacity

Existing collective spare capacity in the borough in the peak period amounts to 41 hours, which equates to 1.64 pitches.

9.6.6 Future hockey pitch needs

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

- Mixed teams have been apportioned between male and female teams.
- The extra pitch calculation is based upon each team requiring an average of 2.5 hours of peak time pitch use per week (1.5 hour match and 1 hour for training), based on a peak period of 25 hours per week.

<i>Team type</i>	<i>Age range</i>	<i>Current population</i>	<i>Current teams</i>	<i>TGR</i>	<i>Population 2031</i>	<i>Teams 2031</i>	<i>Extra teams</i>	<i>Extra pitches</i>
Adult male hockey	18-45	27,720	16	1: 1,733	31,712	18	2	0.2
Adult female hockey	18-45	28,270	9	1: 3,141	32,341	10	1	0.1
Boys junior hockey	8-17	8,623	9	1: 958	9,865	10	1	0.1
Girls junior hockey	8-17	8,687	11	1: 790	9,938	13	2	0.2

Projected future demand by 2031 amounts to the equivalent of 0.6 of an artificial grass pitch.

9.7 Key findings and issues

9.7.1 What are the main characteristics of current supply and demand?

- **Overuse of one pitch:** The Maidstone pitch is overused during the peak period, although this is mitigated by scheduling activity in timeslots immediately adjacent to the peak periods.
- **Spare capacity at two pitches:** The pitches in Marden and Sutton Valance have spare capacity and when aggregated for the borough as a whole, there is collective peak time spare capacity equivalent to 1.64 pitches.

9.7.2 Is there enough accessible and secured community use to meet current demand?

The two pitches on school sites in Sutton Valance do not have secured community access and the capacity at the two pitches which do would be insufficient to meet all current demand.

9.7.3 Is the accessible provision of suitable quality and appropriately maintained?

All the pitches are well-maintained, but all have playing surfaces that are ten years older or more and which therefore require replacement in the near future. Maidstone HC has made financial provision to replace the carpet at the South Park pitch.

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

- **Population growth:** The population of the borough is projected to increase by 22,380 people by 2031. This represents an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.
- **Changes in demand:** The projected increase in population will generate six additional teams by 2031.
- **Changes in supply:** The provision of two new artificial grass pitches at Maidstone Road, Marden will create a net gain of one pitch in the borough.
- **Existing spare capacity:** Current collective peak time spare capacity is equivalent to 1.64 pitches.
- **Future needs:** Additional future needs equate to demand equivalent to 0.6 artificial grass pitches for hockey.

9.7.5 Is there enough accessible and secured provision to meet future demand?

The position is as follows:

- The existing collective peak time spare capacity in the borough amounts to the equivalent of 1.64 pitches.
- Future demand from Maidstone will be equivalent to an additional 0.6 hockey pitches by 2031, all of which can be accommodated by identified spare capacity.
- Not all current provision has secured community access, however, and if the use of the two pitches on education sites was lost, there would be a current deficit of 0.32 pitches and a future shortfall of 1.32 pitches.

9.8 Scenario Testing

9.8.1 Introduction

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

9.8.2 Scenario 1: The impact of loss of access to the school pitches

- **Rationale:** It is possible that access to the pitches on school sites which do not have secured community access could be withdrawn, therefore it is advisable to examine the impact that this would have on available capacity.
- **Advantages:** There are no advantages to this option, but the effect of losing unsecured provision needs to be considered.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of this scenario are as follows:

- The peak-time pitch capacity in the borough would reduce by a cumulative total of 50 hours per week.
 - Current weekly peak-time demand in the borough is for 84 hours of pitch time and supply is 75 hours, so there would be a resultant shortfall of 9 hours of current demand per week.
 - Additional future demand is projected to amount to an extra 15 hours of peak-time demand per week, which would increase the deficit to 24 hours per week.
- **Conclusions:** Efforts should be made to secure community access to the pitches at the Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre and Sutton Valance Prep School.

9.8.3 Scenario 2: Adding additional pitch capacity at South Park

- **Rationale:** There is a peak-time deficit of 5.5 hours per week at Maidstone Hockey Club's existing pitch in South Park. The club would like to install a second pitch to create additional capacity at the site.
- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - The club is struggling to accommodate its current activity programme and the shortage of peak-time capacity is compromising its ability to expand.
 - Adding additional capacity at an established club site is preferable to providing an extra pitch at a separate location.
 - Whilst there is sufficient existing spare artificial grass pitch capacity in the borough to meet all hockey needs to 2031, the existing pitches are not in the optimum locations to serve this demand. The spare capacity is located in Marden and Sutton Valance, rather than Maidstone where 70% of the borough's population is based, so another Maidstone-based pitch would improve accessibility and provide Maidstone Hockey Club with a more coherent model for delivering its pitch requirements.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - There are a number of planning sensitivities in relation to providing an extra pitch adjacent to the existing clubhouse.
 - South Park is public open space, so there may be objections to converting a part of it to a fenced-off artificial grass pitch.
 - There is insufficient unmet hockey demand from Maidstone HC at present to fully utilise an additional pitch.
 - One reason for the current peak-time shortfall is the inclusion of 8 hours per week of football usage of the existing pitch. If local '3G' pitch capacity was expanded, football use could be transferred, thus freeing up sufficient additional time for hockey to meet all current demands.

- **Conclusions:** The difficulties in accommodating an additional pitch at South Park, coupled with the limited amounts of unmet demand and the potential to increase available capacity by transferring football usage elsewhere, makes this option sub-optimal at present.

9.8.4 Scenario 3: Meeting Maidstone Hockey Club's needs at a new site

- **Rationale:** Given the sensitivities in providing a second pitch in South Park and the imminent need to resurface the existing pitch, moving the club to a new location more suitable to accommodating two pitches, a clubhouse and ancillary facilities would represent an alternative way of meeting Maidstone Hockey Club's needs.
- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - The club is struggling to accommodate its current activity programme and the shortage of peak-time capacity is compromising its ability to expand.
 - Adding additional capacity at an established club site is preferable to providing an extra pitch at a separate location.
 - Whilst there is sufficient existing spare artificial grass pitch capacity in the borough to meet all hockey needs to 2031, the existing pitches are not necessarily in the optimum locations to serve this demand. The spare capacity is located in Marden and Sutton Valance, rather than Maidstone where 70% of the borough's population is based, so another Maidstone-based pitch would improve accessibility.
 - The site sensitivities at South Park would be circumvented.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - There is insufficient unmet hockey demand from Maidstone HC at present to fully utilise an additional pitch.
 - This option would be costly, particularly if it involved land purchase.
 - There are no currently identified alternative sites and there may be competition for any that do become available, with other clubs like Maidstone Rugby Club also currently seeking to move.
 - One reason for the current peak-time shortfall is the inclusion of 8 hours per week of football usage of the existing pitch. If local '3G' pitch capacity was expanded, football use could be transferred, thus freeing up sufficient additional time for hockey to meet all current demands.
- **Conclusions:** The difficulties in identifying and securing an alternative site, coupled with the limited amounts of unmet demand and the potential to increase available capacity by transferring football usage elsewhere, makes this option sub-optimal at present.

9.9 Policy recommendations

9.9.1 Introduction

The recommendations in relation to hockey are made in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 74, which stipulates that existing open space including playing pitches, should not be built upon unless:

- An assessment has taken place which has clearly shown the open space to be surplus to requirements, or;
- The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality, in a suitable location, or;
- The development is for alternative sport and recreation provision, the needs for which clearly outweighs the loss.

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

9.9.2 Protect

Recommendation 1 - Safeguarding existing provision: The Maidstone Playing Pitch Strategy comprises a robust and evidence-based assessment of current and future needs for hockey in the borough. The Strategy has identified a need to maintain local hockey pitch capacity and to this extent, it will be important for all current community-used pitches to be retained. It is therefore recommended that existing planning policies continue to support the retention of all sites, based upon the evidence in the Playing Pitch Strategy. If proposals to move hockey pitches, or to convert them into ‘3G’ football turf pitches (or similar surfaces that are unsuitable for hockey use) come forward, this should be subject to planning consent and will only be permissible if:

- The applicant can demonstrate to the satisfaction of England Hockey that there is sufficient capacity at alternative pitches in the borough to meet all current and future needs, or
- The pitch is replaced and meets policy exception E4 of Sport England’s Playing Fields Policy. This states that ‘the playing field or playing fields which would be lost as a result of the proposed development must be replaced by a playing field or playing fields of an equivalent or better quality and of equivalent or greater quantity, in a suitable location and subject to equivalent or better management arrangements, prior to the commencement of development’.

Recommendation 2 - Security of tenure: Two of the hockey pitch sites with community use in Maidstone do not have security of tenure. Whilst there are no known threats of eviction, the loss of access to the Sutton Valence pitches would create a local deficit in provision. It is therefore recommended that efforts be made to secure formal Community Use Agreements, to ensure that all current capacity can be assured.

9.9.3 Enhance

Recommendation 3 - Resurfacing existing pitches: The three pitches in Maidstone and Sutton Valance will all need resurfacing in the near future. Whilst the pitch operators are believed to have made financial provision for this, it is recommended all should be encouraged to continue to ensure that the quality of pitch surfaces is maintained in the longer-term.

Recommendation 4 - Developer contributions (enhancements): Most of the additional demand for hockey arising from the proposed housing development in Maidstone to 2031, should be accommodated at existing pitches and enhancements to changing provision and access arrangements would facilitate this. It is therefore recommended that the action plan in the Maidstone Playing Pitch Strategy be used as the basis for determining facility enhancements that demonstrably relate to the scale and location of specific developments and that an appropriate level of financial contributions be sought under Section 106 or CIL arrangements, to cover the capital and revenue implications of the enhancements. To facilitate this, specific larger playing pitch projects should be listed as ‘relevant infrastructure’, under CIL Regulation 123.

9.9.4 Provide

Recommendation 5 - New facilities: Maidstone Hockey Club is seeking to develop a second pitch at its South Park site. The case for doing so is not clear cut and the scenario testing suggests that displacing football activity from the current pitch, by developing additional ‘3G’ pitch capacity locally, would enable the club to meet all current demand. However, 70% of the population of the borough lives in Maidstone town and all of the spare pitch capacity is located elsewhere. It is therefore recommended that the position be kept under review as demand from additional housing developments in the area emerges and that options for additional pitch provision in Maidstone be re-examined regularly.

Recommendation 6 - Developer contributions (new provision): As indicated above, some of the extra demand for hockey arising from the proposed housing development in Maidstone to 2031, may need to be accommodated through the provision of new pitches and facilities. It is recommended that the action plan in the Maidstone Playing Pitch Strategy be used as the basis for determining which proposed new facilities demonstrably relate to the scale and location of specific developments and that an appropriate level of financial contributions be sought under Section 106 or CIL arrangements, to cover their capital and revenue cost implications. To facilitate this, specific larger playing pitch projects should be listed as ‘relevant infrastructure’, under CIL Regulation 123.

9.10 Action Plan

9.10.1 Introduction

In the context of the high-level recommendations above, the tables below set out the hockey action plan to guide the implementation of the strategy. The abbreviations stand for MBC - Maidstone Borough Council and EH - England Hockey. The capital cost estimates are based upon Sport England’s ‘Facility Costs - Second Quarter of 2016’ (2016).

9.10.2 Key strategic actions

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Cost estimates</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Securing developer contributions	Ensure that policy provision is made to secure developer contributions towards new and improved hockey facilities.	MBC	Hockey Clubs Developers	-	High

9.10.3 Site specific actions

<i>Site</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Cost estimates</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Marden Cricket and Hockey Club	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-
South Park, Maidstone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site overused in the peak period • Pitch needs resurfacing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move football use to create extra available capacity • Resurface pitch • Review options for making additional pitch provision 	MBC	Maidstone HC EH	£100,000 for pitch resurfacing	High
Sutton Valence Prep. School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No security of tenure • Pitch needs resurfacing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate security of tenure • Resurface pitch 	Sutton Valence Prep. School	MBC	£100,000 for pitch resurfacing	Medium
Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No security of tenure • Pitch needs resurfacing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate security of tenure • Resurface pitch 	Sutton Valence School	MBC	£100,000 for pitch resurfacing	Medium

10 AMERICAN FOOTBALL NEEDS IN MAIDSTONE

10.1 Organisational context

- **British American Football:** British American Football is the governing body of the sport and supports the development of the game in Maidstone.
- **Affiliated American Football clubs:** There are two British American Football -affiliated clubs in Maidstone, Maidstone Pumas and Kent Phoenix.

10.2 Strategic context

10.2.1 National American Football strategy

British American Football's strategic plan *'From School Yard to Super Bowl'* (2013) contains the following priorities of relevance to Maidstone:

Vision: 'To develop an infrastructure which is capable of developing and sustaining the widest possible participation and interest in the game of football; facilitating the development of talent to the highest competitive levels; and is recognised both in Great Britain and internationally as being defined by endeavour and excellence in all areas'.

Priority: The priority is 'to grow participation and membership. Integrated interventions funded and delivered by the British American Football Association and key partners will provide greater access to, retention within, and enhanced development of, our participation pathway'.

The 'Football Pathway': This contains three elements:

- **'Touchdown Football':** This is the collective term for programmes designed to introduce people to the sport whether as players, coaches, officials or other. The programmes seek to deliver wider participation across both the community and education contexts.
- **'In the Huddle':** This involves a range of interventions involving clubs and a range of stakeholders which support the development of football within the community with a specific focus upon youth participation.
- **'National Talent Programme':** This involves the development of talent at national level.

Facilities Issues: These are identified as follows:

- There is a paucity of facilities at grassroots level, with athletes often having to play on community pitches adapted from other sports and often with inappropriate markings and changing facilities.
- There is often no stakeholder ownership in community facilities and their associated social facilities so no extra revenue can be raised through bar takings and other social events.

10.2.2 Neighbouring local authorities

There are no American Football teams based in neighbouring local authorities to Maidstone. The only other teams in Kent are based in Canterbury and Orpington.

10.2.3 Implications of the strategic context

American Football is still seeking to develop as a sport in the UK and Maidstone is one of the few places in Kent where the game can be played.

10.3 American Football demand

10.3.1 British American Football-affiliated clubs and teams

The following local clubs affiliate to British American Football:

<i>Club</i>	<i>Home ground</i>	<i>Adult teams</i>	<i>Junior teams</i>
Kent Invicta AFC	Shepway Green	0	3
Maidstone Pumas AFC	New Line Learning Academy	1	0
TOTALS	-	1	3

10.3.2 The nature of American Football demand

The structure of American Football in the UK is different from many of the more established pitch sports and this impacts upon the patterns of demand and the related pitch requirements:

- The game is played all year round, but competitive matches are principally played between March and September.
- The two main versions of the game involve ‘Contact Football’, for age groups from Under 17 to adults and for males and females, which is played on a 120-yard x 60-yard pitch and ‘Flag Football’, played from Under 11 to adults and for males and females (which is non-contact but ‘tackling’ involves removing a detachable flag from an opponent), which is played on an 80-yard x 40-yard pitch.
- Because of the geographical isolation of many clubs, competitive fixtures tend to be played on a ‘tournament’ basis when teams gather to play several games on one day at a central venue. This involves the provision of formally marked out pitches, which are usually overmarked on grass football or rugby pitches on a temporary basis.
- Training takes place on a weekly basis, but this does not necessarily require formal pitch American Football pitch provision - all-weather pitches, grass pitches, multi-use games areas and sports halls are all used for this purpose.

10.3.3 Demand trends

- **National trends:** Sport England’s ‘Active People’ survey national data indicates that the number of adults who played American Football in the four weeks prior to each survey has fallen in the period since 2005.

2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/1	2011/2	2012/3	2013/4	2014/5	2015/6	% Change
45,500	37,800	30,600	38,500	19,500	24,500	38,300	35,200	25,000	28,600	-16,900

- **Local trends:** Maidstone Pumas have had a broadly stable adult membership since the club formed in 1997. Kent Invicta have increased their junior membership to around 50 players and ten coaches.

10.3.4 Displaced demand

Consultation with the local clubs indicated that all members are drawn from within Maidstone borough.

10.3.5 Unmet demand

Unmet demand takes a number of forms:

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

Consultation with local clubs indicated that whilst Maidstone Pumas are happy with their facilities at New Line Learning Academy, Kent Invicta believe that they could expand further with additional facility capacity.

10.3.6 Latent demand

Whereas unmet demand is known to currently exist latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from the current population should they have access to more or better provision. Kent Invicta believe that there is some evidence of latent demand in the borough at present, although this is anecdotal.

10.4 American Football pitch supply in Maidstone

10.4.1 Quantity

Pitch provision used for American Football in Maidstone is as follows:

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Pitch type</i>
New Line Learning Academy	Boughton Lane, Maidstone ME15 9QL	Adult rugby
Shepway Green	Cumberland Ave, Maidstone ME15 7JP	Adult football

10.4.2 Quality

The qualitative analysis of the above pitches was conducted using the football and rugby sport-specific non-technical visual inspections produced by England Hockey for Sport England's 'Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance' (2013). The assessment generated the following scores:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Drainage</i>	<i>Maintenance</i>
New Line Learning Academy	D0	M1

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitch</i>	<i>Changing</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Shepway Green	Poor	Standard	'Poor' quality pitch with litter and dog fouling.

10.4.3 Pitch maintenance

The maintenance of the pitches used for American Football in the borough is organised by the managers of each facility.

10.4.4 Pitch hire charges

Maidstone Pumas AFC pay £50 per hour to hire the New Line Learning Academy rugby pitch and Kent Invicta AFC pay £30 per hour to hire the football pitch at Shepway Green.

10.4.5 Ownership, management and security of access

Shepway Green has secured community access.

<i>Site</i>	<i>Ownership</i>	<i>Management</i>	<i>Security of access</i>
New Line Learning Academy	New Line Learning Academy	New Line Learning Academy	Unsecured
Shepway Green	Maidstone Borough Council	Maidstone Borough Council	Secured

10.4.6 Geographical distribution

Both the pitches used for American Football are in Maidstone town, but as such are relatively central to the borough.

10.4.7 The views of stakeholders on pitch supply

Consultation with Maidstone Pumas AFC established that the facilities they use at the New Line Learning Academy meet all their requirements.

Consultation with Kent Invicta AFC identified the following key issues:

- ***Demand profile:*** The club trains and operates year-round (excluding December and August). Youth American Football is based upon playing a small number of Tournament events at which teams attend to play multiple games. The club is geographically well-located to create a Regional hub for American Football.
- ***Existing use:*** At present the club trains on Sunday mornings from 1000 - 1300, using a training area comparable to an adult football pitch. It has an average turnout of 30 players aged 8-18 each week. with capacity to double this number without requiring more space. The club would like to increase the training sessions to include mid-weeks.
- ***Future use:*** The club is hoping to base itself at Shepway Community Centre, adjacent to Shepway Green, to work with local Youth organisations through SALUS (the community enterprise that runs the centre) to recruit players, develop links and promote American Football. This will provide indoor facilities for the club to access during training sessions, as well as opportunities to provide classroom training and development. It hopes to work with SALUS and MBC to investigate opportunities to develop the outdoor multi-use games area, to bring it up to the specification for American Football.

- **Facilities needs:** The club uses an area the size of an adult football for its training. The area is not marked and it does not require any goalposts. With access to the community centre, the club does not require use of the changing rooms at Shepway Green. For events, the club requires a further similar sized area at Shepway Green (no goal posts required) and the club would mark the pitches.

10.5 Assessment of current needs

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

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

The site overviews identify the extent to which pitches are

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

Given the use of the pitches used for American Football by other sports, the assessment of used capacity includes consideration of other pitch users to establish their carrying capacity.

Site	Pitches	Users	Weekly capacity	Weekly demand	Weekly balance	Peak capacity	Peak demand	Peak balance
New Line Learning Academy	1	Academy use Invicta Panthers RLC Maidstone Pumas AFC	1.0	2.0	-1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Shepway Green	1	Maidstone International FC	1.0	1.5	-0.5	1.0	1.5	-0.5

The assessment shows that both pitches are overused on a weekly basis and that peak demand exceeds supply at Shepway Green. This is partly due to the poor quality and consequent limited carrying capacity of both pitches.

10.6 Assessment of future needs

10.6.1 Population growth

MBC’s ‘Strategic Housing Market Assessment’ (2015) confirmed the objectively assessed housing need for the borough over the period 2011 to 2031 as 17,660 dwellings. Of these 8,335 have already been built or granted planning permission. This scale of development will increase the borough’s population by 22,380 to 177,523 people by 2031. This will represent an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.

10.6.2 Potential changes in demand

Notwithstanding the data from the 'Active People' survey, which shows a fall of 37% in adult participation in the game since 2005, the emphasis on youth development in Maidstone makes it reasonable to project future needs based upon current demand levels (with any falling adult rates offset by increasing youth participation).

10.6.3 Site-specific pressures

Both the current pitches used for American Football in Maidstone are poor quality and over-used. In both cases, increased capacity is required to sustain existing activity levels.

10.6.4 Potential changes in supply

Proposals to provide additional '3G' pitch capacity to address football, rugby union and rugby league needs would also potentially benefit American Football. Improvements to the Multi-use games area at Shepway Green Community Centre would add training facility capacity at that site.

10.6.5 Existing spare capacity

There is no spare capacity at pitches used for American Football in Maidstone at present.

10.6.6 Future American Football pitch needs

Future American Football pitch needs are modelled below using 'Team Generation Rates' (TGRs), which identify how many people in a specified age group in the borough are required to generate one team. These are then applied to projected changes in population to identify the likely number of teams in the future.

<i>Team type</i>	<i>Age range</i>	<i>Current population</i>	<i>Current teams</i>	<i>TGR</i>	<i>Population 2031</i>	<i>Teams 2031</i>	<i>Extra teams</i>	<i>Extra pitches</i>
Adult male	18-45	27,720	1	1: 27,720	31,712	1	0	0
Adult female	18-45	28,270	0	-	32,341	0	0	0
Boys junior	8-17	8,623	3	1: 2,874	9,865	3	0	0
Girls junior	8-17	8,687	0	-	9,938	0	0	0

Projected future demand by 2031 does not involve any additional team formation.

10.7 Key findings and issues

10.7.1 What are the main characteristics of current supply and demand?

- **Overuse of two pitches:** Both pitches are overused on a weekly basis and that peak demand exceeds supply at Shepway Green. This is partly due to the poor quality and consequent limited carrying capacity of both pitches.
- **Kent Invicta AFC:** The club would like to expand its current activities by developing partnerships at Shepway Community Centre and extending its use of the adjacent Shepway Green.

10.7.2 Is there enough accessible and secured community use to meet current demand?

The pitch at New Line Learning Academy does not have secured community access and there is already insufficient capacity at both pitches used for American Football to meet all current demand.

10.7.3 Is the accessible provision of suitable quality and appropriately maintained?

Both pitches are rated as 'poor' quality, which further limits their carrying capacity.

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

- **Population growth:** The population of the borough is projected to increase by 22,380 people by 2031. This represents an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.
- **Changes in demand:** The projected increase in population will not generate any additional teams by 2031.
- **Changes in supply:** Proposals to provide additional '3G' pitch capacity to address football, rugby union and rugby league needs would also potentially benefit American Football. Improvements to the Multi-use games area at Shepway Green Community Centre would add training facility capacity at that site.
- **Existing spare capacity:** There is a current collective deficit of 0.5 pitches in the peak period.
- **Future needs:** There are no projected additional future needs.

10.7.5 Is there enough accessible and secured provision to meet future demand?

Once the existing deficit of 0.5 pitches in the peak period has been met, there will be no additional pitch needs by 2031.

10.8 Scenario Testing

10.8.1 Introduction

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

10.8.2 Scenario 1: Improving grass pitch capacity

- **Rationale:** Improving the quality of the two grass pitches currently used for American Football in Maidstone would improve their carrying capacity and eliminate the current deficit.

- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - Both clubs could continue to use their current sites, where the ancillary facilities already meet their respective needs.
 - The cost of improving the drainage of grass pitches is relatively inexpensive and both pitches could potentially accommodate three or four match equivalents per week if the highest quality and maintenance ratings are achieved.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of this scenario are that the peak-time pitch capacity would remain unaltered, so there would still be a deficit of 0.5 pitches at Shepway Green in the peak period.
- **Conclusions:** Grass pitch improvements would not increase peak-time capacity sufficiently to meet current and future needs.

10.8.3 Scenario 2: Adding additional '3G' pitch capacity

- **Rationale:** There is a shortage of pitch capacity in Maidstone for football, rugby league and rugby union, that could be addressed by '3G' pitch provision that, with a rugby-based construction specification, could also meet the needs of American Football.
- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - The additional capacity provided by an artificial, all-weather surface would provide 25 hours per week of peak-time use.
 - The summer competitive seasons of rugby league and American Football complement the winter playing seasons for football and rugby, to create opportunities for complementary programming.
 - Basing both American Football clubs at a single '3G' pitch site would have the benefit of encouraging closer pathways between the youth and adult versions of the game.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - Both American Football clubs would have to leave their current sites, where the ancillary facilities support their activity programmes.
 - The cost of '3G' pitch provision is relatively high - currently in the order of £850,000.
- **Conclusions:** Provision of a '3G' pitch to meet the needs of a range of sports offers an attractive option for enhancing local capacity.

10.9 Policy recommendations

10.9.1 Introduction

The recommendations in relation to American Football are made in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 74, which stipulates that existing open space including playing pitches, should not be built upon unless:

- An assessment has taken place which has clearly shown the open space to be surplus to requirements, or;
- The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality, in a suitable location, or;
- The development is for alternative sport and recreation provision, the needs for which clearly outweighs the loss.

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

10.9.2 Protect

Recommendation 1 - Safeguarding existing provision: The Maidstone Playing Pitch Strategy comprises a robust and evidence-based assessment of current and future needs for American Football in the borough. The Strategy has identified a need to maintain local pitch capacity and to this extent, it will be important for all current community-used pitches to be retained. It is therefore recommended that existing planning policies continue to support the retention of all sites, based upon the evidence in the Playing Pitch Strategy. In the event that proposals to move pitches used for American Football do come forward, this will only be permissible they are replaced and meet policy exception E4 of Sport England’s Playing Fields Policy. This states that ‘the playing field or playing fields which would be lost as a result of the proposed development must be replaced by a playing field or playing fields of an equivalent or better quality and of equivalent or greater quantity, in a suitable location and subject to equivalent or better management arrangements, prior to the commencement of development’.

Recommendation 2 - Security of tenure: One of the sites used for American Football in Maidstone does not have security of tenure. Whilst there are no known threats of eviction, the loss of access to the New Line Learning Academy pitch would create a local deficit in provision. It is therefore recommended that efforts be made to secure a formal Community Use Agreement, to ensure that all current capacity can be assured.

10.9.3 Enhance

Recommendation 3 - Improving existing ‘poor’ quality provision: Pitch drainage is poor at Shepway Green and the New Line Learning Academy, which compromises usage capacity. Subject to resolving the security of tenure issues, it is recommended that the Academy should be supported to apply for external funding for pitch capacity enhancements, including the receipt of developer contributions (see below), subject to the resolution of the development of alternative options such as a ‘3G’ pitch.

Recommendation 4 - Developer contributions (enhancements): The additional demand for American Football arising from the proposed housing development in Maidstone to 2031, will need be accommodated by enhancing current pitch capacity. It is therefore recommended that the action plan in the Maidstone Playing Pitch Strategy be used as the basis for determining facility enhancements that demonstrably relate to the scale and location of specific developments and that an appropriate level of financial contributions be sought under Section 106 or CIL arrangements, to cover the capital and revenue implications of the enhancements. To facilitate this, specific larger playing pitch projects should be listed as ‘relevant infrastructure’, under CIL Regulation 123.

10.9.4 Provide

Recommendation 5 - New facilities: Given the lack of capacity at the current sites, it is recommended that options for new provision should be investigated, either through providing additional ‘3G’ pitch capacity or improved grass pitch carrying capacity at the current sites used.

Recommendation 6 - Developer contributions (new provision): As indicated above, some of the extra demand for American Football arising from the proposed housing development in Maidstone to 2031, will need to be accommodated through the provision of new pitches and facilities. It is recommended that the action plan in the Maidstone Playing Pitch Strategy be used as the basis for determining which proposed new facilities demonstrably relate to the scale and location of specific developments and that an appropriate level of financial contributions be sought under Section 106 or CIL arrangements, to cover their capital and revenue cost implications. To facilitate this, specific larger playing pitch projects should be listed as ‘relevant infrastructure’, under CIL Regulation 123.

10.10 Action Plan

10.10.1 Introduction

In the context of the high-level recommendations above, the tables below set out the hockey action plan to guide the implementation of the strategy. The abbreviations stand for MBC - Maidstone Borough Council and BAF - British American Football. The capital cost estimates are based upon Sport England’s ‘*Facility Costs - Second Quarter of 2016*’ (2016).

10.10.2 Key strategic actions

Issues	Action	Lead	Partners	Cost estimates	Priority
Increasing pitch capacity	Commission a feasibility study to establish the options for expanding local pitch capacity, including an artificial grass pitch shared with other sports. Subject to the outcome of the feasibility study, provide new community-secured facilities.	MBC	Maidstone Pumas Kent Invicta BAF (other governing bodies of sport)	£20,000 for feasibility study to cover all sports. £850,000 for new artificial grass pitch. £500,000 for changing facilities.	High
Securing developer contributions	Ensure that policy provision is made to secure developer contributions towards new and improved American Football facilities.	MBC	American Football Clubs Developers	-	High

10.10.3 Site specific actions

<i>Site</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Cost estimates</i>	<i>Priority</i>
New Line Learning Academy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor quality pitch • No security of tenure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve pitch quality • Investigate security of tenure 	New Line Learning Academy	Maidstone Pumas	£10,000 for pitch drainage	Medium
Shepway Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor quality pitch • MUGA needs resurfacing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve pitch quality • Resurface MUGA 	MBC	Kent Invicta SALUS	£10,000 for pitch drainage £20,000 for MUGA	Medium

11 LACROSSE NEEDS IN MAIDSTONE

11.1 Organisational context

- **English Lacrosse Association:** The English Lacrosse Association is the governing body of the sport and supports the development of the game in Maidstone.
- **Maidstone Lacrosse Club:** The club affiliates to the English Lacrosse Association, is the premier lacrosse club in Kent and is based at the War Memorial Playing Field in Sutton Valance.

11.2 Strategic context

11.2.1 National Lacrosse strategy

The English Lacrosse Association's strategic plan '*National Lacrosse Strategy: Delivering More 2016 - 2020*' (2016) contains the following priorities of relevance to Maidstone:

Vision: 'For Lacrosse to be recognised as a major team sport in England'.

Market positioning: The English Lacrosse Association will focus on male and female participation in the age range 10 - 30. This will encompass:

- School lacrosse to age 18, including after-school INTO programmes.
- Community Club expansion, using the INTO programmes on a 12-month a year basis.

Key priorities:

- Raising the profile of lacrosse.
- Expanding the lacrosse community.
- Improving world-level competitive performance.

Facilities Issues: There is an identified action to develop greater access to appropriate facilities.

11.2.2 Neighbouring local authorities

There are no community-based Lacrosse clubs in neighbouring local authorities to Maidstone, although the games is played at education sites at Kent University's Tonbridge Campus and schools in Sevenoaks and Cranbrook.

11.2.3 Implications of the strategic context

Lacrosse is still seeking to expand as a sport and Maidstone is the only community club in Kent where the game can be played.

11.3 Lacrosse demand

11.3.1 Maidstone Lacrosse Club

The club has the following teams and also runs a junior section:

<i>Club</i>	<i>Home ground</i>	<i>Men's teams</i>	<i>Women's teams</i>
Maidstone Lacrosse Club	War Memorial Playing Field Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre	2	1

11.3.2 Demand trends

- **National trends:** Sport England's 'Active People' survey does not record adult participation levels in Lacrosse but the number of members nationally affiliating to the English Lacrosse Association increased from 8,000 in 2009 to 17,000 in 2017.
- **Local trends:** Maidstone Lacrosse Club was established as a single men's team in 2008, added a second men's team in 2013 and a women's team in 2014. A junior programme was launched in 2015., so local participation figures have matched national growth trends.

11.3.3 Displaced demand

Consultation with the club indicated that some members are drawn from outside Maidstone borough, in particular players from the University of Kent.

11.3.4 Unmet demand

Unmet demand takes a number of forms:

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

Consultation with the club indicated that it is happy with the current facilities that it uses and that pitch capacity and availability does not constrain membership levels.

11.3.5 Latent demand

Whereas unmet demand is known to currently exist latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from the current population should they have access to more or better provision. There is no evidence of latent demand in the borough at present.

11.4 Lacrosse pitch supply in Maidstone

11.4.1 Quantity

Pitch provision used for Lacrosse in Maidstone is as follows:

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Pitch type</i>
War Memorial Playing Field	North Street, Sutton Valance ME17 3HT	Adult football pitch
Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre	North St., Sutton Valance ME17 3HN	Sand-dressed AGP

11.4.2 Quality

The qualitative analysis of the above pitches was conducted using the football and hockey sport-specific non-technical visual inspections produced by the FA and England Hockey for Sport England's *Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance* (2013). The assessment generated the following scores:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitch</i>	<i>Changing</i>
War Memorial Playing Field	Standard	Poor
Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre	Standard	Good

11.4.3 Pitch maintenance

The maintenance of the pitches used for lacrosse in the borough is organised by the managers of each facility.

11.4.4 Ownership, management and security of access

The War Memorial Playing Field has secured community access, but the Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre does not.

<i>Site</i>	<i>Ownership</i>	<i>Management</i>	<i>Security of access</i>
War Memorial Playing Field	Sutton Valance Parish Council	Sutton Valance Parish Council	Secured
Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre	Sutton Valance School	Sutton Valance School	Unsecured

11.4.5 Geographical distribution

Both the pitches used for lacrosse are in Sutton Valance which is relatively central to the borough.

11.4.6 The views of stakeholders on pitch supply

Consultation with the South-east Regional Co-ordinator for England Lacrosse confirmed that:

- Kent is a priority in terms of development for the South East.
- England Lacrosse will be launching a new junior development programme, which will identify facilities to form small hubs where junior players can play Lacrosse. This is in the early stages and the governing body is unsure where the Kent hubs will be located.

Consultation with the Chair of Maidstone Lacrosse Club confirmed that:

- The club plays competitive fixtures on Saturdays during the winter playing season at the War Memorial Playing Field in Sutton Valance. This involves over-marking a lacrosse pitch on the adult football pitch at the site. The changing facilities at the War Memorial Playing Field are poor quality.
- The club trains on the artificial hockey pitch at the Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre, with junior training in the sports hall at the same site.

- Current facilities provision meets all the club’s needs.

11.5 Assessment of current needs

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

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

The site overviews identify the extent to which pitches are

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

Given the use of the pitches used for lacrosse by other sports in addition, the assessment of used capacity includes consideration of other pitch users to establish their carrying capacity.

- **War Memorial Playing Field adult football pitch:**

Site	Pitches	Users	Weekly capacity	Weekly demand	Weekly balance	Peak capacity	Peak demand	Peak balance
War Memorial Playing Field	1	Fisherman’s Arms FC Mangravel FC Maidstone Lacrosse Club	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced

- **Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre artificial grass pitch:**

Site	Users	Peak capacity	Peak demand	Peak balance
Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre	Sutton Valance HC	25.0	8.5	+9.5
	Cobdown HC		5.0	
	Maidstone Lacrosse		2.0	

The assessment shows that the grass football pitch at the War Memorial Playing Field is currently used to capacity, but that there is some spare peak time capacity at the artificial grass pitch at the Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre.

11.6 Assessment of future needs

11.6.1 Population growth

MBC's 'Strategic Housing Market Assessment' (2015) confirmed the objectively assessed housing need for the borough over the period 2011 to 2031 as 17,660 dwellings. Of these 8,335 have already been built or granted planning permission. This scale of development will increase the borough's population by 22,380 to 177,523 people by 2031. This will represent an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.

11.6.2 Potential changes in demand

The rapid increases in participation in lacrosse in the past decade suggest that demand for the sport is likely to continue to increase, albeit from a low base.

11.6.3 Site-specific pressures

There are no known site-specific pressures at either of the pitches currently used by Maidstone Lacrosse Club, although the War Memorial Playing Field has no spare capacity to accommodate additional use.

11.6.4 Potential changes in supply

There are no known proposed changes to the supply of pitches used by Maidstone Lacrosse Club, although there is no secured community use at the Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre pitch, which is also likely to need to be re-surfaced in the relatively near future.

11.6.5 Existing spare capacity

There is some limited spare capacity at pitches at the Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre pitch.

11.6.6 Future lacrosse pitch needs

Future lacrosse pitch needs are modelled below using 'Team Generation Rates' (TGRs), which identify how many people in a specified age group in the borough are required to generate one team. These are then applied to projected changes in population to identify the likely number of teams in the future.

<i>Team type</i>	<i>Age range</i>	<i>Current population</i>	<i>Current teams</i>	<i>TGR</i>	<i>Population 2031</i>	<i>Teams 2031</i>	<i>Extra teams</i>	<i>Extra pitches</i>
Adult male	18-45	27,720	2	1: 13,860	31,712	2	0	0
Adult female	18-45	28,270	1	1: 28,270	32,341	1	0	0
Juniors	8-17	17,310	1	1: 17,310	19,803	1	0	0

Projected future demand by 2031 does not involve any additional team formation.

11.7 Key findings and issues

11.7.1 What are the main characteristics of current supply and demand?

The grass pitch at War Memorial Playing Field is currently used to capacity, but there is some spare capacity at the artificial grass pitch at the Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre.

11.7.2 Is there enough accessible and secured community use to meet current demand?

The pitch at the Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre does not have secured community access, so in the event that access was withdrawn, there would be insufficient provision to meet the needs of Lacrosse.

11.7.3 Is the accessible provision of suitable quality and appropriately maintained?

The changing facilities at the War Memorial Playing Field are rated as 'poor' quality, which detracts from the overall user experience. The pitch carpet at the Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre is rated as 'average' but is likely to need to be replaced in the relatively near future.

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

- **Population growth:** The population of the borough is projected to increase by 22,380 people by 2031. This represents an increase of 14.4% over the 2011 census figure.
- **Changes in demand:** The projected increase in population will generate one additional team by 2031.
- **Changes in supply:** There are no proposed changes in pitch supply that will directly impact upon the needs of Maidstone Lacrosse Club, although since pitch usage is shared with football and hockey respectively, the needs of lacrosse will need to be overlaid with the other sports.
- **Existing spare capacity:** There is current spare capacity equivalent to 0.38 artificial grass pitches in the peak period at the Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre.
- **Future needs:** Additional future needs equate to demand equivalent to 0.5 grass pitches and 0.1 artificial grass pitches.

11.7.5 Is there enough accessible and secured provision to meet future demand?

With supply and demand of the grass pitch at War Memorial Playing Field balanced, there will be a deficit of 0.5 grass pitches for Lacrosse by 2031.

11.8 Scenario Testing

11.8.1 Introduction

Based upon the key findings and issues identified above, a scenario has been examined, to identify the optimum approach to addressing needs.

11.8.2 Scenario 1: Improving grass pitch capacity

- **Rationale:** Improving the quality of the grass pitch currently used for Lacrosse would improve its carrying capacity and eliminate the current deficit.
- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - The club could remain at its existing site.
 - The cost of improving the drainage of grass pitches is relatively inexpensive and the pitch could potentially accommodate two additional match equivalents per week if the highest quality and maintenance ratings are achieved.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantages are that the changing facilities at War Memorial Playing Field are rated as 'poor' so will also need to be improved to optimise site usage.
- **Conclusions:** Grass pitch improvements and new or refurbished changing facilities at War Memorial Playing Fields would meet current and future needs.

11.9 Policy recommendations

11.9.1 Introduction

The recommendations in relation to Lacrosse are made in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 74, which stipulates that existing open space including playing pitches, should not be built upon unless:

- An assessment has taken place which has clearly shown the open space to be surplus to requirements, or;
- The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality, in a suitable location, or;
- The development is for alternative sport and recreation provision, the needs for which clearly outweighs the loss.

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

11.9.2 Protect

Recommendation 1 - Safeguarding existing provision: The Maidstone PPS comprises a robust, evidence-based assessment of current and future needs for lacrosse in the borough. The Strategy identifies a need to maintain local pitch capacity so it will be important for all current community-used pitches to be retained. It is therefore recommended that existing planning policies continue to support the retention of all sites, based upon the evidence in the Playing Pitch Strategy. In the event that proposals to replace pitches used for lacrosse do come forward, this will only be permissible they are replaced and meet policy exception E4 of Sport England's Playing Fields Policy. This states that 'the playing field or playing fields which would be lost as a result of the proposed development must be replaced by a playing field or playing fields of an equivalent or better quality and of equivalent or greater quantity, in a suitable location and subject to equivalent or better management arrangements, prior to the commencement of development'.

Recommendation 2 - Security of tenure: One of the sites used for lacrosse in Maidstone does not have security of tenure. Whilst there are no known threats of eviction, the loss of access to the Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre pitch would create a local deficit in provision. It is therefore recommended that efforts be made to secure a formal Community Use Agreement, to ensure that all current capacity can be assured.

11.9.3 Enhance

Recommendation 3 - Improving existing 'poor' quality provision: The changing facilities at War Memorial Playing Fields are rated as 'poor', which compromises the user experience. Subject to resolving the security of tenure issues, it is recommended that Sutton Valance Parish Council should be supported to apply for external funding for pitch capacity enhancements, including the receipt of developer contributions (see below).

Recommendation 4 - Developer contributions (enhancements): The additional demand for lacrosse arising from the proposed housing development in Maidstone to 2031, will need be accommodated by enhancing current pitch capacity. It is therefore recommended that the action plan in the Maidstone Playing Pitch Strategy be used as the basis for determining facility enhancements that demonstrably relate to the scale and location of specific developments and that an appropriate level of financial contributions be sought under Section 106 or CIL arrangements, to cover the capital and revenue implications of the enhancements. To facilitate this, specific larger playing pitch projects should be listed as 'relevant infrastructure', under CIL Regulation 123.

11.9.4 Provide

Recommendation 5 - New facilities: Whilst improvements to the existing sites used for Lacrosse in the borough should meet all needs, if these cannot be implemented for any reason, it is recommended that options for new provision should be investigated.

Recommendation 6 - Developer contributions (new provision): As indicated above, if the extra demand for lacrosse arising from the proposed housing development in Maidstone to 2031, needs to be accommodated through the provision of new pitches and facilities, it is recommended that the action plan in the Maidstone Playing Pitch Strategy be used as the basis for determining which proposed new facilities demonstrably relate to the scale and location of specific developments and that an appropriate level of financial contributions be sought under Section 106 or CIL arrangements, to cover their capital and revenue cost implications. To facilitate this, specific larger playing pitch projects should be listed as 'relevant infrastructure', under CIL Regulation 123.

11.10 Action Plan

11.10.1 Introduction

In the context of the high-level recommendations above, the tables below set out the hockey action plan to guide the implementation of the strategy. The abbreviations stand for MBC - Maidstone Borough Council and MLC - Maidstone Lacrosse Club. The capital cost estimates are based upon Sport England's 'Facility Costs - Second Quarter of 2016' (2016).

11.10.2 Key strategic actions

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Cost estimates</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Securing developer contributions	Ensure that policy provision is made to secure developer contributions towards new and improved lacrosse facilities.	MBC	MLC Developers	-	High

11.10.3 Site specific actions

<i>Site</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Cost estimates</i>	<i>Priority</i>
War Memorial Playing Field	Poor quality changing facilities	Provide new changing facilities	Sutton Valance Parish Council	MLC Football Foundation	£200,000	High
Sydney Wooderson Sports Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No security of tenure • Pitch needs resurfacing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure Community Use Agreement • Resurface pitch 	Sutton Valance School	MBC	£100,000 for pitch resurfacing	Medium

12 APPLYING AND REVIEWING THE STRATEGY

12.1 Introduction

This section identifies the applications of the Maidstone Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) and the mechanisms for reviewing it to ensure that it remains robust and up-to-date.

12.2 Strategy applications

The success of the PPS will be determined by how it is used. While the use of the PPS should be led by the Maidstone Borough Council, its application and delivery should be the responsibility of the project steering group involving other key local stakeholders including Sport England and the governing bodies of the pitch sports. The PPS has a number of applications:

12.2.1 Sports development planning

The PPS can be applied to help:

- Highlight, justify and make the case for sports development activities with particular sports, groups and clubs and in particular areas.
- Identify current and future trends and changes in the demand for individual sports and how they are played.
- Inform the work, strategies and plans of sporting organisations active in the area.
- Advocate the need to work with specific educational establishments to secure community use of their site(s).
- Develop and/or enhance school club links by making the best use of school sites where they have spare capacity and are well located to meet demand.

12.2.2 Planning policy

The PPS can be applied to help:

- Develop new, and review the effectiveness of existing, local planning policy (e.g. Local and Neighbourhood Plans) in line with paragraph 73 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- The implementation of local planning policy to meet the needs of the community in line with paragraph 74 of the NPPF.

12.2.3 Planning applications

The PPS can be applied to help:

- Inform the development of planning applications which affect existing and/or proposed new sports facilities provision.

- Inform pre-application discussions to ensure any subsequent planning applications maximise their benefit to sport and are developed in line with national (e.g. NPPF paragraph 74) and local planning policy.
- Sports clubs and other organisations provide the strategic need for development proposals thereby potentially adding support to their application(s) and saving them resources in developing such evidence.
- Maidstone Borough Council to assess planning applications affecting existing and/or proposed new playing pitch provision in line with national (e.g. NPPF paragraph 74) and local planning policy.
- Sport England and other parties respond to relevant planning application consultations.

The PPS can also be applied to help Maidstone Borough Council to meet other relevant requirements of the NPPF including:

- Taking account of and supporting local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs (NPPF paragraph 17 - Core Planning Principles).
- Delivering the social, recreational, cultural facilities and services the community needs (NPPF paragraph 70).
- Planning positively for the development and infrastructure required in the area to meet the objectives, principles and policies of the framework (NPPF paragraph 157).
- Working with public health leads and health organisations to understand and take account of the health status and needs of the local population, including expected future changes, and any information about relevant barriers to improving health and well-being (NPPF paragraph 171).

12.2.4 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The PPS can be applied to help:

- Advocate the need for playing pitch provision to be taken into account when the local authority is developing and/or reviewing an approach to the CIL (Charging Schedule including the Regulation 123 list and Infrastructure Delivery Plan) and the wider benefits of doing so (e.g. improving health and wellbeing).
- Provide prioritised infrastructure requirements for sports facilities provision including deliverable sport, area and site-specific projects with costings (where known).

12.2.5 Funding bids

The PPS can be applied to help:

- Provide the evidence base and strategic need to support funding bids by a range of parties to a variety of potential funding sources.
- Inform potential bidders of the likely strategic need for their project.

12.2.6 Facility and asset management

The PPS can be applied to help:

- Ensure a strategic approach is taken to the provision and management of playing pitches.
- Inform the current management, strategies and plans of playing pitch providers e.g. local authorities (within the study area and neighbouring areas), leisure trusts and educational establishments.
- Share knowledge of how sites are managed and maintained, the lessons learnt and good practice.
- Highlight the potential of asset transfers and ensure any proposed are beneficial to all parties.
- Provide additional protection for particular sites over and above planning policy, for example through deeds of dedication.
- Resolve issues around security of tenure.

12.2.7 Public health

The PPS can be applied to help:

- Understand how the community currently participates in sport, the need for playing pitches and how this may evolve.
- Raise awareness of and tackle any barriers to people maintaining and increasing their participation.
- Highlight and address any inequalities of access to provision within the study area.
- Provide evidence to help support wider health and well-being initiatives.

12.2.8 Co-ordinating resources and investment

The PPS can be applied to help:

- Raise awareness of the current resources and investment (revenue and capital) going into the management, maintenance and improvement of playing pitch provision.
- Co-ordinate the current and any future resources and investment to ensure the maximum benefit to sport and that value for money is secured.

- Ensure the current and any future resources and investment are complimentary and do not result in their inefficient use.

12.2.9 Capital programmes

The PPS can be applied to help:

- Provide the evidence base to justify the protection and investment in playing pitch provision.
- Influence the development and implementation of relevant capital programmes (e.g. school refurbishment and new build programmes).

12.3 Monitoring delivery

A process should be put in place to ensure regular monitoring of how the recommendations and action plan are being delivered. This monitoring should be led by Maidstone Borough Council and supported by all members of, and reported back to, the steering group. Understanding and learning lessons from how the PPS has been applied should also form a key component of monitoring its delivery.

12.4 Keeping the strategy robust and up-to-date

Along with ensuring that the PPS is used and applied, a process should be put in place to keep it robust and up to date. This will expand the life of the PPS, providing people with the confidence to continue to both use it and attach significant value and weight to its key findings and issues, along with its recommendations and actions.

Sport England advocates that the PPS should be reviewed regularly from the date it is formally signed off by the steering group. This will help to maintain the momentum and commitment built up when developing the PPS. Taking into account the time to develop the PPS this should also help to ensure that the original supply and demand information is no more than two years old without being reviewed.

Sport England guidance advocates that the reviews should highlight:

- How the delivery of the recommendations and action plan has progressed and any changes required to the priority afforded to each action (e.g. the priority of some may increase following the delivery of others).
- How the PPS has been applied and the lessons learnt.
- Any changes to particularly important facilities and/or sites in the area (e.g. the most used or high-quality sites for a particular sport) and other supply and demand information, what this may mean for the overall assessment work and the key findings and issues.
- Any development of a specific sport or particular format of a sport.
- Any new or emerging issues and opportunities.