



FOREST OF DEAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

ASSESSMENT REPORT JANUARY 2022

QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

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Cert Num: 6543-QMS-001

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

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ABBREVIATIONS

3G	Third Generation (artificial turf)
AGP	Artificial Grass Pitch
AP	Active Partnership
BC	Bowls Club
BE	Bowls England
CC	Cricket Club
CFA	County Football Association
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
ECB	England and Wales Cricket Board
EH	England Hockey
FA	Football Association
FC	Football Club
FE	Further Education
FF	Football Foundation
FIT	Fields in Trust
FOD	Forest of Dean
FODDC	Forest of Dean District Council
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
GFA	Gloucestershire Football Association
GMA	Grounds Management Association
HE	Higher Education
HC	Hockey Club
IRB	International Rugby Board
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh and Page
LMS	Last Man Stands
LTA	Lawn Tennis Association
MOD	Ministry of Defence
NGB	National Governing Body
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PPS	Playing Pitch Strategy
RFU	Rugby Football Union
RFL	Rugby Football League
RLFC	Rugby League Football Club
RUFC	Rugby Union Football Club
S106	Section 106
TC	Tennis Club
TGR	Team Generation Rate
U	Under
WR	World Rugby

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

PART 1: INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

1.1: Introduction

This is the Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) Assessment Report for Forest of Dean (FOD), commissioned by Forest of Dean District Council (FODDC). It presents a supply and demand assessment of playing pitch and other outdoor sports facilities in the District in accordance with Sport England's The Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance: An approach to developing and delivering a The Playing Pitch Strategy. This forms part of a wider study including an Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment.

The PPS guidance details a stepped approach that is separated into five distinct stages:

- ◀ Stage A: Preparation
 - ◀ Step 1: Clarify why the Playing Pitch Strategy is being developed
 - ◀ Step 2: Set up the management arrangements
 - ◀ Step 3: Tailor the approach
- ◀ Stage B: Information Gathering
 - ◀ Step 4: Develop an audit of playing pitches
 - ◀ Step 5: Develop a picture of demand
- ◀ Stage C: Assessment
 - ◀ Step 6: Understand how each site is being used
 - ◀ Step 7: Develop the current picture of provision
 - ◀ Step 8: Carry out scenario testing
- ◀ Stage D: Key Findings & Issues
 - ◀ Step 9: Identify key findings & issues
 - ◀ Step 10: Check and challenge key findings & issues
- ◀ Stage E: Strategy Development & Implementation
 - ◀ Step 11: Develop conclusions & recommendations
 - ◀ Step 12: Develop an action & implementation plan
 - ◀ Step 13: Adopt, monitor and review the Playing Pitch Strategy

Stages A to C are covered in this report, with Stage D and Stage E covered in the subsequent strategy document. This Assessment and subsequent Strategy population projections will run from 2021-2041, in line with the new Local Plan for the Forest of Dean.

Covid-19

The PPS has been undertaken during the Covid-19 global pandemic, which resulted in England entering into unprecedented restrictions which have fluctuated over the course of 2020 and 2021. At various points in time, grassroots sport has been halted, leading to truncated seasons and changes to way leagues have been run and fixtures scheduled. This has had a direct consequence on the supply of and demand for playing pitch and outdoor sport facilities, which, if considered in isolation, would not present an accurate representation of provision.

Consequently, this study presents information based on nature of supply and demand had there not been any restrictions in place, though consideration is given to the impact of Covid-19 and the issues clubs, teams and users face as a consequence. The approach taken is further explained within each section of the report, where appropriate.

Consultation with clubs in the District has been tailored to understand the consequential affect lockdown and the Covid-19 pandemic had on both demand for each sport and access to facilities.

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The pitch assessment data captured for winter sports (rugby union, football, hockey) in this Assessment Report was captured in February 2021 and is an accurate reflection of supply and demand. Pitches have been subject to regular use through autumn 2020 until November, though it is key to note that this is still reflective of Covid-19 affected practices, for example government guidance meant that all outdoor sport ceased from November 2020, only resuming 29th March 2021.

Furthermore, in line with RFU Return to Play (RTP) protocols there was no contact rugby union activity permitted prior to December 2020, with a brief resumption throughout December again halted by restrictions until end of March 2021. Relative to sports such as football and hockey, there has been less activity and use of pitches for rugby union during the past 12 months.

Though formal sporting use was not permitted at the time of assessment, the steering group agreed that the assessments should be undertaken, with importance placed on scrutiny and check and challenge of supply data through the Stage B process to ensure accuracy.

It is currently unknown what impact the pandemic and enforced restrictions will have on participation and provision moving forward in both the short and longer terms. Therefore, this should form a key aspect of the Stage E process, with the review of the documents ensuring that any recommendations made remain accurate as the effect of Covid-19 becomes clearer. As part of Stage E the PPS should be reviewed on an annual basis from the date it is formally signed off by the Steering Group. A review will help to maintain the momentum and commitment built up during its development. Given current circumstances an annual meeting, which could coincide with the annual NGB affiliation process, would be beneficial to understand what impact, if any, Covid-19 and the Lockdown has had within the District. For more information regarding the Stage E process please see Part 8: Deliver the strategy and keep it robust and up to date or see <http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/planning-for-sport/planning-tools-and-guidance/playing-pitch-strategy-guidance/>

1.2: Local context

Forest of Dean Local Plan

The Forest of Dean District does not have a PPS and a new Study is required. A new PPS will form part of the evidence base for the new Local Plan which will set out how the Forest of Dean will develop over the next 20 years to 2041.

Public consultation on the draft is proposed for summer 2021, with the publication version of the plan anticipated to be made available for formal representations in Spring 2022) and any Local Plan updates, such as a review of any individual sites where there could potentially be a loss of playing field land. To meet current Sport England guidance, a new PPS is required.

The Local Plan for the Forest of Dean consists of the following documents:

- ◀ Core Strategy: adopted in 2012, it outlines the Vision, Spatial Strategy and Planning Policies for the District including policies CSP.8 Retention of Community Facilities and CSP.9 Recreational and Amenity Land.
- ◀ Allocations Plan: adopted in 2018 the role of the plan is to update and show how the strategy for the Forest of Dean will be implemented and to provide detailed policies including settlement boundaries.
- ◀ Cinderford Northern Quarter Area Action Plan: the Cinderford Regeneration Board started working on an Area Action Plan for Cinderford's Northern Quarter in 2008, later adopted by the District Council in 2012. It provides the blueprint for regeneration so it can improve the area for residents and business and attract investment.

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The Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) will be an evidence base document for the new Local Plan. It will ensure that existing facilities are the most appropriate in terms of quantity, quality and location and consider how best to meet the additional needs generated by the planned housing and economic growth.

Freedom Leisure

Forest of Dean District Council contracts Freedom Leisure to deliver leisure facilities/service in the District. Freedom Leisure is a not-for-profit leisure trust which manages leisure and cultural facilities on behalf of partners across the UK to achieve its vision of “improving lives through leisure. In 2015 Freedom Leisure were awarded the contract to manage the leisure facilities in Cinderford, Lydney, Newent and Sedbury.

All local authority leisure centre provision is based at education sites where they operate as dual-use centres, Freedom Leisure managing the leisure operation and community use of school facilities outside of school hours.

1.3: Stage A: Prepare and tailor the approach

Management arrangements

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

Further to this, a Steering Group is and has been responsible for the direction of the Playing Pitch Strategy from a strategic perspective and for supporting, checking and challenging the work of the project team. The Steering Group is made up of representatives from FODDC, Sport England and National Governing Bodies of Sport.

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

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

Why the Playing Pitch Strategy is being developed

The rationale for undertaking this study is to update current levels of provision within Forest of Dean across the public, private, education, voluntary and commercial sectors and to compare this with current and likely future levels of demand.

The primary purpose of the PPS is to provide a strategic framework which ensures that the provision of playing pitches meet the local needs of existing and future residents within the District. The PPS also provides the necessary robustness and direction to inform decisions affecting the provision of playing pitch facilities and to support sports development objectives.

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One of the core planning principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs. Section 8 of the NPPF deals specifically with the topic of healthy communities, with paragraph 98 discussing the importance of access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation that can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.

Paragraph 99 discusses assessments and the protection of “existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields”. Paragraphs 101 and 102 also promote the identification of important green spaces by local communities and the protection of these facilities. Such spaces may include playing fields and outdoor sport facilities.

This strategy provides an evidence base for planning decisions and funding bids and background evidence to support Local Plan policies in relation to formal recreation. It will ensure that this evidence is sound, robust and capable of being scrutinised through examination and meets the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (2018).

Scope

The Assessment Report provides detail in respect of what exists in the District. With regards to each sport, the PPS will specifically consider the number of pitches/facilities and will take into account the size, quality, location, accessibility and capacity of the provision as well as accompanying ancillary facilities such as changing accommodation, toilets and car parking.

It also considers the demand for facilities based on population distribution and planned growth. The full list of sports facilities covered is set out below.

Pitch sports (i.e. football, rugby union, rugby league, hockey and cricket) will be assessed using the guidance set out in Sport England’s Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance: An approach to developing and delivering a playing pitch strategy.

Whilst rugby league is included in the scope of the project, no supply or demand for the sport has been identified since Forest Bulldogs Rugby League folded in 2018. Therefore, no section has been included in this report. In addition, any other grass sport pitches identified during the project will also be included.

Pitch sports:

- ◀ Football pitches
- ◀ Rugby union pitches
- ◀ Rugby league pitches
- ◀ Cricket pitches
- ◀ Third generation artificial grass (3G) pitches
- ◀ Artificial grass pitches (AGPs - including use for hockey)
- ◀ Other pitch sports (e.g. lacrosse)

Non-pitch facilities (bowls, tennis, netball courts) will be assessed using Sport England’s Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance (2014). This requires a different methodology to assess supply and demand to that used for pitch sports.

Non-pitch sports:

- ◀ Outdoor bowling greens
- ◀ Outdoor tennis courts
- ◀ Outdoor athletics facilities

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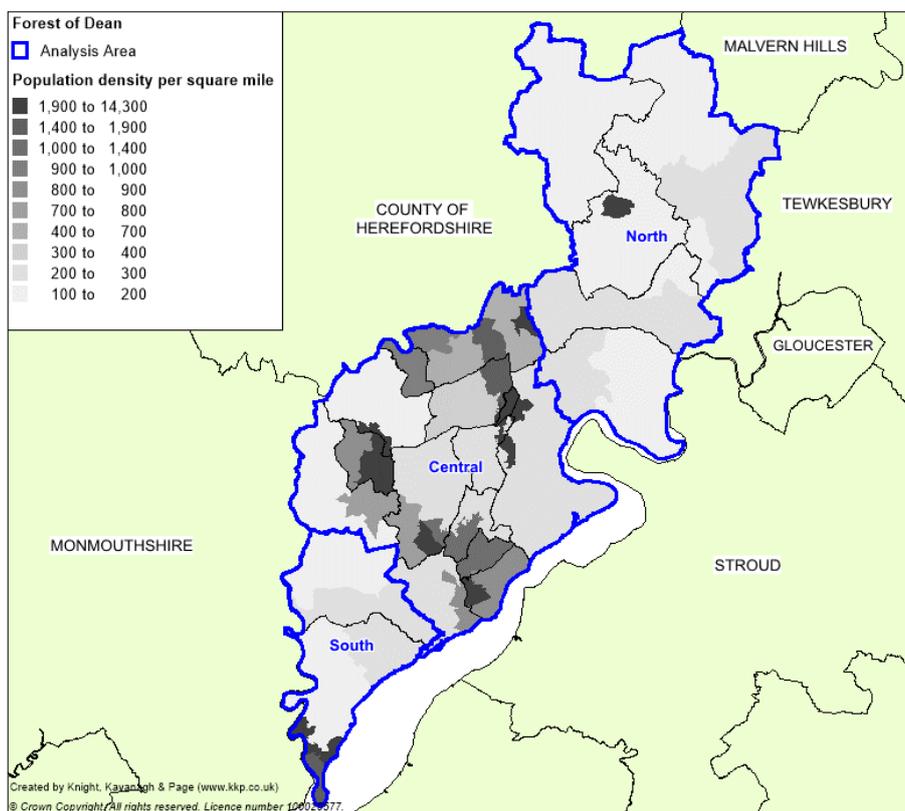
Extent of the study area

Forest of Dean District lies within the County of Gloucestershire. It borders the Gloucestershire districts of Tewkesbury and the City of Gloucester to the east, as well as Stroud to the south and southeast.

Forest of Dean also borders the Worcestershire district of Malvern Hills to the north and the County of Herefordshire to the northwest. The western border marks the national boundary with Wales where the District borders Monmouthshire, a significant proportion of the Wye Area of Natural Beauty (AONB) lying within the Forest of Dean administrative area.

Much of the District's southern and south-eastern boundaries are marked by the River Severn which runs alongside. It has four main settlements: Cinderford, Lydney, Sedbury and Newent.

Figure 1.1: Forest of Dean study area with analysis areas



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The study area will comprise the whole of Forest of Dean District Council's administrative area. Due to its size, Forest of Dean will be broken into smaller subsections known as analysis areas which broadly align with other sub-areas used for planning purposes. They are:

- ◀ **North (19,8291)** – taking in the town of Newent and surrounding settlements generally related to Newent but also Gloucester, Ledbury and other larger centres.
 - ◀ Wards: Dymock, Hartpury and Redmarley, Newent and Taynton, Longhope and Huntley, Westbury.
- ◀ **Central (57,5732)** – referred to as the 'Forest core', the Forest of Dean itself with its managed woodlands. The largest area in terms of population, reflective of the inter-relationship of the three main towns (Cinderford, Lydney and Coleford) and their immediate hinterlands. Part of the area is close to Monmouth and Ross (both Wales).
 - ◀ Wards: Mitcheldean Ruardean and Drybrook, Cinderford East, Cinderford West, Newnham, Ruspidge, Lydney West and Alyburton, Lydney East, Lydney North, Bream, Berry Hill, Lydbrook, Coleford, Newland and Sling.
- ◀ **South (9,389²)** - surrounding southern settlements which relate to Chepstow as well as centres in Forest of Dean District.
 - ◀ Wards: St Briavels, Tidenham.

Cross boundary issues will also be explored to determine the level of imported and exported demand, recognising, for example, that people travel to and make use of strategic facilities irrespective of administrative boundaries. There is identified import of demand from Gloucester City and Tewkesbury, for example by football clubs and the GFA Vets Football League to access 3G pitches, with the latter based at Hartpury College as a central venue.

Both Gloucester City (2015) and Tewkesbury (2017) have a PPS, whilst a new South Worcestershire PPS taking in Malvern Hills (as well as Worcester City and Wychavon) is being produced to be completed in 2021. Herefordshire County Council does not have a valid PPS in place, whilst there is no known strategic needs assessment for Monmouthshire.

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

A clear picture of supply and demand for outdoor sports facilities in Forest of Dean needs to be provided to include an accurate assessment of quantity and quality. This is achieved through consultation with key stakeholders to ensure that they inform the subsequent strategy. It informs current demand, adequacy, usage, future demand and strategies for maintenance and investment for outdoor sports facilities.

Gather supply information and views – an audit of playing pitches

Sport England's Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance uses the following definitions of a playing pitch and playing field. These definitions are set out by the Government in the 2015 'Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order'².

- ◀ **Playing pitch** – a delineated area which together with any run off area, is of 0.2ha or more, and is used for association football, rugby, cricket, hockey, lacrosse, rounders, baseball, softball, American football, Australian football, Gaelic football, shinty, hurling, polo or cycle polo.
- ◀ **Playing field** – the whole of a site which encompasses at least one playing pitch.

¹ Source: ONS Mid-2019 Population Estimates for Lower Layer Super Output Areas in England and Wales

². www.sportengland.org>Facilities and Planning> Planning Applications

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Although the statutory definition of a pitch is one that meets a minimum size of 0.2ha, this PPS includes smaller size pitches that contribute to the supply side, for example, a site containing one mini 5v5 football pitch³ (as this is less than 0.2 hectares). This PPS counts individual grass pitches (as a delineated area) as the basic unit of supply. The definition of a playing pitch also includes artificial grass pitches.

As a rural area with a small number of more densely populated towns, the District has a wide range and mix of playing pitch site owners and managers. The District Council does not manage any playing field sites, with the majority managed by either Freedom Leisure on behalf of the District Council (across a portfolio of dual-use school sites), or through a mixture of parish or town council or private ownership.

Quantity

Where known, all outdoor sports facilities are included irrespective of ownership, management and use. Sites were initially identified using Sport England's Active Places web-based database, with the Council and National Governing Bodies of Sport supporting the process by checking and updating this initial data. This was also verified against club information supplied by local leagues.

For each site, the following details were recorded in the project database (which will be supplied upon completion of the project as an electronic file):

- ◀ Site name, address (including postcode) and location
- ◀ Ownership and management type
- ◀ Security of tenure
- ◀ Total number, type and quality of outdoor sports facilities

Accessibility

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

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

As far as possible the Assessment Report aims to capture all of the pitches within the District. However, there may be instances, for example, on school sites, where access was not possible and has led to omissions within the report. Where pitches have not been recorded within the report they remain as pitches and for planning purposes continue to be so. Furthermore, exclusion of a pitch does not mean that it is not required from a supply and demand point of view.

³ Refer to Table 2.1 for football pitch format definitions

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A number of sites in Forest of Dean are protected for community use through additional status, such as through Community Right to Bid as Assets of Community Value (ACV).

An Asset of Community Value (ACV) is land or buildings nominated by a local voluntary or community group and which the Council decides meets the requirements to be listed as an asset of community value. The statutory rules about assets of community value can be found in sections 87 – 103 of the Localism Act⁴.

If the owner of land or buildings that are listed as assets of community value wants to sell them, they must contact the Council which will notify the community group that nominated the asset. The community group then has the opportunity to register its interest as a potential bidder, triggering a six month moratorium period during which, subject to certain exceptions, the owner can only sell the asset if it is to a community interest group. After the six month moratorium period the owner can sell to whomever they choose. Freedom Leisure Lydney (The Dean Academy Lydney) is a successfully nominated ACV⁵.

Furthermore, playing field sites can be protected through Fields in Trust (FIT) King George V (KGV) or Queen Elizabeth II (QE2) programmes. Protection is a legal agreement between FIT and the landowner of a space that they will retain it for use as a green space, usually a public park, playing field or recreation ground, in perpetuity. The following sites have additional protection through FIT programmes:

Table 1.1: Summary of sites with protection through FIT playing field programmes

Site ID	Site name	Type of protection
3	Bathurst Park	Queen Elizabeth II Fields
14	Clearwell Recreation Ground	Centenary Fields
33	King George V Playing Fields (Coleford)	King George V Fields
43	Newent Recreation Ground	Queen Elizabeth II Fields
48	Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field Corse & Staunton	Queen Elizabeth II Fields
51	Redmarley Playing Fields	Queen Elizabeth II Fields
60	St Briavels Recreation Ground	Centenary Fields
-	Newent Arboretum	Queen Elizabeth II Fields

Quality

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

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

⁴ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/section/88/enacted>

⁵ <https://www.fdean.gov.uk/media/og4mwb0p/list-of-successful-nominations.pdf>

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The quality of all outdoor sports facilities identified in the audit and the ancillary facilities supporting them are assessed regardless of ownership, management or availability. Along with capturing any details specific to the individual facilities and sites, a quality rating is also recorded within the audit for each. These ratings are used to help estimate the capacity to accommodate competitive and other play within the supply and demand assessment.

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

Gather demand information and views

Presenting an accurate picture of current demand for outdoor sports facilities (i.e. recording how and when provision is used) is important when undertaking a supply and demand assessment. Demand for outdoor sports facilities in the Forest of Dean tends to fall within the categories of organised competitive play and organised training. There may also be some informal play recorded.

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

In addition, latent, unmet, imported and exported demand for provision is also identified within each section. Unmet and latent demand is defined as the number of additional teams that could be fielded if access to a sufficient number of outdoor sports facilities (and ancillary provision) was available, whereas exported and imported demand refers to those that are playing outside of their local authority of choice. Please refer to Appendix One: Glossary of Terms for further details.

A variety of consultation methods were used to collate such demand information. Firstly, face to face consultation was carried out with key clubs from each sport, thus allowing for the collection of detailed demand information and an exploration of key issues to be interrogated and more accurately assessed. For all remaining clubs, an online survey (converted to postal if required) was utilised.

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

As key providers and users of outdoor sports facilities, educational establishments were also consulted. This involved face to face or video hosted meetings with secondary schools/colleges and an online survey being sent to primary schools.

Future demand

Alongside current demand, it is important for a Playing Pitch Strategy to assess whether the future demand for playing pitches can be met. Using Office of National Statistics (ONS) population projections, as well as likely participation growth informed through consultation, an estimate can be made of the likely future demand for playing pitches.

Team generation rates are used to provide an indication of how many people it may take to generate a team (by gender and age group) in order to help estimate the change in demand for pitch sports that may arise from any population change. Future demand for pitches is calculated by adding the percentage increases to the population increases. This figure is then applied to the team generation rates and is presented on a sport by sport basis.

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Population and housing growth

The current population in Forest of Dean is 86,791 (2019 mid-year estimates)⁶. By 2041 (the period to which this assessment projects population based future demand, in line with the Local Plan period) the population is projected to increase to predicted to rise to 100,309⁷, representing population growth of 16%.

As Office of National Statistics figures are available by individual age brackets (to reflect team growth) this is considered the most accurate data set to apply to team generation rates (as identified above) to calculate likely future demand within the Assessment Report.

Key development sites include the strategic allocation at East Lydney (Policy AP 47, 1,684 new homes), as well as the proposals for development of the Five Acres site.

In October 2018 FODDC agreed to purchase the Five Acres site, formerly Gloucestershire College and Freedom Leisure Coleford, from Homes England. The Council's ambition is to develop a new Council owned destination leisure facility at Five Acres to add to existing facilities, improve the health and wellbeing of Forest residents and to increase the numbers of visitors coming to the area. To help the whole project financially, the new leisure use will need to be accompanied by some commercial use or a modest residential scheme.

Table 1.2: Summary of housing allocations identified in the 2018 Core Strategy

Location	Number to be provided by 2026 (approximate)
Cinderford and Ruspidge Urban area	1050
Lydney	1900
Coleford (inc. Milkwall, Coalway, Mile End, Berry Hill)	650
Newent	350
Tutshill and Sedbury	111
Bream	100
Drybrook	100
Mitcheldean	101
Newnham	65
Whitecroft-Pillowell-Yorkley	45
Lydbrook-Joys Green	82
Other villages and rural	608

1.5: Stage C: Assess the supply and demand information and views

Supply and demand information gathered within Section B was used to assess the adequacy of playing pitch provision in the Forest of Dean. It focused on how much use each site could potentially accommodate compared to how much use is currently taking place.

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

⁶ Source: ONS Mid-2019 Population Estimates for Lower Layer Super Output Areas in England and Wales

⁷ Data Source: ONS 2018-based projections 2018-2043

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

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

As a guide, the Football Association (FA), Rugby Football Union (RFU), Rugby Football League (RFL) and the English Cricket Board (ECB) have set a standard number of matches that each grass pitch type should be able to accommodate without adversely affecting its quality.

Table 1.3: Summary of carrying capacity for playing pitches

Sport	Pitch type	Number of match equivalent sessions		
		Good quality	Standard quality	Poor quality
Football	Adult pitches	3 per week	2 per week	1 per week
	Youth pitches	4 per week	2 per week	1 per week
	Mini pitches	6 per week	4 per week	2 per week
Rugby Union*	Natural inadequate	2 per week	1.5 per week	0.5 per week
	Natural adequate	3 per week	2 per week	1.5 per week
	Pipe drained	3.25 per week	2.5 per week	1.75 per week
	Pipe and slit drained	3.5 per week	3 per week	2 per week
Rugby league	Senior pitches	3 per week	2 per week	1 per week
Cricket	One grass wicket	5 per season	4 per season	0 per season
	One synthetic wicket	60 per season	60 per season	0 per season

For hockey, the capacity of an artificial grass pitch (AGP) is dependent on various factors including availability, sports lighting and current usage levels. Generally, a sand artificial grass pitch with sports lighting can accommodate up to four matches throughout one day. Similarly, for third generation artificial grass pitches (3G pitches), due to the variation in accommodating different football formats, a set capacity rating is unavailable. However, a scenario for accommodating football matches on third generation artificial grass pitches (with recommended programming) will be run in the Strategy.

The LTA does not presently work towards a capacity standard for tennis courts in club settings. Whilst courts are able to offer a greater number of accessible hours and therefore a greater level of capacity for use with sports lighting or coverings, the capacity and balance of use for tennis courts is considered on a site by site basis, informed by club consultation to understand where pressures on facilities may exist. Provision of tennis courts in parks and publicly accessible settings is a priority for the LTA and it uses a population based penetration model for courts per population to determine opportunities where underprovided or where demand for this market can be met.

Bowls England suggests a broad guide to help approximate members per green ratio. It is considered that a natural turf green can accommodate up to 60 playing members, whilst attention should be given to the long-term sustainability and viability of greens which accommodate a total playing membership of less than 20 members. Artificial turf bowling greens are likely able to accommodate in practice more than 60 members, however there are no artificial turf greens in the District.

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Develop the current picture of provision

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

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

Identify the key findings and issues

By completing Steps 1-5 it is possible to identify several findings and issues relating to the supply, demand and adequacy of outdoor sports provision in Forest of Dean. This report seeks to identify and present the key findings and issues prior to development of the Strategy and Action Plan for Forest of Dean.

Develop the future picture of provision (scenario testing)

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

The scenario testing generally occurs in the Strategy and Action Plan that proceeds this document and therefore does not form part of the Assessment Report.

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

PART 2: FOOTBALL

2.1: Introduction

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

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

Local Football Facility Plans (LFFPs)

To support in delivery of both the current and superseding FA National Games Strategy (NGS), the FA commissioned a nationwide consultancy project which has now been completed. As part of this, a Local Football Facility Plan (LFFP) has been produced for every local authority across England, with each plan being unique to its area as well as being diverse in its representation.

The LFFP is strategically aligned to the National Football Facilities Strategy (NFFS); a 10-year plan to change the landscape of football facilities in England. The NFFS represents a major funding commitment from the national funding partners (the FA, Premier League and Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)) and is delivered through the Football Foundation to inform and direct an estimated one billion pounds of investment into football facilities over the next ten years.

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

The LFFP is a 'live' document that can be updated following the completion of a PPS, if required, as an up-to-date supply and demand assessment may present findings and recommendations that need to be incorporated for investment purposes. A refresh of the LFFP process is to be piloted with a local authority in the second half of 2021. LFFPs identify key projects to be delivered and act as an investment portfolio for projects that require funding. As such, around 90% of all national football investment through the funding partners will be identified via LFFPs.

Notwithstanding the above, it is important to recognise that the LFFP is an investment portfolio of priority projects for potential investment; it is not a detailed supply and demand analysis of all pitch provision in a local area. Consequently, it cannot be used in place of a PPS and is not an accepted evidence base for site change of use or disposal. A LFFP does, however, build on available/existing local evidence and strategic plans and may adopt relevant actions from a PPS and/or complement these with additional investment priorities.

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

The LFFP for the Forest of Dean was produced in December 2018 and identifies five priority projects for investment. These are discussed in greater detail in both this section and Part 3 of this report.

Consultation

Consultation with football clubs took place via telephone consultation or an electronic survey. Contact details were provided by Gloucestershire FA, and the invitation to complete the survey was distributed via email. A total of 38 clubs responded to consultation requests, with the responsive clubs covering 132 of the 165 teams in the District. This equates to a team response rate of 80%. Both FC Littledean and Westbury United indicated they did not want to take part. Key clubs identified by Gloucestershire FA that have been consulted with are as follows:

- ◀ Broadwell Amateurs
- ◀ Broadwell Amateurs Youth
- ◀ Cinderford Town
- ◀ Cinderford Town Youth
- ◀ Lydney Town
- ◀ Lydney Town Juniors

2.2: Supply

The audit identifies a current total of 72 grass football pitches within the Forest of Dean across 51 sites. All of the identified pitches are available for community use at some level.

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

Analysis area	Available for community use					
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
North	14	-	-	1	1	16
Central	29	8	5	6	-	48
South	5	2	-	1	-	8
Total	48	10	5	8	1	72

As can be seen in the table above, the Central Analysis Area contains the largest number of pitches (48), whilst the South Analysis Area contains the least (eight). There are significantly more adult pitches when compared to the other pitch sizes.

The large number of adult pitches is reflective of the majority of teams using adult pitches. However, it should be noted that this includes many youth 11v11 teams playing on adult pitches, which may in part be due to a lack of dedicated youth 11v11 pitches rather than a preference for adult pitches. In total, 13 youth 11v11 teams (U13-U16) currently use adult pitches for home matches in the Forest of Dean, which is not ideal for youth players and is not in line with the FA Youth Review.

In accordance with the FA Youth Review, U17 and U18 teams can play on adult pitches, with the FA's recommended pitch size being 100 x 64 metres compared to 91 x 55 metres for U15 and U16 teams and 82 x 50 metres for U13 and U14 teams. Please refer to the table below for more detail relating to pitch sizes for each format of play.

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Table 2.2: Recommended pitch sizes

Format	Age group	Recommended pitch size (metres)
Adult	U17s+	100 x 64
Youth 11v11	U15s-U16s	91 x 55
	U13s-U14s	82 x 50
Youth 9v9	U11s-U12s	73 x 46
Mini 7v7	U9s-U10s	55 x 37
Mini 5v5	U7s-U8s	37 x 27

Figure 2.1: Summary of grass football pitches by analysis area

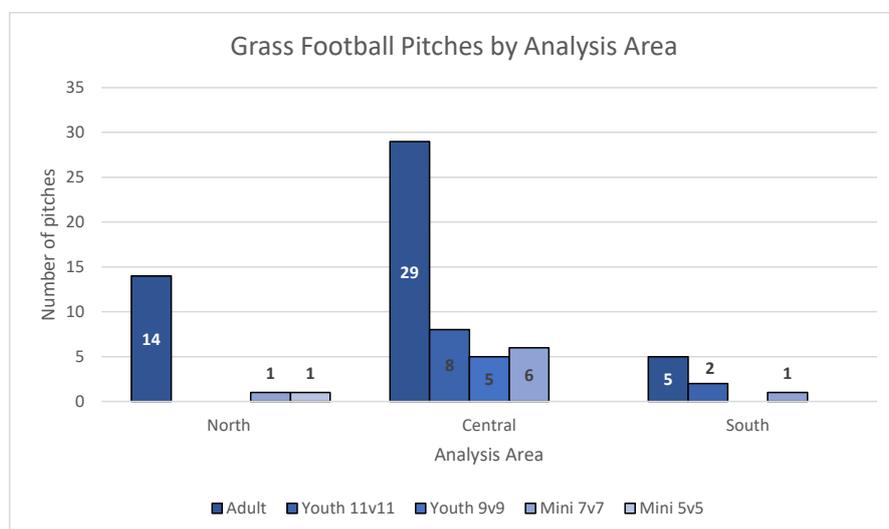
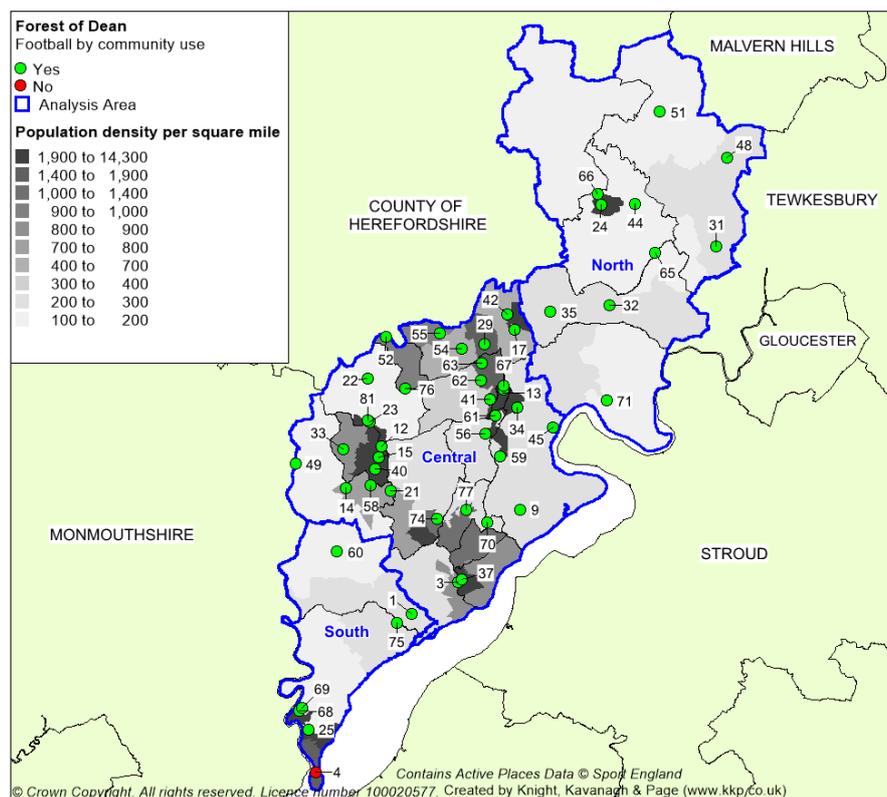


Figure 2.2 identifies all grass football pitches currently within the Forest of Dean. For more detailed maps, please see Appendix 2. For a key to these maps, see Table 2.18.

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Figure 2.2: Location of all grass football pitches in the Forest of Dean



Disused sites

The following table identifies all disused sites in the Forest of Dean that previously provided football pitches.

Table 2.3: Summary of disused football provision

Site	Comments
Aylburton Village Playing Field	An adult football pitch was previously marked on site although this was replaced by a cricket square between 2014 and 2017 according to aerial imagery. A single set of goalposts remains on site for informal and recreational football.
Bream Cricket Club	The pitch and changing rooms on site have been under gradual development for the past 20 years. Aerial imagery indicates that part of the outfield (including the football pitch on site) was excavated between 2014 and 2017. This land has now been replaced and Bream Amateurs FC hope to return to the site for the 2021/22 season if funds allow. Planning permission has been granted for a new pavilion on site. A planning application for a stand and ball-stop netting has been submitted.

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Site	Comments
Lydbrook Recreation Ground	One adult pitch which was previously used by Lydbrook Athletic. The Club has since relocated to Reeds Ground and the pitch now lies disused.
Collingwood Skatepark	The site previously hosted one youth 11v11 pitch as well as space for a mini football pitch. It has now been allocated for the development of a new hospital.
Meene	The site operates as informal open space. Recreational goals are present on site but no formal pitches are marked.

Future supply

As featured in the table above, the pitches at Bream Cricket Club are likely to be back online for the 2021/22 season. When the pitches were last used in 2013, a mini 5v5 and a mini 7v7 pitch were marked on site. Therefore, these pitches are likely to be re-marked on site.

Rank Outsiders AFC indicates there is space for another pitch to be marked at Steam Mills Recreation Ground. However, the Club states that it is unable to access grant funding due to having no security of tenure on site and so cannot provide the pitch currently.

Ruardean Hill Rangers FC is looking to add a new youth pitch and a training area at Ruardean Hill Recreation Ground.

Management

Of the community available pitches, 20 are managed by the Council or the respective parish/town council, 19 by clubs and 14 by schools/colleges/universities. The remaining pitches are managed by trusts, community organisations or the MOD.

Pitch quality

The quality of football pitches in the Forest of Dean has been assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments as determined by the FA), user consultation and Pitch Improvement Programme (PIP) / PitchPower (PP) reports (where possible) to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◀ Good
- ◀ Standard
- ◀ Poor

The percentage parameters used for the non-technical assessments are as follows: Good (>80%), Standard (50-80%), Poor (<50%). However, it must be noted that the final quality ratings assigned to the sites also take into account the user quality ratings gathered from consultation.

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

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

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

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

The table below summarises the quality of pitches that are available for community use in the Forest of Dean. In total, 12 pitches are assessed as good quality, 58 as standard quality and six as poor quality.

Table 2.4: Pitch quality ratings (community use pitches)

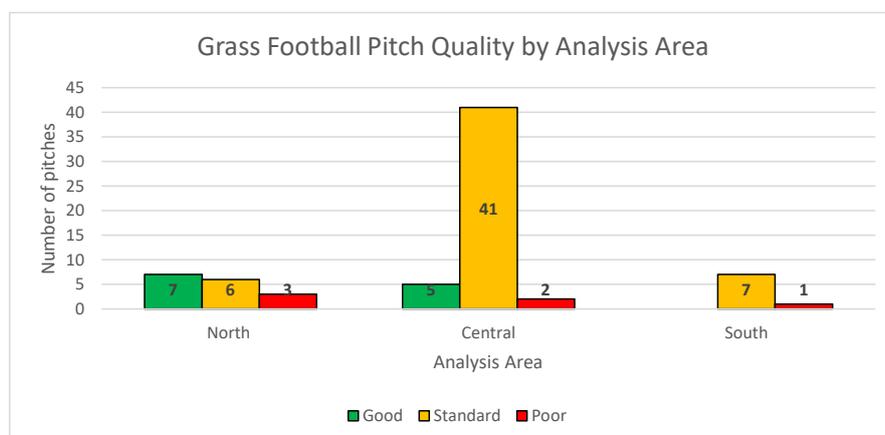
Analysis area	Adult pitches			Youth pitches			Mini pitches		
	Good	Standard	Poor	Good	Standard	Poor	Good	Standard	Poor
North	5	6	3	-	-	-	2	-	-
Central	5	24	-	-	11	2	-	6	-
South	-	4	1	-	2	-	-	1	-
Total	10	34	4	-	13	2	2	7	-

For a full breakdown of the quality ratings at each site, see Table 2.18.

The non-technical pitch quality audit shows that most pitches are poor or standard quality, particularly at local authority sites. All sites managed by the Council receive a basic level of maintenance that is restricted to grass cutting and seeding, with budgets not allowing for any further level of upkeep. Most pitches within schools also receive basic maintenance. Maintenance of pitches at club sites varies; some clubs hire dedicated ground staff whilst others depend on remedial work by volunteers that is often limited by cost and a lack of specialised equipment.

Overall, 21% of the adult pitches are good quality, 71% are standard quality and 8% are poor quality. Similarly, 13% of youth pitches are poor quality, whilst 87% are standard quality. There are no good quality youth pitches. For mini pitches, 22% are good quality and 78% are standard quality. There are no poor quality mini pitches.

Figure 2.3: Summary of grass football pitch quality by analysis area (community use pitches)



FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

In general, club consultation aligns to the finding of the audit, with 38% of clubs stating that their home pitch/es is good quality, 48% rating theirs as standard and 14% rating theirs as poor. A total of 32% of responding clubs report an improvement in quality over the last three years, whilst 59% report no difference and 9% report worsening quality.

The most common factors attributed to pitch improvements are an investment in drainage work and more frequent maintenance, whilst the opposite is true for pitches that are worsening in quality. Specific comments relating to pitch conditions at individual sites can be seen in the table below. The comments are a combination of club feedback and site assessment information.

Table 2.5: Site specific comments

Site	Comments
Five Acres High School	Site drains poorly.
Broadwell Amateurs FC	The Club indicates it is working with the Football Foundation to improve the pitch on site following a PIP/PitchPower assessment.
The Forest High School	Site suffers from wild boar damage.
Collingwood Skatepark	Site suffers from wild boar damage.
Causeway Ground	Pitch is in good quality although it has no topsoil and therefore cannot accommodate a lot of demand and requires constant work to keep in playable condition. The pitch also drains poorly.
Tidenham Recreation Ground	The Club received a maintenance grant to support with improved drainage and promote grass growth. It has also purchased a ride on mower to support with maintenance.
Woolaston Recreation Ground	Site suffers from mole and rabbit damage.
Steam Mills Recreation Ground	Site suffers from wild boar damage and drains poorly
Blakeney Recreation Field	Site drains poorly.
Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community School)	Site drains poorly Games have also been called off due to the goals on site not being the correct height.
Lydney Recreation Ground	Site floods often – see Part 5 Rugby Union, Figure 5.4.
Bream Cricket Club	Bream Amateurs FC vacated the site due to persistent flooding. As mentioned previously, the Club hopes to return to the site from the 2021/22 season.
Ruspidge Field	Site drains poorly.
Huntley Recreation Ground	Pitch quality is poor and Huntley FC have been unable to undertake the required maintenance to improve quality due to Parish Council restrictions.
Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field Corse & Staunton	Pitch quality was historically poor but Staunton & Corse FC received a maintenance grant two years ago. Pitch quality has now improved and is considered to be standard quality although the site still drains poorly.
Redbrook Rovers Football Club	The pitch is said to be below minimum size and is without sportslights meaning the Club cannot be promoted any further.

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Local Football Facility Plan

The LFFP for Forest of Dean identifies key sites considered a priority to improve, with these selected based on the rationale of identifying sites that are the poorest in quality and that are the best utilised, or that have the greatest potential for increased utilisation following quality enhancements. Emphasis is on sites with three or more pitches, although scope exists for the inclusion of smaller sites if they are deemed to be strategically important. The following two sites are identified: Five Acres and Five Acres High School

In the PPS, pitches at these sites have been assessed as standard quality. Whilst most of these sites will still require improvement, given that the LFFP is a live document, there may be a need to amend and/or add to this list based on the findings of this study. Recommendations on whether this current list of sites should be amended will be made in the accompanying Strategy document.

Pitch improvement⁸

Gloucestershire FA has a Pitch Improvement Programme aimed at improving the standard of grass pitches across the County. For provision included in the programme, clubs can utilise the services of the Football Foundation's Pitch Power app to carry out a free on-side assessment of their pitches. This will provide the Grounds Management Association (GMA) with the detail needed to create a personalised, informative report to advise on how to improve the grass pitches at the site. Clubs will then receive bespoke advice and support to help with any future actions, funding applications and equipment, with clubs getting access to discounted rates for machinery and consumables through local partnerships. PitchPower inspections are now a requirement before an application can be made for grass pitch funding.

Linked to this, the FA has a general pitch improvement strategy, in partnership with the GMA. As part of this, it has a grass pitch maintenance service that can be utilised by grassroots clubs with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and therefore the quality of pitches. The key principles behind the service are to provide clubs with advice/practical solutions in a range of areas, with the simple aim of improving playing surfaces. This is designed to help clubs on sites that they themselves manage and maintain but can also be used to advise council-maintained sites.

The Football Foundation and the FA have also recently developed a new pitch maintenance grant fund that allows clubs and sports organisations to apply for funding for maintenance assistance, consumables and/or equipment. Whilst local authorities are currently ineligible applicants through this fund, clubs, leagues and/or charitable organisations using local authority sites can apply provided they have security of tenure. This fund was initially available until the end of March 2020, although it has since been extended indefinitely due to ongoing circumstances surrounding Covid-19.

Funding is awarded over a ten-year period for up to 66% of the total cost required to bring the pitches up to an appropriate standard, following a site assessment. The level of funding then decreases year on year, with the expectation that the Club is able to take on the works independently by the end of the term.

⁸ <https://footballfoundation.org.uk/grass-pitch-improvement>

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Over marked pitches

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

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

There are a number of football pitches in Forest of Dean which are marked onto or overlapping cricket outfields, which can create availability issues at multi-sport sites as the cricket season begins in April when the football season is still ongoing, and the football season begins in August as cricket fixtures are still being played. Examples of this are Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field (Corse & Staunton) and St. John's Cricket Ground.

The table overleaf highlights all sites containing over marked pitches.

Table 2.6: Sites containing over marked pitches

Site	Comments
Ellwood Football Club	An adult pitch overmarked with a mini 7v7 pitch.
Clearwell Recreation Ground	A youth 11v11 pitch overmarked with a youth 9v9 pitch.
St Briavels Recreation Ground	An adult pitch overmarked with a mini 7v7 and a mini 5v5 pitch.
Mitcheldean Playing Fields	An adult pitch overmarked with a youth 9v9 pitch.
Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community School)	An adult pitch overmarked with a youth 9v9 pitch.
Miners Welfare Playing Fields (Cinderford)	A youth 9v9 pitch although the site is also used for adult football which overlaps the youth pitch.
Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field Corse & Staunton	An adult pitch overlaps a cricket outfield.
St. John's Cricket Ground	All pitches on site overlap a cricket outfield.
The Federation of Newent Schools (Glebe Infant & Picklenash Junior)	A mini 7v7 and a mini 5v5 pitch although the site is used for youth 9v9 football which overlaps both pitches.

In addition, some clubs have taken to marking out pitches using cones, especially for mini football. This is due to a lack of pitch markings for mini football at preferred sites, as well as enabling clubs to save money on pitch hire fees. This is the case at Five Acres, Miners Welfare Playing Fields (Cinderford) and Lydney Recreation Ground.

Ancillary facilities

The quality of ancillary facilities across Forest of Dean has been assessed via a combination of site visits and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◀ Good
- ◀ Standard
- ◀ Poor

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Ancillary facility ratings are primarily influenced by the type and quality of amenities which are available on a site, such as a clubhouse, changing rooms, showering provision, car parking, dedicated official and spectator facilities and boundary fencing. Where known, nine (50%) sites are identified as being supported by good quality facilities, five (28%) by standard quality and four (22%) by poor quality facilities.

Of clubs responding to consultation, eight (50%) state that they access good quality facilities, five (31%) rate their facilities as standard quality and three (19%) rate their facilities as poor.

Table 2.7: Clubs response to ancillary facility quality

Good	Standard	Poor
50%	31%	19%

Most facilities rated as good or standard quality by users are located at multi-sport venues, such as Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community School), or private sites, such as Broadwell Amateurs Football Club.

In contrast, facilities described as poor by users have dated facilities that are small and do not provide enough rooms in relation to the number of pitches on site. Facilities receiving a poor rating from clubs include Causeway Ground and Steam Mills Recreation Ground.

Changing facilities at Bream Cricket Club are said to be in poor condition although, as mentioned previously, planning permission has been granted to construct a new pavilion on site.

Broadwell Amateurs FC reports it has received a grant from the Football Foundation for a new car parking area and a hard standing area around the ground. The Club is now looking to construct a stand and install sports lighting to meet Step 6 ground grading requirements as well as improving catering facilities on site.

As part of the wider plans for the Five Acres site, West Dean Parish Council hopes to develop a community hub on site with changing facilities.

Cinderford Town Youth FC indicates there is a general lack of ancillary provision servicing football pitches across the Forest of Dean.

At the Causeway Ground, Cinderford Town FC indicates that ancillary provision on site is very poor. The roof is damaged and the Club expects repair costs to be in the region of £100,000. Changing rooms and stands on site are said to be very dated. The Club is now working with The Forest High School and a local housing association in an attempt to sell the Causeway Ground for residential and social housing. This would see it move onto The Forest High School's site to construct a community hub with a 3G stadia pitch that would have the facilities for Step 3 football. It is looking to attract part funding from the Football Foundation to facilitate this development.

Ellwood FC wants to fence the perimeter of the ground at Ellwood Football Club.

Newent Town FC has plans in place to extend its clubhouse at Newent Town AFC whilst Milkwall and Huntley football clubs have plans to improve changing facilities at their respective home venues.

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Gloucestershire FA indicates the changing facilities at Harrow Hill AFC are subsiding and panels have been placed across the walls to hold the building up. A new clubhouse is deemed to be required on site.

In addition, there is demand for a changing pavilion to be constructed at Alvington Playing Fields and some funding has already been provided towards this development from the ECB.

Redbrook Rovers FC reports changing facilities at Redbrook Rovers Football Club have been built as an extension to the neighbouring village hall. The Club only rents these facilities from the village hall and whilst they are considered to be of adequate quality, the changing rooms are said to be small.

Local Football Facility Plan

As with grass pitch improvements, the LFFP for Forest of Dean identifies sites considered as priority sites for clubhouse and changing facility improvements, although there may again be a need to amend and/or add to this list based on the findings of this study. It recommends projects at Five Acres.

Security of tenure

Tenure of sites in Forest of Dean is generally secure i.e. through a long-term lease or a guarantee that the pitch will continue to be provided over the next three years, with most sites ensuring community use is available.

There are a number of sites owned or leased by clubs or wider multi-sport clubs, such as Broadwell Amateurs Football Club (Broadwell Amateurs FC), Causeway Ground (Cinderford Town FC) and Lydney Recreation Ground (Lydney Town FC). Such clubs are therefore considered to have security of tenure.

In contrast, tenure of some sites does remain unsecure, notably at schools and academies which state their own policies and are more likely to restrict levels of community use. An example of this is Broadwell Amateurs Youth FC as the Club plays a number of home matches at Five Acres High School.

Away from schools, whilst most clubs are happy with their current tenure agreement. The exception to this is Rank Outsiders AFC. As mentioned previously, the Club would like to provide an additional pitch at Steam Mills Recreation Ground. However, it is unable to access grant funding to provide the pitch due to having no security of tenure on site. Currently, Rank Outsiders AFC only has a verbal agreement in place with Cinderford Town Council for the use of Steam Mills Recreation Ground.

In addition to the above, Gloucestershire FA and the Football Foundation indicates English Bicknor FC has reported challenges with its agreement for access to the changing and ancillary facilities at English Bicknor Playing Fields. It is not currently known what security is formally in place.

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

National League System (NLS)

The National League System (NLS) is a series of interconnected leagues for adult men's football clubs in England. It begins below the Football League (the National League) and comprises of seven steps, with various leagues at each level and more leagues lower down the pyramid than at the top. The step system has a hierarchical format with promotion and relegation between the steps, allowing even the smallest club the theoretical possibility of rising to the top of the system.

Clubs playing within the National League must adhere to ground requirements set out by the FA. The higher the level of football being played the higher the requirements. Clubs cannot progress into the league above if the ground requirements do not meet the correct specifications. Ground grading assesses grounds from A to H, with 'A' being the requirement for Step 1 clubs and H being the requirement for Step 7 clubs. Please refer to the FA website⁹ for the full specifications for each.

There are three clubs in Forest of Dean that play within the National League System, as shown in the table below.

Table 2.8: National League System clubs in Forest of Dean

Team	League	Level
Cinderford Town FC	Southern League – Division One South	Step 4
Lydney Town FC	Hellenic Football League – Premier Division	Step 5
Newent Town FC	Hellenic Football League – Division One	Step 6

In addition to the teams listed above, Broadwell Amateurs FC plays in the Gloucestershire County Football League. This previously sat at Step 7 in the football pyramid although following a restructuring of the league system, no longer does so.

As detailed previously, both Cinderford Town and Broadwell Amateurs football clubs have plans to improve their home venues to meet ground grading requirements for the Step above which they currently play (Step 3 and 6 respectively).

There has been a restructure of the NLS, with Step 7 repositioned as Regional Feeder Leagues to the NLS to be more aligned to the County FA network as the highest level of regional/local football. Clubs at Step 7 remain eligible to access grant funding through the Football Stadia Improvement Fund (FSIF), subject to planned FSIF review in late 2021, whilst continue to be able to apply for funding through the Football Foundation (where there is wider community use beyond National League System play). Clubs will retain access to cup competitions but the restructure will help to establish a clear and consistent process for clubs coming in at Step 6 and will allow County FAs to develop local pyramid structures.

Women's National League System

Correspondingly there is a Women's National League System (WNLS) similar to the adult men's which provides structure to the women's game. This is based on seven tiers with the top tier equating to competition in the FA Women's Super League.

This ranges from Step 1 to Step 6 with each step requiring differing ground grading requirements. The system is also hierarchical format with promotion and relegation between the levels.

⁹ <http://www.thefa.com/get-involved/player/ground-grading>

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Table 2.9: Summary of ground grading for women's football

Level	League	Grading category
Step 3 and 4	Women's Super League 1	Grade A
Step 3 and 4	Women's Super League 2	Grade B
Step 5	Northern and Southern Women's Premier League	Grade A
Step 6	Women's Combination Leagues	Grade B
Step 7	Women's Regional Leagues – Premier Divisions	Grade C

In the Forest of Dean there are no teams which play in the Women's National League System. However, both Mitcheldean SC Ladies and Ellwood Ladies play just outside the Women's National League System in the Gloucestershire County Women's Football League in Division 2 and 3, respectively.

Although women's clubs are still required to meet ground requirements set out by the FA, these differ from the men's National League System. Ratings range from grade A to C, each with differing minimum requirements. Steps 1 and 2 in the Women's National League System is akin to steps 3 and 4 of the men's National League System, with some differences.

2.3: Demand

A total of 165 teams are identified as playing within the Forest of Dean. This consists of 77 men's, five women's, 49 youth boys', three youth girls' and 31 mini soccer teams.

Please note that demand is based on the number of teams each club planned to field during the 2020/2021 season (as identified through consultation and/or via affiliation data). This is by means of taking into account what play would have taken place had there not been a pandemic, rather than what actually took place, with Covid-19 and subsequent restrictions limiting activity.

Table 2.10: Summary of competitive teams currently playing in the Forest of Dean

Analysis area	Number of teams					
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
Central	51	25	14	14	8	112
North	23	6	2	2	4	37
South	8	3	2	2	1	16
Total	82	34	18	18	13	165

Most teams play in the Central Analysis Area (112). In contrast, there are very few teams in the South Analysis Area (16) and comparatively low numbers in the North Analysis Area (37 teams).

The most prevalent playing format is the adult category (82 teams); which consists of almost half of the football teams playing within the Forest of Dean.

The five women's and three girls' teams make up 5% of the total number of teams. This is a low number when compared nationally.

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Participation trends

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

Table 2.11: Change in the number of teams over the previous three years

Team type	Clubs response		
	Increased	Decreased	Stayed the same
Adult	23%	4%	73%
Youth	5%	28%	67%
Mini	11%	6%	83%

The highest increase in teams is seen in adult football, with 23% of clubs reporting an increase over the last three years and only 4% reporting a decrease.

It should also be noted that Redmarley Youth FC has lost playing numbers due to Covid-19 and whilst no teams have been lost yet, the Club reports that one or two teams are at risk of folding.

Unmet demand

Unmet demand is existing demand that is not getting access to pitches. It is usually expressed when a team is already training but is unable to access a match pitch, or when a league has a waiting list due to a lack of pitch provision, which in turn is hindering the growth of the league.

There is no unmet demand identified in the Forest of Dean, although Bridge Football Academy Youth is a training academy and so only runs training sessions for its teams currently. However, the Club is looking to enter its teams into the Gloucester League from the 2021/22 season.

Latent demand

Latent demand refers to potential demand; individuals who would like to participate within the sport but do not do so. This can be for a variety of reasons including a lack of pitches or appropriate facilities.

Clubs that report latent demand in the Forest of Dean and the reasons provided for this latent demand can be seen in the table below. In total, it applies to 20 clubs.

Table 2.12: Summary of latent demand expressed by clubs

Club	Need for more match pitches	Need for more/better training facilities	Need for better/more appropriate changing provision
Broadwell Amateurs Youth FC	Yes	Yes	-
Broadwell Amateurs FC	Yes	Yes	-
Cinderford Town Youth FC	Yes	-	-
Lydney Town FC	-	Yes	Yes
Lydney Town Youth FC	Yes	Yes	-
Huntley FC	-	Yes	Yes
Viney St. Swithins FC	Yes	Yes	-

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Club	Need for more match pitches	Need for more/better training facilities	Need for better/more appropriate changing provision
Milkwall FC	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ruardean Hill Rangers FC	Yes	Yes	Yes
Soudley FC	Yes	-	Yes
Bream Amateurs FC	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ellwood Youth FC	-	Yes	Yes
Blakeney AFC	-	Yes	-
Newent Town AFC	Yes	Yes	-
Rank Outsiders AFC	Yes	-	Yes
Ellwood FC	Yes	Yes	-
Mushet and Coalway Utd FC	-	Yes	-
Woolaston Football Club	-	Yes	Yes
Forest of Dean Youth FC	Yes	Yes	-
Tidenham FC	Yes	-	Yes

In total, 16 of the 20 clubs that indicate latent demand attribute this to a lack of adequate training facilities. 14 clubs report a need for more match pitches whilst 11 clubs state that they could increase playing numbers if better or more appropriate changing facilities were available.

In addition, Cinderford Town Youth FC indicates that it has struggled to find sufficient match pitches for its current level of demand. Throughout Covid-19, it has been able to utilise the rugby pitches at Drybrook Rugby Club whilst rugby hasn't been permitted. Once rugby restarts, the Club does not yet currently know how it will field all of its team.

Exported demand

Exported demand refers to teams that are currently accessing pitches for their home fixtures outside of the area in which they are registered, normally because their pitch requirements cannot be met.

Gorsley Village Youth FC also exports all of its demand outside of the Forest of Dean, with its U8 team playing at Gorsley Baptist Church and its U9 and U12 teams playing at Gorsley Goffs Primary School. Both of these venues are in Herefordshire and as they are both located within the village of Gorsley, the Club indicates no desire to return to the Forest of Dean.

Staunton & Corse FC exports its third team to Apperley Village Hall in Tewkesbury due to a lack of available and suitable match pitches in the Forest of Dean. The Club indicates the pitch and facilities on site are in poor condition and would prefer to return to the Forest of Dean if possible. Ideally, Staunton & Corse FC would like to purchase land surrounding their current site at Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field Corse & Staunton to create a second pitch, although the Club believes additional changing facilities would also have to be constructed to facilitate this.

Imported demand

Imported demand refers to any demand from neighbouring local authorities that access facilities within the Forest of Dean due to a lack of available facilities in other local authorities where such team or club is based.

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There is some demand imported by Vets teams playing in the Gloucestershire County Vets League, based at Hartpury College on the 3G pitch and running as a central venue. This demand is imported from districts across the County based on the nature of venue format rather a shortage of facilities, therefore does not require access to additional provision to meet this demand within the Forest of Dean.

Future demand

Future demand can be defined in two ways, through participation increases and by using population forecasts. In addition, the Strategy & Action Plan that follows this report will contain housing growth scenarios that will estimate the additional demand for football arising from housing development plans within the Forest of Dean.

Population increases

Team generation rates are used to calculate the number of teams likely to be generated in the future (2041) based on population growth. Using this, it is predicted that there will be a possible increase of five adult men's (18-45) teams, five youth 11v11 boys (12-17) teams, one youth 9v9 boys (10-11) team and one mini mixed (8-9) team.

Table 2.13: Team generation rates (2041)¹⁰

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams	Team Generation Rate	Future population within age group	Predicted future number of teams (2041)	Teams that may be generated from the increased population
Adult Men's (18-45)	12,197	77	1:158	13,090	82	5
Adult Women's (18-45)	12,290	5	1:2458	13,865	5	0
Youth Boys (12-17)	2,822	33	1:86	3,257	38	5
Youth Girls (12-17)	2,769	2	1:1385	3,376	2	0
Youth Boys (10-11)	941	16	1:59	1,012	17	1
Youth Girls (10-11)	961	1	1:961	1,043	1	0
Mini Mixed (8-9)	1,914	17	1:113	2,028	18	1
Mini Mixed (6-7)	1,857	14	1:133	1,953	14	0

In total, population increases are likely to result 12 additional teams; however, this is when the team generation rates are applied local authority wide. Once they are applied to individual analysis areas, a more detailed representation of where exactly the predicated growth will occur emerges.

It is indicated that the Central Analysis Area will have the most growth with a projected increase of six teams. Furthermore, it shows that the adult pitch format will have the largest potential increase. This is broken down by match equivalent sessions in the table overleaf.

¹⁰ Population projections include resident migration as a result of planned housing growth.

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Table 2.14: Summary of future demand from team generation rates by analysis area

Analysis area	Future demand (match equivalent sessions)					
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
North	0.5	0	0	0	0	0.5
Central	1.5	0	1.5	0	0	3
South	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	2	0	1.5	0	0	3.5

Notwithstanding the above, it is important to note that team generation rates are based on population figures and do not account for targeted development work within certain areas or focused towards certain groups, such as through FA initiatives, coaching within schools and club-led programmes. To better understand this, more detailed population forecasts would need to be undertaken, which could be done through use of Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator. This is further explored in the proceeding Strategy document.

FA Wildcats Centres

FA Wildcats Centres work with County FA qualified coaches to deliver local weekly sessions, which provide opportunities for girls aged five to 11 to develop fundamental skills and experience football in a safe and fun environment. As part of the expansion process, organisations extending beyond affiliated clubs to include other providers or community groups were invited to apply in late 2017 to become one of the new centres.

In light of both FA aspirations to double female participation in football through its Game Changer strategy and the establishment and foreseen future effect of the Wildcats programme, it is likely that the growth in affiliated women's and girl teams may exceed that shown through population growth. To account for this, seven more women's teams and 16 more girls' teams are identified as future demand for female growth.

Participation increases

A total of nine clubs report aspirations to increase the number of teams they provide. Of the clubs which quantify their *potential* increase, there is a predicted growth of 12 teams.

Table 2.15: Potential team increases identified by clubs

Club	Analysis area	Future demand	Pitch type	Match equivalent sessions ¹¹
Lydney Town FC	Central	1 x Adult	Adult	0.5
Cinderford Town FC	Central	1 x Adult	Adult	0.5
Tidenham FC	South	1 x Adult	Adult	0.5
Ruspidge United FC	Central	2 x Adult 2 x 9v9	Adult Youth 9v9	1 1
Woolaston FC	South	1 x Adult	Adult	0.5
Bream Amateurs FC	Central	1 x 9v9	Youth 9v9	0.5
Milkwall FC	South	1 x Adult	Adult	0.5
Huntley FC	North	1 x Adult	Adult	0.5
Staunton & Corse FC	North	1 x 11v11	Youth 11v11	0.5
Totals			Adult	4
			Youth	2
			Mini	0

¹¹ Two teams require one pitch to account for playing on a home and away basis. Therefore 0.5 pitches can therefore be seen in the table where there is latent demand for one team.

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In addition, Ruardean Hill Rangers, Soudley and Forest of Dean Youth football clubs indicate plans to increase their number of teams although did not quantify this potential increase.

The total future demand expressed by clubs amounts to six match equivalent sessions. The majority of this is identified in the Central Analysis Area (3.5 match equivalent sessions), whilst 1.5 match equivalent sessions are identified in the South Analysis area. The least is identified in the North Analysis Area (one match equivalent session).

Only adult and youth pitches have future demand expressed for them. The most is found on adult pitches (four match equivalent sessions) whilst 1.5 match equivalent sessions are identified on youth 9v9 pitches. The remaining 0.5 match equivalent sessions are identified on youth 11v11 pitches.

Table 2.16: Summary of future demand expressed by clubs

Analysis area	Future demand (match equivalent sessions)					
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
North	0.5	0.5	0	0	0	1
Central	2	0	1.5	0	0	3.5
South	1.5	0	0	0	0	1.5
Total	4	0.5	1.5	0	0	6

2.4: Capacity analysis

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

As a guide, the FA has set a standard number of matches that each grass pitch type should be able to accommodate without it adversely affecting its quality. Taking into consideration the guidelines on capacity, the following ratings are used in the Forest of Dean:

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

Table 2.18 applies the above pitch ratings against the actual level of weekly play recorded to determine a capacity rating as follows:

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

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Match equivalent sessions

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

Education sites

To account for curricular/extra-curricular use of education pitches, the carrying capacity at such sites needs to be adjusted. The only time this would not happen is when a school does not use its pitches at all and the sole use is community use. The adjustment is typically dependent on the amount of play carried out, the number of pitches on site and whether there is access to an on-site AGP (as this can result in less grass pitch use).

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

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

Informal use

A number of football pitches in the area are on open access sites. As such, these pitches are subject to informal use in the form of dog walkers, unorganised games of football and exercise groups. It must be noted, however, that informal use of these sites is not recorded and it is therefore difficult to quantify on a site-by-site basis. Instead, it is recommended that open access sites be protected through an improved maintenance regime.

Peak time

Peak time for all youth and mini pitch formats has been found to be Saturday AM, with more matches being scheduled at this time on each pitch type. Peak time for adult football is found to be Saturday PM.

On occasion, spare capacity in the peak period is identified despite the pitch being played to capacity or overplayed, or more spare capacity is identified in the peak period than the overall spare capacity that exists. This is because most or all of the use on those particular pitches occurs outside of the peak period. Where this is the case, given that peak time usage should not be utilised over and above overall capacity, adjustments have been made.

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

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

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

The table below identifies the way actual spare capacity is represented in Table 2.18.

Table 2.17: Spare capacity examples

Spare capacity in peak period (examples)	Explanation of spare capacity
1	Highlighted in green with a number denotes that the pitches have actual spare capacity at peak time.
-	With a dash, this indicates that the pitch is unavailable in the peak period. If it were to be made available, actual spare capacity could exist.
0	Highlighted in orange with a zero, this indicates the pitch is played to capacity, either overall or during the peak period.
1	Not highlighted by with a value, this indicates that the pitch has spare capacity in the peak period; however capacity has been discounted. This may be due to unsecure tenure and/or poor pitch quality.

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Table 2.18: Football pitch capacity analysis

Site ID	Site name	Available for community use	Type of tenure ¹²	Management	Analysis area	Pitch type	Pitch size	Agreed quality rating	No. of pitches	Match equivalent sessions per week			Pitches available in peak period	Comments
										Current play	Site capacity ¹³	Capacity balance		
1	Alvington Playing Fields	Yes	Secure	Parish Council	South	Adult		Standard	1	1.5	2	0.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity
3	Bathurst Park	Yes	Secure	Trust	Central	Adult		Standard	1	1	2	1	1	Actual spare capacity
3	Bathurst Park	Yes	Secure	Trust	Central	Youth	(11v11)	Standard	1	0.5	2	1.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity
4	Beachley Barracks	Yes	Unsecure	MOD	South	Adult		Standard	1	2	2	0	-	Played to capacity
9	Blakeney Recreation Field	Yes	Secure	Parish Council	Central	Adult		Standard	1	1	2	1	0	Played to capacity at peak time
12	Broadwell Amateurs Football Club	Yes	Secure	Sports Club	Central	Adult		Good	1	1.5	3	1.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
13	Causeway Ground	Yes	Secure	Sports Club	Central	Adult		Standard	1	1.5	2	0.5	0.5	Quality issues restrict further play
14	Clearwell Recreation Ground	Yes	Unsecure	Education	Central	Youth	(11v11)	Standard	1	3	2	1	-	Overplayed
15	Coalway Recreation Ground	Yes	Secure	Town Council	Central	Adult		Standard	1	1	2	1	0	Played to capacity at peak time
17	Dene Magna School	Yes	Unsecure	Education	Central	Adult		Standard	2	2	4	2	1	Unsecure tenure
21	Ellwood Football Club	Yes	Secure	Sports Club	Central	Adult		Good	1	4	3	1	-	Overplayed
22	English Bicknor Playing Fields	Yes	Secure	Community	Central	Adult		Standard	1	1.5	2	0.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
23	Five Acres	Yes	Secure	Parish Council	Central	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	1.5	4	2.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
23	Five Acres	Yes	Secure	Parish Council	Central	Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	0.5	2	1.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity
24	Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community School)	Yes	Secure	School	North	Adult		Poor	2	3	2	1	-	Overplayed
25	Freedom Leisure Sedbury (Wyedean School & Sixth Form)	Yes-unused	Secure	School	South	Youth	(11v11)	Standard	2	0	4	4	2	Actual spare capacity
29	Harrow Hill A.F.C.	Yes	Secure	Sports Club	Central	Adult		Standard	2	1.5	4	2.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity
31	Hartpur College	Yes	Unsecure	Education	North	Adult		Good	4	5.5	12	6.5	4	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure
32	Huntley Recreation Ground	Yes	Secure	Parish Council	North	Adult		Poor	1	1.5	1	0.5	-	Overplayed
33	King George V Playing Fields (Coleford)	Yes	Secure	Town Council	Central	Adult		Standard	2	1	4	3	1	Actual spare capacity
34	Littledean Recreation Ground	Yes-unused	Secure	Parish Council	Central	Youth	(11v11)	Standard	1	0	2	2	1	Actual spare capacity
35	Longhope Recreation Ground	Yes	Secure	Community	North	Adult		Standard	1	1.5	2	0.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity
37	Lydney Recreation Ground	Yes	Secure	Trust	Central	Adult		Standard	1	1.5	2	0.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
37	Lydney Recreation Ground	Yes	Secure	Trust	Central	Youth	(11v11)	Standard	1	2	2	0	-	Played to capacity
37	Lydney Recreation Ground	Yes	Secure	Trust	Central	Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	2	2	0	-	Played to capacity
37	Lydney Recreation Ground	Yes	Secure	Trust	Central	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	2	4	2	0	Played to capacity at peak time
40	Milkwall Football Club	Yes	Secure	Sports Club	Central	Adult		Good	1	1	3	2	0	Played to capacity at peak time
41	Miners Welfare Playing Fields (Cinderford)	Yes	Secure	Town Council	Central	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	3.5	1	2.5	-	Overplayed
42	Mitcheldean Playing Fields	Yes	Secure	Sports Club	Central	Adult		Standard	1	2.5	2	0.5	-	Overplayed
42	Mitcheldean Playing Fields	Yes	Secure	Sports Club	Central	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	1	4	3	0	Played to capacity at peak time
44	Newent Town AFC	Yes	Secure	Sports Club	North	Adult		Good	1	1.5	3	1.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
45	Newnham Recreation Ground	Yes	Secure	Parish Council	Central	Adult		Standard	1	0.5	2	1.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity
48	Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field Corse & Staunton	Yes	Secure	Community	North	Adult		Standard	1	1.5	2	0.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
49	Redbrook Rovers FC	Yes	Secure	Sports Club	Central	Adult		Standard	1	1	2	1	0	Played to capacity at peak time

¹² Unless local information suggests otherwise it can be assumed that the availability of all pitches in Council, Town and Parish Council and sports club ownership will be secure.

¹³ Based on pitch quality The FA recommends a maximum number of match equivalent sessions to be accommodate per pitch type. Please refer to Section 2.4 for the full breakdown.

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Site ID	Site name	Available for community use	Type of tenure ¹²	Management	Analysis area	Pitch type	Pitch size	Agreed quality rating	No. of pitches	Match equivalent sessions per week			Pitches available in peak period	Comments
										Current play	Site capacity ¹³	Capacity balance		
51	Redmarley Playing Fields	Yes-unused	Secure	Parish Council	North	Adult		Standard	2	0	4	4	2	Actual spare capacity
52	Reeds Ground	Yes	Secure	Sports Club	Central	Adult		Standard	1	1.5	2	0.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
54	Ruardean Hill Recreation Ground	Yes	Secure	Community	Central	Adult		Good	1	1.5	3	1.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
55	Ruardean Memorial Ground	Yes	Secure	Community	Central	Youth	(11v11)	Standard	1	0.5	2	1.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity
56	Ruspidge Field	Yes	Secure	Trust	Central	Adult		Standard	1	0.5	2	1.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity
58	Sling Recreation Ground	Yes-unused	Secure	Parish Council	Central	Adult		Standard	1	0	2	2	1	Actual spare capacity
59	Soudley Recreation Ground	Yes	Secure	Parish Council	Central	Adult		Good	1	2	3	1	0	Played to capacity at peak time
60	St Briavels Recreation Ground	Yes	Secure	Community	South	Adult		Standard	1	2.5	2	0.5	-	Overplayed
61	St Whites Primary School	Yes-unused	Unsecure	Education	Central	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	1	4	3	1	Unsecure tenure
62	St. John's Cricket Ground	Yes	Secure	Sports Club	Central	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	0.5	4	3.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity
62	St. John's Cricket Ground	Yes	Secure	Sports Club	Central	Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	1	2	1	0	Played to capacity at peak time
62	St. John's Cricket Ground	Yes	Secure	Sports Club	Central	Youth	(11v11)	Standard	1	0.5	2	1.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity
63	Steam Mills Recreation Ground	Yes	Secure	Town Council	Central	Adult		Standard	1	2	2	0	-	Played to capacity
65	Taynton And Tibberton Village Hall	Yes-unused	Secure	Parish Council	North	Adult		Standard	1	0	2	2	1	Actual spare capacity
66	The Federation of Newent Schools (Glebe Infant & Picklenash Junior)	Yes	Secure	Education	North	Mini	(7v7)	Good	1	3	6	3	0	Played to capacity at peak time
66	The Federation of Newent Schools (Glebe Infant & Picklenash Junior)	Yes	Secure	Education	North	Mini	(5v5)	Good	1	3	6	3	0	Played to capacity at peak time
67	The Forest High School	Yes	Unsecure	Education	Central	Youth	(11v11)	Poor	1	2	1	1	-	Overplayed
68	Tidenham Recreation Ground	Yes	Secure	Trust	South	Adult		Standard	1	1.5	2	0.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity
69	Tutshill CE Primary School	Yes-unused	Unsecure	Education	South	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	1	4	3	1	Unsecure tenure
70	Viney St Swithins Sports & Social Club	Yes	Secure	Sports Club	Central	Adult		Standard	1	2.5	2	0.5	-	Overplayed
71	Westbury-On-Severn Parish Hall	Yes	Secure	Parish Council	North	Adult		Standard	1	0.5	2	1.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity
74	Whitcroft Recreation Ground	Yes	Secure	Sports Club	Central	Adult		Standard	2	2.5	4	1.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity
75	Woolaston Recreation Ground	Yes	Secure	Sports Club	South	Adult		Poor	1	3.5	1	2.5	-	Overplayed
76	Worrall Hill Recreation Ground	Yes	Secure	Community	Central	Adult		Standard	1	1.5	2	0.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
77	Yorkley Community Centre	Yes	Secure	Sports Club	Central	Adult		Standard	1	1	2	1	0	Played to capacity at peak time
81	Five Acres High School	Yes	Unsecure	Education	Central	Youth	(11v11)	Standard	1	1.5	2	0.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
81	Five Acres High School	Yes	Unsecure	Education	Central	Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	1.5	2	0.5	0.5	Unsecure tenure
81	Five Acres High School	Yes	Unsecure	Education	Central	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	0.5	4	3.5	0.5	Unsecure tenure

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2.5: Supply and demand analysis

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

Table 2.19: Spare capacity/ overplay of adult pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity ¹⁴	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
North	4	1.5	2.5	1	1.5
Central	5	2	3	3.5	0.5
South	1	3	2	1.5	3.5
Total	10	6.5	3.5	6	2.5

Overall, in the Forest of Dean there is current actual spare capacity of 3.5 adult match equivalent sessions, although the South Analysis Area is overplayed by two match equivalent sessions per week. When accounting for future demand, the authority becomes overplayed by 2.5 match equivalent sessions per week. Existing overplay in the South Analysis Area is exacerbated whilst the Central Analysis Area also becomes overplayed.

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

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity ¹²	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
North	0	0	0	0.5	0.5
Central	2.5	2	0.5	0	0.5
South	2	0	2	0	2
Total	4.5	2	2.5	0.5	2

The table above shows that for youth 11v11 pitches overall in the Forest of Dean there is currently actual spare capacity of 2.5 match equivalent sessions. After considering future demand, this falls to two match equivalent sessions although a shortfall is created in the North Analysis Area.

In addition to the above, please note that a further 9.5 youth 11v11 match equivalent sessions are recorded as playing on adult pitches in the Forest of Dean and, as such, this further exacerbates the shortfall of youth pitches. That being said, the transfer of demand to dedicated youth 11v11 pitches would enable greater capacity and reduce usage of adult pitches.

¹⁴ In match equivalent sessions per week

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

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity ¹⁵	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
North	0	0	0	0	0
Central	0.5	2.5	2	3	5
South	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0.5	2.5	2	0	5

There is a current shortfall of youth 9v9 pitches equating to two match equivalent sessions and a future shortfall equating to five match equivalent sessions. The North and South analysis areas are both played to capacity whilst the Central Analysis Area is overplayed by two match equivalent sessions per week. The shortfall in the Central Analysis Area worsens to five match equivalent sessions after considering future demand.

Table 2.22: Spare capacity/ overplay of mini 7v7 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity ¹³	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
North	0	0	0	0	0
Central	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5
South	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5

As seen in the table above, there is current actual spare capacity of 0.5 match equivalent sessions on mini 7v7 pitches. Spare capacity exists only in the Central Analysis Area, with the North and South analysis areas played to capacity. There is no future demand expected for mini 7v7 pitches.

As seen in the table below, there is no identified actual spare capacity, overplay or future demand for mini 5v5 pitches across the Forest of Dean.

Table 2.23: Spare capacity/ overplay of mini 5v5 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity ¹³	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
North	0	0	0	0	0
Central	0	0	0	0	0
South	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0	0

2.6: Conclusion

In conclusion, there is a sufficient number of most pitch types to meet current demand in the Forest of Dean with only youth 9v9 pitches overplayed. After considering future demand, a shortfall of adult pitches is expected whilst youth 11v11 pitches in the North Analysis Area will also become overplayed. Existing shortfalls on youth 9v9 pitches are exacerbated.

¹⁵ In match equivalent sessions per week

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Football – grass pitch summary

- ◀ **Overall, there is a current shortfall evidenced for youth 9v9 pitches, whilst adult, youth 11v11 and mini 7v7 pitches show actual spare capacity. Mini 5v5 pitches are at capacity.**
- ◀ **Accounting for future demand, the existing shortfall of youth 9v9 pitches is expected to worsen whilst overplay occurs on adult pitches. Actual spare capacity for youth 11v11 pitches is reduced.**
- ◀ The audit identifies a current total of 72 grass football pitches within the Forest of Dean across 51 sites of which, all are available, at some level, for community use.
- ◀ In addition, five disused sites have been identified that previously accommodated football provision.
- ◀ Tenure of sites in the Forest of Dean is generally secure, with only Rank Outsiders AFC expressing concerns with security of tenure. However, tenure remains unsecure at education sites such as Five Acres High School, despite being used by the community.
- ◀ In addition to the above, Gloucestershire FA and the Football Foundation indicate English Bicknor FC has concerns about its current tenure agreement at English Bicknor Playing Fields.
- ◀ Of the community available pitches, 20 are managed by Parish/Town councils or the respective parish/town council, 19 by clubs and 14 by schools/colleges/universities. The remaining pitches are managed by trusts, community organisations or the MOD.
- ◀ In total, 12 pitches are assessed as good quality, 58 as standard quality and six as poor quality.
- ◀ Changing facilities are generally viewed as being adequate by clubs, with 53% rating provision as good, 27% rating facilities as standard and 20% rating facilities as poor.
- ◀ A total of 165 teams are identified as playing within the Forest of Dean. This consists of 77 men's teams, five women's teams, 49 youth boys' teams, three youth girls' teams and 31 mini soccer teams.
- ◀ Clubs across the Forest of Dean report team numbers at adult, youth and mini level have remained fairly static over the previous three years.
- ◀ There are three clubs in the Forest of Dean competing within the men's National League System.
- ◀ A total of 20 express latent demand linked to grass pitch, training and/or ancillary facility provision.
- ◀ Gorsley Village Youth FC exports all demand outside the Forest of Dean, whilst Staunton & Corse FC exports a single adult team to Tewkesbury.
- ◀ Of the clubs which quantify their potential future demand, there is a predicted growth of 12 teams equating to four adult and two youth match equivalent sessions.
- ◀ Through population increases, a further 12 teams are likely to be generated, although this falls to seven teams when broken down by analysis area.

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

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

3.1 Introduction

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

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

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

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

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

3.2 Current provision

A full size 3G pitch is considered by the FA to measure at least 100 x 64 metres (106 x 70 metres including run offs); however, for the purposes of this report, all pitches measuring over 90 x 55 metres (inclusive of run offs) are considered to be full size due to the amount of demand they can accommodate. It is common for such pitches to be slightly undersized, especially when sand-based pitches have been converted as the size requirement for hockey is generally smaller than for football.

As seen in the table below, there are currently three full size 3G pitches within the Forest of Dean across two sites, all of which are available to the community and with sports lighting. Two pitches are located in the North Analysis Area and one is within the Central Analysis Area. No pitches are located in the South Analysis Area.

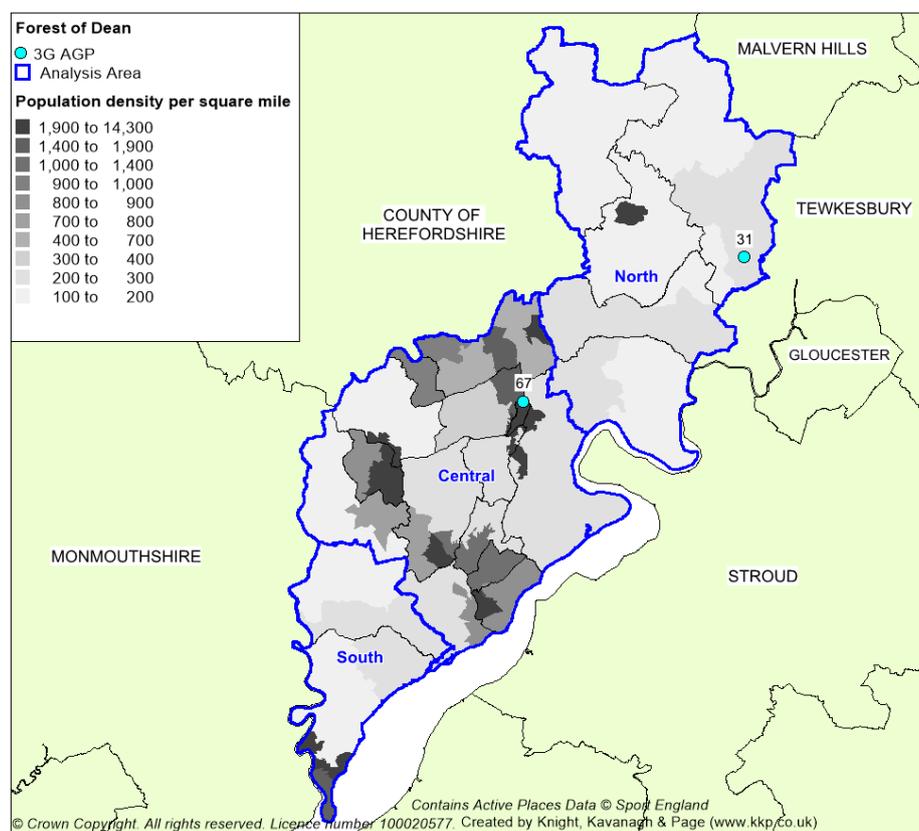
FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Table 3.1: Full size 3G pitches in the Forest of Dean

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Availability for community use	Sports lighting	Size (metres)
31	Hartpury College	North	Yes	Yes	110 x 65
			Yes	Yes	90 x 58
67	The Forest High School	Central	Yes	Yes	100 x 64

No small size 3G pitches have been identified within the Forest of Dean.

Figure 3.1: Location of all 3G pitches in the Forest of Dean



Future provision

Lydney Town, Lydney Town Juniors and Lydney Town Youth FC are looking to secure funding in order to provide a stadia 3G pitch at Lydney Recreation Ground. Gloucestershire FA and the Football Foundation also indicates that Lydney Town Youth FC is also exploring a potential 3G project with The Dean Academy School. The Club hopes to provide a full size 3G pitch with sports lighting alongside the existing sand based AGP on site. The School is said to be willing to donate the required land to the Club to facilitate this development in exchange for day time access to the pitch. Neither project is listed in the LFFP.

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

West Dean Parish Council has plans to establish a leisure and sporting centre at Five Acres. Plans include a full-size 3G pitch with sports lighting as well as a large clubhouse facility to act as a community hub with changing facilities. This development is listed as a priority project in the LFFP for the Forest of Dean. Forest of Dean District Council is hoping to receive monies through The Levelling Up Fund which could be allocated to the Five Acres site. There is also potential for this proposed pitch to be World Rugby compliant.

Commented [JR1]: added

The LFFP also lists a 9v9 3G pitch at Freedom Leisure Sedbury (Wyedean School & Sixth Form) as a priority project although it is unknown whether any discussions regarding this development have yet taken place.

Drybrook RFC aspires to replace either its training pitch or the junior pitch on site with an artificial surface with sports lighting in order to better cater for training demand.

Cinderford Town FC is working with The Forest High School and a local housing association in an attempt to sell the Causeway Ground for residential and social housing. This would see the Club move onto The Forest High School's site to construct a community hub with a 3G stadia pitch that would have the facilities for Step 3 football. It is looking to attract part funding from the Football Foundation to facilitate this development.

Bridge Football Academy Youth FC aspires to create its own 3G pitch to increase the number of accessible facilities in the area and stop the Academy having to travel outside of the Forest of Dean to access facilities. The Club currently utilises the 3G pitch at The Forest High School but also uses facilities in Cheltenham and Gloucester due to a lack of local facilities. The Club reports it has had difficulties attracting funding for a potential development. This project is not listed in the LFFP.

FA/FIFA approved pitches

In order for competitive matches to be played on 3G pitches, the pitch should be FIFA or IMS tested and approved and added to the FA pitch register, which can be found at: <https://footballfoundation.org.uk/3g-pitch-register>.

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

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

There is one FA approved 3G pitch in the Forest of Dean which can therefore host competitive matches, located at Hartpury College. Re-testing is required every three years to ensure that this remains the case. Should quality drop below a certain level, the pitches will not pass accreditation.

World Rugby compliant pitches

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

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The specification includes a rigorous test programme that assesses ball/surface interaction and player/surface interaction and has been modified to align the standard with that of FIFA. Any 3G pitch used for any form of competitive rugby must comply with this specification and must be tested every two years to retain compliance.

There is one full size World Rugby compliant 3G pitch in the Forest of Dean, located at Hartpury College. The pitch can therefore be used to accommodate rugby training activity and match play.

Management

The pitches at Hartpury College are operated by the College itself whilst the 3G pitch at the Forest High School was previously managed by Freedom Leisure but Cinderford Town Youth FC has since taken over management of the pitch.

Availability

The table below summarises the availability for community use at sites in the Forest of Dean providing 3G pitches.

Table 3.2: Summary of availability of full size 3G pitches

Site ID	Site	Availability
31	Hartpury College	Both pitches are reserved for curricular and extracurricular use until 18:00 during the week. Available to the community from 18:00 until 22:00 Monday to Friday and from 08:30 until 17:00 Saturday to Sunday.
67	The Forest High School	The pitch is reserved for School use until 17:45 during the week. Available to the community from 17:45 to 21:45 Monday to Friday and from 09:00 until 16:00 at weekends although the pitch is only opened at weekends if there are bookings in place.

Quality

Depending on use, it is considered that the carpet of an AGP usually lasts for approximately ten years and it is the age of the surface, combined with maintenance levels, which most commonly affects quality. It is therefore recommended that sinking funds be put into place by providers to enable long-term sustainability, ongoing repairs and future refurbishment beyond this period.

The following table indicates when each full size 3G pitch was installed or last resurfaced in the Forest of Dean together with an agreed quality rating following non-technical assessments and user and provider consultation.

Table 3.3: Summary of quality of full size 3G pitches

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Year installed/ resurfaced	Quality
31	Hartpury College	North	2019	Good
			2020	Good
67	The Forest High School	Central	2008	Poor

As seen in the table above, two of the three 3G pitches in the Forest of Dean are assessed as good quality and have been recently resurfaced. Cinderford Town Youth FC aspires to resurface the pitch at The Forest High School but reports the cost as prohibitive and any spending would be split with the SGS Academy Trust.

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Ancillary facilities

Ancillary facilities at Hartpury College and The Forest High School are rated as good quality, with no issues discovered through consultation.

3.3 Demand

Outside of periods of lockdown, the 3G pitches currently servicing the Forest of Dean are reported to be operating at or close to capacity at peak times, especially during winter months when grass pitches cannot be used for training or recreational demand (due to a lack of sports lighting).

In addition to capacity being taken up by clubs for training and match play purposes, there is also a strong presence of small-sided football being played across the area. In this regard, Soccer Sixes is a key commercial operator, running leagues at The Forest High School.

The table below summarises usage levels of the full size 3G provision in the Forest of Dean based on booking sheets supplied by the operators, which accounts for demand prior to the Covid-19 pandemic (2019/2020 season). This is compared against availability at peak time, using Sport England's Facilities Planning Model (FPM). This applies an overall peak period for AGPs of 34 hours per week (Monday to Thursday 17:00-21:00; Friday 17:00-19:00; Saturday and Sunday 09:00-17:00).

Table 3.4: Current usage of 3G pitches across the Forest of Dean

Site ID	Site name	Midweek availability (hours)	Midweek usage (hours)	Weekend availability (hours)	Weekend usage (hours)
31	Hartpury College	13	13	16	12
		13	13	16	12
67	The Forest High School	14.25	14.25	14	4

As seen above, all midweek availability is currently taken up through training, recreational and commercial demand. Hartpury College has a waiting list of nine clubs for access to the 3G pitches on site.

Broadwell Amateurs, Broadwell Amateurs Youth, Lydney Town, Lydney Town Juniors, Lydney Town Youth, Mushet & Coalway, Ellwood, Milkwall, Redmarley Youth and Redbrook Rovers football clubs all export their training demand outside of the Forest of Dean due to a lack of facilities in the authority.

At the weekends, more availability exists as usage tends to be more heavily concentrated around traditional kick off times. Hartpury College operates as a central venue for the Gloucestershire FA Veterans League, with matches taking place throughout the day on Sundays. The remaining weekend usage on site comes from ad-hoc match demand. At the Forest High School, weekend usage is generated from commercial and recreational demand.

Football

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

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Training demand

Getting access to good quality, affordable training facilities is a problem for many clubs throughout the country. In the winter months, midweek training is only possible at facilities with sports lighting, with 3G provision preferred by the FA and the large majority of clubs.

Of clubs responding to consultation, 15 (43%) report that they require additional training facilities, or access to additional training facilities, with 13 (87%) of these specifically mentioning demand for 3G pitches. This is relatively high in comparison to most other local authorities nationally, although it still suggests a significant amount of unmet demand. Most clubs expressing such needs currently access sand-based pitches, indoor sports halls or their own match pitches for training despite these not being their preferred form of provision, whilst others do access 3G pitches but do so at undesirable times and/or at undesirable locations (including outside of the Forest of Dean).

Match play demand

Improving grass pitch quality is one way to increase the capacity at sites but given the cost of doing such work and the continued maintenance required (and associated costs), alternatives need to be considered that can offer a more sustainable model for the future of football. The substitute to grass pitches is the use of 3G pitches for competitive matches, providing that the pitch is FA approved, with sports lighting and available for community use during the peak period.

In the Forest of Dean, one of the full size 3G pitches has undergone testing and is therefore FA approved and all have sports lighting and available for community use. This is comparable with other local authorities. The caveat to this is that programming may need to be adjusted to allow more teams to utilise the facilities and pricing can often be a barrier as grass pitches remain generally cheaper to access.

A total of three teams are currently identified as playing matches on 3G pitches, all from Hartpury University Men's FC, which is a low number when compared to other local authorities.

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

Rugby union

There is one World Rugby compliant full size 3G pitch within the Forest of Dean, located at Hartpury College. The pitch is used throughout the week by Hartpury College and University BUCs teams as well as teams fielded by University of Hartpury RFC, for both training and some matches. The community use programme is heavily made up of use for football and the only community use for rugby union by external clubs is by Ledbury RFC (Herefordshire), imported demand for training.

Drybrook RFC has previously shown aspiration for development of a full size World Rugby compliant pitch in place of one of the natural turf rugby union pitches at Drybrook RFC. The Club has in the past had dialogue with the RFU regarding the potential to develop a pitch onsite through its Rugby 365 investment programme into 3G pitches, however this was not progressed beyond the local partnership needs assessment stage.

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Given the identified capacity shortfalls for grass rugby pitches (highlighted in Part 5 of this report), scope exists for further provision to be developed in the future. The RFU states that there is sufficient demand in the area, notably amongst the three larger clubs Lydney RFC, Cinderford RFC and Drybrook RFC, however a commitment to shared access and use by these other local clubs would be required for any development to be financially viable at Drybrook RFC. Alternatively, there may be scope for a shared use multi-sport programme for football and rugby union where sufficient demand exists from a group of local clubs.

3.4: Supply and demand analysis

Fa training scenario

The FA's long-term ambition is to provide every affiliated team in England the opportunity to train once per week on a 3G surface with sports lighting, together with priority access for every 3 Star England Football Accredited Club through a partnership agreement. As such, it has established a model to calculate the required number of full size pitches to meet demand, with one pitch being required to service every 38 teams within a local authority. This is based on peak time access being Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings and on account of full size 3G pitches being divided into thirds or quarters (Mondays and Fridays are discounted as it is considered that teams do not want to train in such close proximity to a weekend match, and it also allows for other forms of access such as for commercial leagues and recreational play).

Using the above calculation, with 165 teams currently playing in the Forest of Dean, there is a theoretical requirement for four full size 3G pitches (rounded down from 4.3). This would ordinarily indicate a shortfall of one pitch based on three currently being provided; however, it is considered that the shortfall should actually be increased due to limited football access to the rugby pitch at Hartpury College as well as the prevalence of university use on site. In effect, the two pitches at Hartpury College provide the same level of availability for affiliated football team training as one pitch normally would. Therefore, it is suggested that the shortfall in the Forest of Dean amounts to two full size pitches.

Table 3.5: Current demand for 3G pitches in the Forest of Dean (based on 38 teams per pitch)

Current number of teams	3G requirement ¹⁶	Current number of 3G pitches	Alteration required	Current shortfall
165	4	3	-1	2

When considering future demand for an additional 19 teams (based on population increases and future demand expressed by clubs), the requirement increases to five full size 3G pitches (rounded up from 4.8) which means a future shortfall of three pitches.

Table 3.6: Future demand for 3G pitches in the Forest of Dean (based on 38 teams per pitch)

Future number of teams	3G requirement ¹⁷	Current number of 3G pitches	Alteration required	Future shortfall
184	5	3	-1	3

Alternatively, the table below considers the number of full size 3G pitches required if every team was to remain training within the respective analysis area that they play in. This not only identifies where the needs exist across the Forest of Dean, but it can also be used to guide which areas should be targeted for new provision.

¹⁶ Rounded to the nearest whole number

¹⁷ Rounded to the nearest whole number

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Table 3.7: Current demand for 3G pitches in the Forest of Dean by analysis area

Analysis area	Current number of teams	3G requirement ¹⁵	Current number of 3G pitches	Alteration required	Potential shortfall
North	37	1	2	-1	0
Central	112	3	1	-	2
South	16	0	0	-	0
Total	165	4	3	-1	2

Applying the FA Training Scenario by analysis area suggests a shortfall of just two full size 3G pitches, lower than the overall current shortfall across the Forest of Dean. This equates to a shortfall of two pitches in the Central Analysis Area. However, whilst there isn't sufficient demand in the South Analysis Area to warrant a full-size 3G pitch, a half-size 3G pitch could be created to service the teams playing within the area.

There is no change to the previously identified shortfalls after considering future demand, as seen in the table below.

Table 3.8: Future demand for 3G pitches in the Forest of Dean by analysis area

Analysis area	Future number of teams	3G requirement ¹⁵	Current number of 3G pitches	Alteration required	Potential shortfall
North	41	1	2	-1	0
Central	125	3	1	-	2
South	19	0	0	-	0
Total	184	4	3	-1	2

It should also be noted that the figures above may be subject to further alteration in the accompanying Strategy document when housing growth in the Forest of Dean is considered, using the Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator.

3.5: Conclusion

For football, there is no spare capacity on the present supply of 3G pitches when teams require access for training purposes, leading to a large number of clubs reporting a need for increased provision. With the FA Training Scenario suggesting that there is a shortfall of at least two full size 3G pitches, priority should be placed on the creation of new full size 3G pitches. To that end, the provision of additional pitches in the Central Analysis Area should be considered and will be explored further in the accompanying Strategy Report.

In addition, priority should not only be placed on the creation of new full size 3G pitches but also on sustaining the current pitch stock. To that end, providers are encouraged to put sinking funds in place and it is also recommended that all new and existing pitches undergo FA testing every three years to remain or become FA approved.

For rugby union, the creation of an additional full size World Rugby compliant 3G pitch in a strategically viable location would further relieve pressure on grass pitches and also help to accommodate any future demand. There may be opportunity for the development of such provision as a shared facility for football and rugby union in order to reduce shortfalls for both sports and increase provision with sports lighting for training in the central area of the District. This will also be explored further in the Strategy Report.

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

3G summary

- ◀ **For training purposes, based on the FA model, there is a current shortfall of two full size 3G pitches across the District, increasing to a future shortfall of three.**
- ◀ **On an analysis area basis, the current shortfall exists entirely in the Central Area, whilst additional capacity in the South Analysis Area may also be required.**
- ◀ **There is sufficient demand for increased access to compliant 3G pitch provision for rugby union in the Central Area, where increased capacity and sports lighting would help alleviate capacity issues which exist across a conurbation of sites.**
- ◀ There are three full size 3G pitches within the Forest of Dean, all of which have sports lighting and available to the community.
- ◀ One of the full size 3G pitches is FA registered and can therefore host competitive matches, at Hartpury College.
- ◀ The second full size 3G pitch at Hartpury College is World Rugby compliant.
- ◀ The FA compliant 3G pitch at Hartpury College was resurfaced in 2019 whilst the World Rugby compliant pitch was resurfaced in 2020. Both are assessed as good quality. The remaining pitch at The Forest High School has exceeded its recommended lifespan and is of poor quality.
- ◀ The 3G pitches currently servicing the Forest of Dean are reported to be operating at capacity during the week, with some spare capacity at weekends.
- ◀ Of football clubs responding to consultation, 15 teams (44%) report that they require additional training facilities, or access to additional training facilities, with 13 teams (87%) specifically mentioning demand for 3G pitches.
- ◀ There are three football teams currently playing home matches on the 3G pitch stock, which is a low number when compared to other local authorities.
- ◀ The World Rugby compliant 3G pitch is well used for rugby union activity by the University & College itself, University of Hartpury RFC and Ledbury Rugby RFC (imported demand).

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

PART 4: CRICKET

4.1: Introduction

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

For adult cricket in the Forest of Dean there are three main offerings; Saturday, Sunday and midweek cricket. The youth league structure tends to be club-based matches which are played midweek, although some matches are also played on Sundays.

Consultation

In total, 16 cricket clubs are identified as playing within the Forest of Dean, of which 11 responded to consultation requests, representing a 69% club response rate. Consultation was undertaken via a combination of video meetings and via online survey.

Whilst Aston Ingham CC is based in Herefordshire, it plays in the Gloucestershire County Cricket League and is considered to be a Gloucestershire club by both the GCF and ECB. Therefore, the Club and its home venue has been considered within this report for the Cricket section alone.

Table 4.1: Cricket club response rate

Club name	Response received
Alvington and Woolaston CC	Yes
Aston Ingham CC	No
Bream CC	No
Cinderford CC	Yes
Corse and Staunton CC	Yes
Dymock CC	Yes
Huntley CC	Yes
Lydney CC	Yes
Newent CC	Yes
Newnham on Severn CC	Yes
Parkend CC	No
Primrose Hill CC ¹⁸	No
Redmarley CC	No
Ruardean Hill CC	Yes
St Briavels CC	Yes
Westbury on Severn CC	Yes

¹⁸ The 2021 season was the final for the Club, with its final fixture played on the 18th September. Therefore, the Club has now folded.

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4.2: Supply

Natural turf pitches

In total, there are 21 grass wicket cricket squares in the Forest of Dean provided across 20 sites (two squares are provided at Newent Cricket Club). All of the squares are available for community use.

Table 4.2: Summary of grass wicket squares

Analysis area	Number of squares
North	10
Central	9
South	2
Total	21

The South Analysis Area has the least provision with just two grass cricket squares. This is due to the South of the District being less populated and this also correlates with levels of provision in this Area being relatively lower for other sports. The remaining provision is split across the North and Central analysis areas with ten and nine grass cricket squares respectively.

Non-turf pitches

The ECB highlights that non-turf pitches (NTPs) which follow its TS6 guidance¹⁹ on performance standards are suitable for high level, senior play and are considered able to provide 60 match equivalent sessions per season, though this may include training sessions via the use of mobile nets.

Not all leagues currently permit senior matches to be played on NTPs, limiting their use. They are increasingly used for lower level senior league, junior, short format evening league and school cricket activity.

There are eight NTPs, of which four are adjacent to natural turf squares. They are located at Queen Elizabeth II Playing Fields Corse & Staunton, Ruardean Hill Recreation Ground, Newnham on Severn Cricket Club and one square at Newent Cricket Club.

In addition, there are four standalone NTPs at the following sites:

- ◀ Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community School) Dene Magna School (x 2)
- ◀ Freedom Leisure Sedbury (Wyedean School & Sixth Form)

All four of these are available to the community. The NTPs at Dene Magna School and Freedom Leisure Sedbury (Wyedean School & Sixth Form) are managed by the respective Schools whilst the NTP at Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community School) is managed by a subsidiary company of the School; Newent Community Sports Limited.

Of the standalone NTPs in the Forest of Dean, only the wicket at Freedom Leisure Newent is in adequate and useable condition. For the NTPs at Dene Magna School and Freedom Leisure Sedbury (Wyedean School & Sixth Form), moss is growing on the wickets and signs of wear and tear are evident.

¹⁹ <http://www.cag.org.uk/docs/ecb-non-turf-pitches-ts6-final-328.pdf>

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

Future provision

Corse and Staunton CC is currently exploring options for and fundraising to create a second square, ideally close to its current home site (Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field Corse & Staunton).

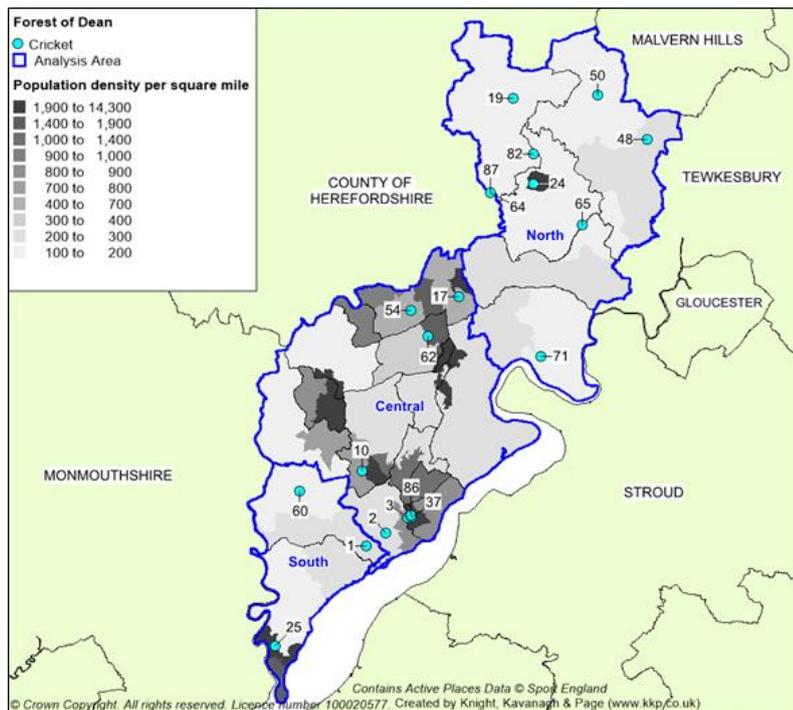
The map below shows the location of all cricket squares currently servicing the Forest of Dean. For a key to the map, see Table 4.3.

Ball strike issues

ECB identifies a growing issue nationally in relation to potential ball strike issues (which can result in damage to properties) where there is either new cricket provision developed close to houses, or more commonly, a new housing development being built near to a cricket pitch.

As such, the ECB recommends that the clubs and organisations seek to have a ball strike risk assessment undertaken at an early stage of planning; further information can be provided by the ECB.

Figure 4.1: Location of cricket pitches within the Forest of Dean



FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Table 4.3: Key to map of cricket squares

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use	Number of squares	Number of wickets	
					Grass	Non-turf
1	Alvington Playing Fields	South	Yes	1	7	0
2	Aylburton Village Playing Field	Central	Yes	1	8	0
3	Bathurst Park	Central	Yes	1	8	0
10	Bream Cricket Club	Central	Yes	1	5	0
19	Dymock Cricket Club	North	Yes	1	12	0
37	Lydney Recreation Ground	Central	Yes	1	3	0
48	Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field Corse & Staunton	North	Yes	1	13	1
50	Redmarley Cricket Club	North	Yes	1	16	0
54	Ruardean Hill Recreation Ground	Central	Yes	1	8	1
60	St Briavels Recreation Ground	South	Yes	1	6	0
62	St. John's Cricket Ground	Central	Yes	1	11	0
64	Stockings Field	North	Yes	1	14	0
65	Taynton And Tibberton Village Hall	North	Yes	1	6	0
71	Westbury-On-Severn Parish Hall	North	Yes	1	10	0
82	Newent Cricket Club	North	Yes	2	16	0
					4	1
83	Parkend Cricket Club	Central	Yes	1	6	0
84	Huntley Cricket Club	North	Yes	1	8	0
85	Newnham On Severn Cricket Club	Central	Yes	1	7	1
86	Lydney Cricket Club	Central	Yes	1	15	0
87	Mill Meadow	North	Yes	1	6	0

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Pitch quality

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

- ◀ Good
- ◀ Standard
- ◀ Poor

The percentage parameters used for the non-technical assessments were as follows; Good (>80%), Standard (50-79%), Poor (<49%). For the full assessment criteria, please see Appendix 2.

Maintaining high pitch quality is the most important aspect of cricket; if the wicket is poor, it can affect the quality of the game and can, in some instances, become dangerous. As an example, if a square is poor quality, a ball can bounce erratically on a wicket and become a danger to players.

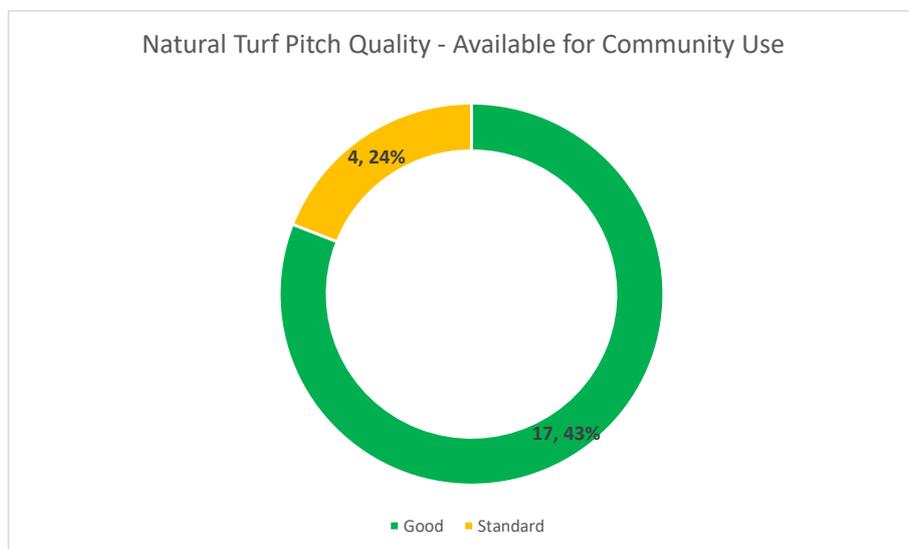
The audit of community available grass wicket cricket squares in the Forest of Dean found 17 to be good quality and four to be standard quality, with none assessed as poor quality.

Table 4.5: Quality ratings for community available grass wicket squares (site-by-site)

Site ID	Site	Number of squares	Analysis area	Square quality
1	Alvington Playing Fields	1	South	Good
2	Aylburton Village Playing Field	1	Central	Good
3	Bathurst Park	1	Central	Good
10	Bream Cricket Club	1	Central	Standard
19	Dymock Cricket Club	1	North	Good
84	Huntley Cricket Club	1	North	Good
86	Lydney Cricket Club	1	Central	Good
37	Lydney Recreation Ground	1	Central	Standard
87	Mill Meadow	1	North	Standard
82	Newent Cricket Club	2	North	Good
85	Newnham On Severn Cricket Club	1	Central	Standard
83	Parkend Cricket Club	1	Central	Good
48	Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field Corse & Staunton	1	North	Good
50	Redmarley Cricket Club	1	North	Good
54	Ruardean Hill Recreation Ground	1	Central	Good
60	St Briavels Recreation Ground	1	South	Good
62	St. John's Cricket Ground	1	Central	Good
64	Stockings Field	1	North	Good
65	Taynton and Tibberton Village Hall	1	North	Good
71	Westbury-On-Severn Parish Hall	1	North	Good

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Figure 3.2: Quality of natural turf cricket pitches available for community use



Newnham on Severn CC reports the playing surface at Newnham on Severn Cricket Club was damaged by a recent sheep incursion. Newent CC states the top ground at Newent Cricket Club needs a larger outfield whilst there is rabbit damage to the outfield of both squares. Huntley CC reports the outfield drains poorly and it has suffered from vandalism which has included areas of the square and outfield being dug up.

Despite being assessed as good quality, Cinderford CC indicates the outfield at St. John's Cricket Ground drains poorly. Investment has been made in aeration in recent years although the pitch struggles during the football season, Puma FC using the outfield for matches, pre-season training and occasional training sessions. The outfield has also suffered from damage by wild boars in 2021.

Similarly, Westbury on Severn CC reports the outfield at Westbury-on-Severn Parish Hall has poor land drainage, particularly at the bottom edge of the playing field. It is reported that it is too costly for the Parish Council to rectify.

Conversely, square quality is said to have improved at Dymock Cricket Club thanks to the grounds team spending additional time on maintenance, although the site still suffers from dog fouling.

Performance Quality Standards

To obtain a full technical assessment of wicket and pitches, the ECB recommends a Performance Quality Standard (PQS) assessment. The PQS looks at a cricket square to ascertain whether the pitch meets the required standards, which are benchmarked by the Grounds Management Association (GMA). There are three categories of measurement that relate to the overall quality of the square: structural quality, presentational quality and playing quality. Once a square has been assessed it is given a quality rating, as shown overleaf.

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

Table 4.6: Performance Quality Standard ratings

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

Overmarking of cricket outfield

Several pitches are overmarked or share playing field with other sports pitches which are typically marked onto outfield areas seasonally, predominantly football and cricket pitches. Whilst making effective seasonal use of space and opportunities for multi-sport sites to share and maximise the likes of ancillary use and social facilities, this can also have a detrimental effect on pitch provision for cricket if not rigorously managed.

Overmarking can lead to issues with seasonal clashes when the cricket season begins and football and rugby union seasons have not finished. This could be more of a concern at private sports club sites where some sports may have to seek alternative temporary venues due to seasonal clashes. The ECB states that joint use of outfield is acceptable if the maintenance programme ensures that the outfield is ready for cricket in the summer and there is a gap between seasons for pre-season and end of season works.

Furthermore, the use of playing field land year round and as cricket outfield during the summer limits the scope for off-season repair and rejuvenation, with any quality issues sustained as winter sports pitches unable to be rectified and likely to subsequently impact on cricket users. Without proper off-season maintenance or rotation of pitches this lack of scope for off-season works can lead to decline in quality over time, in the case of cricket presenting possible safety issues should outfield become undulating and bare.

Ancillary facilities

Alvington and Woolaston CC reports its facility is sub-standard and is without changing rooms, toilets, electricity or water.

All ten remaining clubs in the Forest of Dean have access to changing room facilities at their home ground, with nine clubs listing provision as good quality. Only Newnham on Severn CC reported its facilities to be of standard quality.

Cinderford CC reports its clubhouse to be of good quality although showers are reported to be of poor quality and there is leaking into the changing rooms. The Club is looking to develop a portacabin for changing with two or four rooms. It hopes this will be ready for next season and allow dedicated girls changing rooms although the long-term aim is to improve the internal changing facilities.

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Lydney CC aspires to expand the clubhouse at Lydney Cricket Club in order to relocate the bar area and provide the players with their own balcony. A tea/lounge area would replace the previous bar area and the extended facility would also be used as a secondary function area. The Club is also due to begin construction of a floodproof machinery store in the immediate future.

Huntley CC believes its clubhouse is in good condition although it has been damaged by vandalism in the last year, with render being knocked off the walls. The Club has recently submitted a planning application to extend its clubhouse which would include a new machinery store. Newnham on Severn CC has also had the windows smashed on a vehicle which is used to tow mowers. CCTV has subsequently been fitted.

Training facilities

Access to cricket nets is important, particularly for pre-season/winter training. In the Forest of Dean, eight of the 11 responding clubs report demand for new, improved or additional training facilities.

St Briavels, Ruardean Hill and Huntley cricket clubs all indicate demand for NTPs to be installed at their respective home venues, with Huntley CC also stating a need for a mobile net cage. Newent CC reports demand for mobile nets and for an increased number of grass and artificial training wickets.

Dymock and Cinderford cricket clubs both hope to install a static training nets at their respective home venues. Lydney CC indicates the lanes within its fixed bay training nets will require refurbishment in the near future whilst Corse and Staunton CC indicates its three fixed bay nets are in need of refurbishment, with the tracks and nets in need of replacement. Additionally, these are said to be in a poor location as the nets become waterlogged during the winter and the Club must remove moss from the surface before the start of the cricket season each year.

In addition to the above, there are also fixed bay cricket nets available for use at Freedom Leisure Cinderford (The Forest High School). They are managed by the School and reported to be in poor condition following limited maintenance. The nets are rarely used by the School and there is no longer netting surrounding the bays.

When considering indoor facilities, only three Forest of Dean based clubs are known to access indoor training facilities. This includes Newent, Huntley and Ruardean Hill cricket clubs which access facilities at Newent Community School, The King's School and Dene Magna School respectively. Only Newent CC reports issues with these facilities, stating that availability at Newent Community School is very limited, often leaving the Club with undesirable time slots and the cost is high.

Management and security of tenure

Of the responding clubs, four clubs have freehold of their home venues whilst three have lease agreements in place. The remaining four clubs rent their playing provision.

Table 4.4: Summary of security of tenure for clubs

Club	Primary site	Agreement
Alvington and Woolaston CC	Alvington Playing Fields	Rented
Dymock CC	Dymock Cricket Club	Freehold
Lydney CC	Lydney Cricket Club	Freehold

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Club	Primary site	Agreement
Corse and Staunton CC	Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field Corse & Staunton	Rented (from Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field Corse & Staunton Charity of which the Cricket Club is a Trustee).
Ruardean Hill CC	Ruardean Hill Recreation Ground	Rented
St Briavels CC	St Briavels Recreation Ground	Leased (50 years)
Cinderford CC	St. John's Cricket Ground	Freehold
Westbury on Severn CC	Westbury-on-Severn Parish Hall	Rented
Newent CC	Newent Cricket Club	Freehold
Huntley CC	Huntley Cricket Club	Leased (999 years)
Newnham on Severn CC	Newnham on Severn Cricket Club	Leased (not disclosed)

For the clubs with lease agreements in place, both St Briavels and Huntley cricket clubs are deemed to have secure, long-term agreements in place it is assumed Newnham on Severn CC have a secure tenure agreement as no threat to loss of access was highlighted during consultation.

Westbury on Severn CC rents its square from Westbury on Severn Parish Council although the Club considers itself to be a part of the Parish and therefore considers this agreement to be secure. However, the Club, as well as Alvington and Woolaston and Ruardean Hill cricket clubs, could have issues when it comes to seeking grant funding and site development due to only having short-term formalised agreements in place.

In addition to the above, Lydney CC also has a 25 year lease agreement in place for the square at Lydney Recreation Ground, which it believes it has 15/16 years remaining of. Corse and Staunton CC also rents the second square at Newent Cricket Club from Newent CC.

4.3: Demand

There are 16 clubs in the Forest of Dean which collectively provide 38 senior men's, three senior women's and 31 junior teams. Twelve of the clubs are relatively large and consist of both senior and junior sections, whilst Alvington and Woolaston, Newnham on Severn and Primrose Hill cricket clubs all field a single team. Corse and Staunton CC is the largest club in the District with 11 teams.

Table 4.7: Summary of teams by club

Club	Analysis area	Number of teams			
		Senior male	Senior female	Junior boys	Junior girls
Alvington and Woolaston CC	South	1	0	0	0
Aston Ingham CC	North	5	0	3	0
Bream CC	Central	1	0	2	0
Cinderford CC	Central	3	0	2	0
Corse and Staunton CC	North	5	1	4	1
Dymock CC	North	3	0	4	0
Huntley CC	North	1	1	1	0
Lydney CC	Central	3	0	2	0
Newent CC	North	2	1	3	0
Newnham on Severn CC	Central	0	0	1	0
Parkend CC	Central	3	0	2	0

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Club	Analysis area	Number of teams			
		Senior male	Senior female	Junior boys	Junior girls
Primrose Hill CC	Central	1	0	0	0
Redmarley CC	North	2	0	0	0
Ruardean Hill CC	Central	2	0	1	0
St Briavels CC	South	2	0	3	0
Westbury on Severn CC	North	4	0	2	0
Total		38	3	30	1

As seen in the table below, most teams are based in the North Analysis Area (43 teams), whereas the South Analysis Area has just six teams.

Table 4.8: Summary of teams by analysis area

Analysis area	Number of competitive teams				
	Senior men	Senior women	Junior boys	Junior girls	Total
Central	13	0	10	0	23
North	22	3	17	1	43
South	3	0	3	0	6
Total	38	3	30	1	72

Participation trends

Of the responding clubs, only four indicate that demand has increased in the previous three years. Huntley CC reports membership at all levels has increased in recent years whilst St Briavels CC has seen an increase in men's and junior membership. Cinderford CC states junior membership has increased. Westbury on Severn CC reports its ladies and junior sections have grown considerably in recent years.

Most of the clubs' report playing numbers have remained consistent with only Newent CC reporting a decrease at any level. The Club states that junior membership has fallen in the previous three years.

Latent demand

No latent demand has been expressed during consultation, with no clubs reporting that teams are unable to play due to a lack of facilities.

Imported/exported demand

Exported demand refers to teams that are currently accessing pitches for home fixtures outside of the District, in this case to meet facility needs which are not able to be met in the Forest of Dean due to insufficient quality or access.

No formalised exported demand has been identified in the Forest of Dean, nor is there recorded imported demand (exported from neighbouring authorities)

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Development activity

The ECB is currently running several initiatives across the Country which result in additional cricket demand and use of cricket facilities. Whilst these do not generally utilise grass wickets, they can impact upon availability when sessions are being held due to use of cricket outfield, making squares unusable during these periods.

All Stars Cricket

In partnership with the ECB and Chance to Shine, cricket clubs can register to become an ECB All Stars Cricket Centre. Once registered, a club can deliver the programme which aims to introduce cricket to children aged from five to eight. Subsequently, this may lead to increased interest and demand for junior cricket at clubs.

The programme seeks to achieve the following aims:

- ◆ Increase cricket activity for 5-8 year olds in the school and club environment.
- ◆ Develop consistency of message in both settings to aid transition.
- ◆ Improve generic movement skills for children, using cricket as the vehicle.
- ◆ Make it easier for new volunteers to support and deliver in the club environment.
- ◆ Use fun small-sided games to enthuse new children and volunteers to follow and play the game.

For the 2021 season, Lydney, Westbury on Severn, Cinderford, Huntley and Newent cricket clubs are signed up to be part of the initiative. Corse and Staunton CC reports it will re-start All Stars Cricket from the 2022 season.

Dynamos Cricket

A key development area for the ECB in delivering on the outcomes of 'Inspiring Generations' will be the Dynamos Cricket programme for 8-11 year olds, which originally aimed to launch in 2020. It plans on building on the significant growth of the All Stars and will develop the pathway to retain juniors who progress.

Where All Stars seeks to engage children in cricket activity and learning the skills, Dynamo's seeks to engage children in learning how to play, introducing a modified softball format as competitive progression with a view to eventual transition through to hardball cricket. The programme will be strongly linked to The Hundred, a new short format competition which also aimed to launch in 2020 (pre-Covid-19).

In the Forest of Dean, Lydney, Cinderford, Huntley and Newent cricket clubs are signed up to deliver Dynamo's. Corse and Staunton CC reports it will start Dynamo's Cricket from the 2022 season.

Softball Cricket

Softball Cricket is an ECB initiative aimed at women and girls to increase female participation in cricket as a sport. The aim of softball cricket sections is enjoyment and participation, without pads, a hardball, a heavy bat and limited rules. Sessions are generally played on the outfield of a square and follow a festival format with each session running for a maximum of two and half hours, shorter than traditional formats.

No known women's softball teams are currently fielded in the Forest of Dean.

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Chance to Shine

Chance to Shine is a national charity that aims to give all children the opportunity to play, learn and develop through cricket. It believes that cricket can help to develop the personal, social and physical skills of the 500,000 children that are worked with every year. It works in schools to provide children with their first experience of cricket, whilst it has also developed Chance to Shine Street. This is a format of the sport played with a tapeball, targeting children and young adults in inner-city areas and with matches lasting just 20-minutes.

There are no Chance to Shine Street sessions in or around the Forest of Dean.

Future demand

Future demand can be defined in two ways, through participation increases and using population forecasts. In addition, the Strategy & Action Plan that follows this report will contain housing growth scenarios that will estimate the additional demand for cricket arising from housing development plans within the Forest of Dean.

Population forecasts

Team generation rates are used below as the basis for calculating the number of teams likely to be generated in the future (2041) based on population growth. Using this, it is predicted that there will be a growth of three junior boys' teams.

Table 4.10: Team generation rates based on population growth (2041)

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams	Team Generation Rate	Future population within age group	Predicted future number of teams	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population ²⁰
Senior Men's (18-55)	18,586	38	1:489	18,870	38	0
Senior Women's (18-55)	18,978	3	1:6,326	20,641	3	0
Junior Boys (7-18)	5,747	30	1:192	6,394	33	3
Junior Girls (7-18)	5,721	1	1:5,721	6,552	1	0

As seen below, when broken down by analysis area, predicted growth falls to two junior boys' teams with one team expected to be generated in each the Central and North analysis areas.

Table 4.11: Team generation rates based on population growth by Analysis Area

Age group	Additional teams that may be generated		
	Central	North	South
Senior Men's (18-55)	0	0	0
Senior Women's (18-55)	0	0	0
Junior Boys (7-18)	1	1	0
Junior Girls (7-18)	0	0	0

²⁰ Rounded to the nearest whole number

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Although no women and girls' teams are predicted to be created via population growth alone, consultation with the ECB suggests that further development of female cricket in the Forest of Dean is likely as it is currently a national priority to increase women and girl's participation. It is therefore important to acknowledge that there are plans and strategies to increase the number of teams at some formats beyond what current trends and population changes would ordinarily suggest. This also applies to a likely growth in junior cricket, linked to the abovementioned All Stars and Dynamo's initiatives.

In addition, the ECB's five-year media rights deal, from 2020-2024, includes a continuation of its relationship with Sky Sports. This now extends beyond broadcasting and acts as a genuine partnership to secure investment and a commitment to increase participation and drive engagement. This could therefore see future demand increase to levels in excess of those anticipated through the PPS, meaning the impact should be reviewed over coming years.

Participation increases

Of the 11 responsive clubs in the Forest of Dean, six indicate aspirations to increase levels of participation. This amounts to a total predicted growth of 13 teams, equating to five senior men's, two senior women's and five junior boys and one junior girls' team.

Table 4.12: Future demand expressed by clubs

Club	Analysis area	Senior men's	Senior women's	Junior boys	Junior girls
Alvington and Woolaston CC	South	1	0	0	0
Cinderford CC	Central	0	0	0	1
Dymock CC	North	1	1	1	0
Huntley CC	North	1	0	2	0
Newent CC	North	1	0	1	0
St Briavels CC	South	1	1	1	0
	Total	5	2	5	1

Peak time demand

An analysis of match play identifies that peak time demand for senior cricket in the Forest of Dean is Saturday, although a good proportion of teams are also fielded on a Sunday including senior women's teams. As such, both require consideration.

For junior cricket, peak time is midweek albeit some Sunday cricket is also recorded.

4.4: Capacity analysis

Capacity analysis for cricket is measured on a seasonal rather than a weekly basis. This is due to playability (as only one match is generally played per square per day at weekends or weekday evening) and because wickets are rotated throughout the season to reduce wear and tear and to allow for repair.

The capacity of a square to accommodate matches is driven by the number and quality of wickets. This section of the report therefore presents the current pitch stock available for cricket and illustrates the number of competitive match equivalent sessions per season per square that is available and that currently takes place.

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For good quality squares, capacity is considered to be five matches per grass wicket per season, whilst for a standard quality square, capacity is four matches per wicket per season. For poor quality squares, no capacity is considered to exist as such provision is not deemed safe for play.

The number of matches played by each team has been derived from consultation with the clubs. Where consultation was not possible, or where the level of play was not made clear, an assumption has been made that all senior teams play between ten and 12 home matches per year and all junior teams play between four and eight matches per year depending on their age and level of competition.

The above is used to allocate capacity ratings as follows:

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

The capacity analysis assumes that all clubs rotate their wickets evenly. However, this may not be the case at all sites, with central wickets potentially used more commonly than outer wickets that are closer to a boundary, especially for senior matches. The idea of this is to showcase what the capacity is or could be if best practice is followed for the whole square, rather than doing it on a wicket-by-wicket basis.

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Table 4.13: Capacity analysis of community available grass cricket squares

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Management	Security of tenure	Community use	Club users	Number of squares	Square quality	Number of grass wickets	Match equivalent sessions per season			Potential spare capacity for senior cricket (Saturday)	Potential spare capacity for senior cricket (Sunday)	Potential spare capacity for junior cricket (Midweek)
										Recommended capacity	Actual play	Capacity rating			
1	Alvington Playing Fields	South	Parish Council	Secure	Yes	Alvington and Woolaston CC	1	Good	7	35	9	26	Yes	Yes	Yes
2	Aylburton Village Playing Field	Central	Community	Secure	Yes - unused	-	1	Good	8	40	0	40	Yes	Yes	Yes
3	Bathurst Park	Central	Trust	Secure	Yes - unused	-	1	Good	8	40	0	40	Yes	Yes	Yes
10	Bream Cricket Club	Central	Sports Club	Secure	Yes	Bream CC, Primrose Hill CC	1	Standard	5	20	13	7	No	Yes	Yes
19	Dymock Cricket Club	North	Sports Club	Secure	Yes	Dymock CC	1	Good	12	60	60		No	No	No
86	Lydney Cricket Club	Central	Sports Club	Secure	Yes	Lydney CC	1	Good	15	75	22	53	No	Yes	Yes
48	Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field Corse & Staunton	North	Trust	Secure	Yes	Corse and Staunton CC	1	Good	13	65	45	20	No	No	No
50	Redmarley Cricket Club	North	Sports Club	Secure	Yes	Redmarley CC	1	Good	16	80	16	64	No	Yes	Yes
54	Ruardean Hill Recreation Ground	Central	Community	Secure	Yes	Ruardean Hill CC	1	Good	8	40	30	10	No	Yes	Yes
60	St Briavels Recreation Ground	South	Sports Club	Secure	Yes	St Briavels CC	1	Good	6	30	24	6	No	Yes	Yes
62	St. John's Cricket Ground	Central	Sports Club	Secure	Yes	Cinderford CC	1	Good	11	55	18	37	No	Yes	Yes
65	Taynton And Tibberton Village Hall	North	Community	Secure	Yes - unused	-	1	Good	6	30	0	30	Yes	Yes	Yes
71	Westbury-On-Severn Parish Hall	North	Parish Council	Secure	Yes	Westbury on Severn CC	1	Good	10	50	25	25	No	Yes	Yes
82	Newent Cricket Club	North	Sports Club	Secure	Yes	Newent CC, Corse and Staunton CC	2	Good	16	80	80		No	No	No
								Good	4	20	8	12	Yes	Yes	Yes
83	Parkend Cricket Club	Central	Sports Club	Secure	Yes	Parkend CC	1	Good	6	30	26	4	No	Yes	No
84	Huntley Cricket Club	North	Sports Club	Secure	Yes	Huntley CC	1	Good	8	40	50	10	No	No	No
85	Newnham On Severn Cricket Club	Central	Sports Club	Secure	Yes	Newnham on Severn CC	1	Standard	7	28	10	18	Yes	Yes	Yes
37	Lydney Recreation Ground	Central	Sports Club	Secure	Yes	Lydney CC	1	Standard	3	12	6	6	No	Yes	Yes
87	Mill Meadow	North	Sports Club	Secure	Yes	Aston Ingham CC	1	Standard	6	24	7	17	Yes	Yes	Yes
64	Stockings Field	North	Sports Club	Secure	Yes	Aston Ingham CC	1	Good	14	70	33	37	No	Yes	Yes

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Actual spare capacity

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

Cricket squares also need to be able to accommodate and sustain the average number of home fixtures senior teams play per season. For Saturday senior cricket, this is nine matches per season.

Despite 17 squares exhibiting some form of spare capacity at other times, only seven are available for further senior cricket activity on a Saturday (peak time). These are across the three sites that are either currently unused by clubs, used as secondary venues by larger clubs or used by single team clubs as follows:

- ◀ Alvington Playing Fields
- ◀ Aylburton Village Playing Field
- ◀ Bathurst Park
- ◀ Taynton And Tibberton Village Hall
- ◀ Newent Cricket Club
- ◀ Newnham On Severn Cricket Club
- ◀ Mill Meadow

Total actual spare capacity equates to 99 match equivalent sessions with the most actual spare capacity in the Central Analysis Area and the least in the South Analysis Area.

Table 4.14: Actual spare capacity for senior cricket (Saturday) by analysis area

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (matches per season)
North	36
Central	54
South	9
Total	99

All remaining squares are used to capacity on Saturdays, either because two teams are already assigned to them as a home venue or because the level of spare capacity is insufficient to accommodate an additional team without overplay being created or exacerbated (at least nine match equivalent sessions of spare capacity are required).

For Sunday cricket, actual spare capacity totals 116 match equivalent sessions. As seen with Saturday cricket, with the largest amount of actual spare capacity in the Central Analysis Area and the least in the South Analysis Area.

Table 4.15: Actual spare capacity for senior cricket (Sunday) by analysis area

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (matches per season)
North	40
Central	60
South	12
Total	112

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Sunday capacity provides capacity for additional senior men's demand to be accommodated outside of the peak period but still within a competitive format. Moreover, it provides peak time availability for senior women's cricket (both hardball and softball) and for some junior demand, particularly older age groups.

For junior midweek cricket, 14 squares have actual spare capacity. This totals 155 match equivalent sessions.

Table 4.16: Actual spare capacity for junior cricket (midweek) by analysis area

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (matches per season)
North	60
Central	80
South	15
Total	155

The reason for midweek capacity being higher than the capacity for Saturday cricket is because fixtures can be split across numerous days, meaning more than two home teams can be assigned to a square. In addition, junior teams can utilise NTPs where they are provided. It is therefore only clubs with a significant junior membership base or that overplay their squares that struggle for capacity, such as Corse and Staunton and Lydney cricket clubs.

Overplay

Overplay translates to a site accommodating more demand than it can sustain based on the number of wickets provided and the quality of the square. On this basis, one site in the Forest of Dean is overplayed: Huntley Cricket Club, by ten match equivalent sessions.

Table 4.17: Summary of overplay

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Overplay (matches per season)
84	Huntley Cricket Club	North	10
Total			10

Table 4.18: Summary of overplay by analysis area

Analysis area	Overplay (sessions per season)
North	10
Central	0
South	0
Total	10

Although it is possible to sustain certain, minimal levels of overplay providing that a regular, sufficient maintenance regime is in place, a reduction in play is recommended on overplayed squares to ensure there is no detrimental effect on quality over time.

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4.5: Supply and demand analysis

Consideration must be given to the extent to which current provision can accommodate current and future demand for both senior and junior cricket. This section therefore looks at actual spare capacity on grass wicket squares considered against overplay and identified future demand. Match equivalent sessions for future demand are calculated using the average number of matches played per season (nine matches for Saturday senior teams, four for Sunday senior teams and five matches for junior teams).

Senior cricket - Saturday

The table below looks at the supply and demand balance during the peak period for senior men's cricket (Saturday). For actual spare capacity, this is converted from the number of match equivalent sessions identified above to the number of match equivalent sessions that could feasibly be utilised by a growth in demand. This is calculated by using the average number of matches played per season by senior teams (nine) multiplied by the number of additional teams that can be fielded at peak time (two teams per square that is available). The entirety of the spare capacity at each site is not used as this number of matches may not be able to be accommodated at peak time.

Table 4.19: Supply and demand analysis of cricket squares for senior cricket (Saturday)

Analysis area	Demand (match equivalent sessions per season)				
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
North	36	10	26	27	1
Central	54	0	54	0	54
South	9	0	9	18	9
Total	99	10	89	45	44

As shown in the table above, there is current overall spare capacity for Saturday cricket in the Forest of Dean amounting to 89 match equivalent sessions, with all analysis areas having actual spare capacity.

When accounting for future demand, shortfalls occur in the North and South analysis areas although there remains overall spare capacity at a Districtwide level equating to 44 match equivalent sessions. The future shortfall of one match equivalent session per season in the North Area is minimal and can be sustained.

Senior cricket - Sunday

The table below looks at the supply and demand balance for Sunday cricket, which is peak time for senior women's demand but also relevant to some senior men's and junior teams. This shows overall current spare capacity amounting to 102 match equivalent sessions and overall future spare capacity amounting to 94 match equivalent sessions. No shortfalls are identified when considering current or future demand.

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Table 4.20: Supply and demand analysis of cricket squares for senior cricket (Sunday)

Analysis area	Demand (match equivalent sessions per season)				
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
North	40	10	30	4	26
Central	60	0	60	0	60
South	12	0	12	4	8
Total	112	10	102	8	94

Junior cricket - midweek

For the junior supply and demand analysis, actual spare capacity equates to the total spare capacity at each available site or, if it is lower, the total number of additional junior teams that could be fielded on each available square (on the assumption that one square can accommodate six midweek teams), multiplied by six (the average number of matches a junior team plays). This is because junior demand at peak time is not limited to one day, although some capacity should be reserved for activity such as All Stars and Dynamo's Cricket.

Table 4.21: Supply and demand analysis of cricket squares for junior cricket

Analysis area	Demand (match equivalent sessions per season)				
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
North	60	10	50	25	25
Central	80	0	80	10	70
South	15	0	15	5	10
Total	155	10	145	40	105

There is currently overall spare capacity for midweek cricket amounting to 145 match equivalent sessions, which reduces to 105 match equivalent sessions after considering future demand. However, no shortfalls are expected to occur within the Forest of Dean for midweek cricket.

4.6: Conclusion

In conclusion, there is sufficient supply of cricket provision across the Forest of Dean to cater for current and future demand for both senior and junior cricket. However, future shortfalls in the North and South analysis areas are expected for Saturday cricket.

Square quality across the authority is generally good, with 17 good quality, four standard quality and no poor quality squares. Alvington and Woolaston CC may require support to improve ancillary provision at Alvington Playing Fields.

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Cricket summary

- ◀ **In conclusion, there is sufficient supply of cricket provision at a Districtwide level to cater for current and future demand for both senior and junior cricket across Forest of Dean.**
- ◀ **However, there are some Area specific future shortfalls expected for senior Saturday cricket in the North and South analysis areas. The shortfall in the North area is minimal and can be sustained.**
- ◀ In total, there are 21 grass cricket squares in the Forest of Dean, with all 21 available for community use.
- ◀ There are NTPs accompanying grass wicket squares at four sites and there are standalone NTPs at four sites.
- ◀ Corse and Staunton CC is currently looking and fundraising for a second square, ideally close to its current home site (Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field Corse & Staunton).
- ◀ Of the responsive clubs in the Forest of Dean, four clubs have freehold of their home venues whilst three have lease agreements in place. The remaining four clubs rent their playing provision.
- ◀ The audit of community available grass wicket cricket squares found 17 to be good quality and the remaining four to be standard quality; none are assessed as poor.
- ◀ Alvington and Woolaston CC reports its facility is sub-standard and is without changing rooms, toilets, electricity or water.
- ◀ All remaining clubs have access to changing room facilities, with nine of the ten responding clubs listing provision as good quality and one with standard quality provision.
- ◀ Eight of the 11 responding clubs report demand for new, improved or additional training facilities.
- ◀ There are 16 clubs in the Forest of Dean which collectively provide 38 senior men's, three senior women's, 30 junior boys and one junior girls team.
- ◀ Four of the 11 responding clubs report that demand has increased in some form over the previous three years with only Newent CC reporting a decrease relating to its junior membership.
- ◀ Lydney, Westbury on Severn, Cinderford, Huntley and Newent cricket clubs are signed up to be part of the All Stars Cricket initiative, whilst Lydney, Cinderford, Huntley and Newent are also signed up to deliver Dynamos Cricket. Corse and Staunton CC reports it will sign up to both initiatives from the 2022 season.
- ◀ Future demand for two junior teams is predicted via population growth, whilst club aspirations equate to the potential growth of five senior men's, two senior women's and five junior boys and one junior girls' team.
- ◀ There are seven squares that show potential spare capacity on grass wickets on Saturdays, 17 on Sundays and 16 during midweek for junior cricket.
- ◀ One site is overplayed; Huntley Cricket Club, by ten match equivalent sessions.

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

PART 5: RUGBY UNION

5.1: Introduction

The Rugby Football Union (RFU) is the national governing body for rugby union. It is split into four areas across the Country with a workforce team that covers development, coaching, governance and competitions. A full-time development team is responsible for The Forest of Dean District (as part of the wider region) and works with all clubs to maximise their potential. This work involves developing club structures, working towards the RFU accreditation and the development of school-club structures.

Locally, rugby union clubs in the District affiliate to Gloucestershire RFU which administers some local competitions. The rugby union playing season operates from September to May.

Consultation

There are eight RFU affiliated community clubs playing in the District of which all responded, representing an 100% response rate. Consultation was undertaken via a combination of video meetings and online survey.

Table 5.1: Summary of rugby union consultation

Affiliated club name	Response received
Berry Hill RFC	Yes
Bream RFC	Yes
Cinderford RFC	Yes
Drybrook RFC	Yes
Lydney RFC	Yes
Newent RFC	Yes
University of Hartpury RFC	Yes
Westbury-on-Severn RFC	Yes

Rugby union definitions

Rugby union in England (as specified by the RFU) is played in the following formats and as such these references are used throughout this section to refer to supply (pitch types) and demand (team types).

Table 5.2: Rugby union age group and pitch format definitions

Team reference	Age group	Team type	Pitch type
Senior men	19-45 years old	Senior	Senior
Senior women	19-45 years old	Senior	Senior
Colts	17-18 years old	Under 18 - Under 19	Senior
Junior boys	13-16 years old	Under 14 - Under 17	Junior
Junior girls	13-16 years old	Under 14 - Under 17	Junior
Mini rugby mixed	7-12 years old	Under 8 - Under 13	Mini

NB. Please note that players aged 17 can play in senior rugby union teams provided appropriate regulations & safeguarding measures are met.

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

5.2: Supply

In total, there are 33 rugby union pitches in the Forest of Dean across 16 sites. There are 24 senior pitches, six dedicated mini pitches and three junior size pitches.

There are 28 pitches across 14 sites identified as being available for rugby union activity, all used by community clubs except for seven at education sites Dene Magna School, Newent Community School and Wyedean School and Sixth Form. Five pitches are unavailable for external community access, at Hartpury College (four senior pitches) and Beachley Barracks.

Traditionally, mini rugby activity often takes place on senior pitches and this is the case for most clubs in Forest of Dean District. Mini rugby typically takes place using areas of senior pitches, either for matches or training on Sunday mornings subject to fixtures. There is some use of other areas for mini rugby, for example unmarked playing field areas or 3G pitches.

Table 5.3: Summary of grass rugby union pitch supply

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Availability for community use?	Number of pitches	Pitch type
3	Bathurst Park	Central	Yes	1	Mini
4	Beachley Barracks	South	No	1	Senior
5	Beavis Memorial Ground (Cinderford RFC)	Central	Yes	1	Senior
8	Berry Hill RFC	Central	Yes	1	Senior
				3	Mini
11	Bream RFC	Central	Yes	2	Senior
17	Dene Magna School	Central	Yes	2	Senior
18	Drybrook RFC	Central	Yes	2	Senior
				1	Junior
				2	Mini
23	Five Acres	Central	Yes	1	Senior
24	Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community School)	North	Yes	2	Senior
25	Freedom Leisure Sedbury (Wyedean School & Sixth Form)	South	Yes	1	Senior
				2	Junior
31	Hartpury College	North	No	4	Senior
37	Lydney Recreation Ground	Central	Yes	1	Senior
38	Lydney Rugby Club	Central	Yes	1	Senior
43	Newent Recreation Ground	North	Yes	2	Senior
73	Westbury-On-Severn Rugby Football Club	North	Yes	2	Senior
79	Valley Road Recreation Ground	Central	Yes	1	Senior

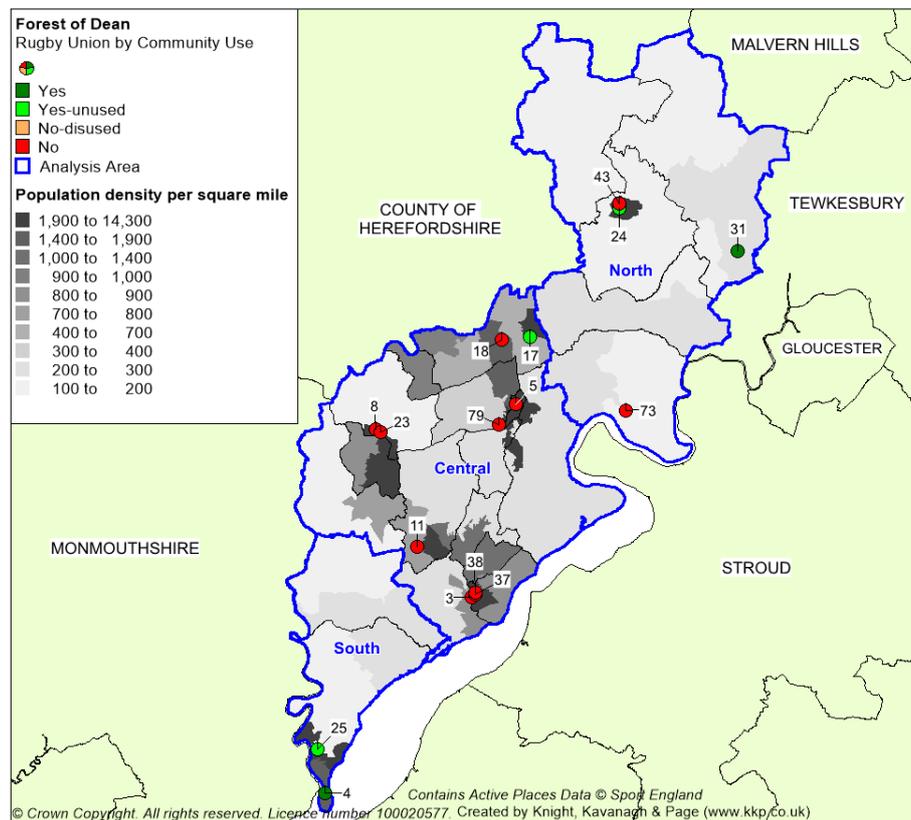
The audit only identifies dedicated, line marked pitches. For rugby union pitch dimension sizes please see the table below.

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Table 5.4: Rugby union pitch dimensions

Team type (ages)	Team reference	Maximum pitch dimensions (metres) ²¹
Under 8	Mini	45 x 22
Under 9	Mini	60 x 30
Under 10	Mini	60 x 35
Under 11	Mini	60 x 43
Under 12	Mini	60 x 43
Under 13	Junior	90 x 60 (60 x 43 for girls)
Under 14-16	Junior	100 x 70 ²²
Under 17+	Senior	100 x 70

Figure 5.1: Location of grass rugby union pitches across Forest of Dean District

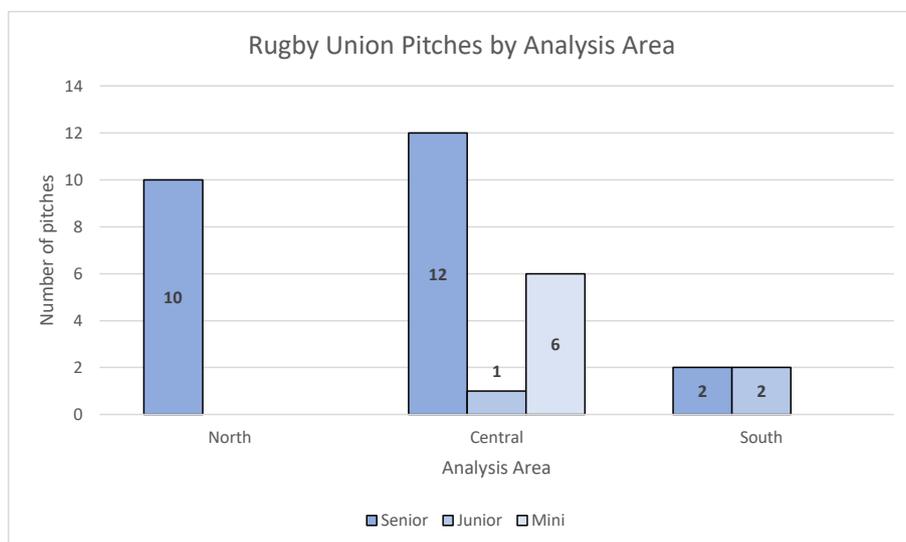


²¹ Recommended run off area for all pitch types requires five metres each way and a minimum in-goal length of six metres.

²² Minimum dimensions of 94 x 68 metres are acceptable.

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Figure 5.2: Summary of grass rugby union pitches by analysis area



Most pitches identified as being available for community (19 of 28 pitches – 68%) are located in the Central Area, whilst all seven of the dedicated mini pitches are also in this area. The South Area has the fewest pitches with four, of which one at Bletchley Barracks is unavailable, meaning just three are available for community use (11% of available provision),

In the North Area there is also a full size World Rugby compliant 3G pitch at Hartpury College which accommodates a notable level of rugby union activity, mostly from the College and University in-house programmes and teams but also from some community clubs, detailed later in the section.

There are no identified plans to create new rugby union pitches in the District.

Security of tenure

Clubs are generally considered to have secure tenure where they have freehold, leasehold or formally secured use of their site/s (for example, through a community use agreement) for the next three or more years.

Several education sites contain grass rugby union pitches, however, they are only in receipt of school use and none are known to be used by community clubs for rugby union activity. These pitches are considered available for community use and some have use for other sports such as football but are not used by rugby union clubs. Any future use would be through rental, with no known community use agreements in place, therefore any future community use would be considered to offer unsecure tenure.

Cinderford RFC, Drybrook RFC, Lydney RFC, Berry Hill RFC, Bream RFC and Westbury-On-Severn RFC all have freehold of their home grounds, therefore tenure is considered to be secure for these clubs at their respective sites.

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Newent RFC has a license from Newent Town Council for use of Newent Recreation Ground, where it has played for around 40 years. The license, negotiated and agreed in 2018 for 15 years, has three break clauses including one after the first seven years of the lease. This was agreed in order to meet tenure requirements to secure RFU funding for the installation of training sports lighting onsite in 2018, for which seven years security of tenure were required. Four years remain until the initial break clause could potentially be triggered by the Town Council, therefore the Club is regarded to still have security of tenure for the purposes of the PPS, however there is a need in the short-term to seek negotiation of an agreement that gives the Club greater long-term security of tenure.

Five Acres lies adjacent to Berry Hill RFC and is managed by West Dean Parish Council. The Club uses the senior pitch onsite via informal agreement and therefore has unsecure tenure for continued long term use of the site.

Cinderford RFC is considered to have secure tenure at Valley Road Recreation Ground through long-term leasehold via agreement with the Forestry Commission.

Lydney Recreation Ground and Bathurst Park are managed directly by Lydney Recreation Trust and the Bathurst Park Trust respectively, both of which are administered by Lydney Town Council. Lydney RFC has a long-term lease agreement for Lydney Recreation Ground whilst the Club utilises Bathurst Park via rental so tenure here is deemed to be unsecure.

Professional club Gloucester Rugby has a close relationship with Hartpury University and College through its Gloucester Rugby Academy programmes and University of Hartpury RFC women's team which is run collaboratively as a partnership. Hartpury University and College work with Gloucester Rugby on academic programmes, work experience and industry expertise.

Gloucester Rugby has been based at Hartpury College where it had access to two senior rugby union pitches to the west of the site, as well as to conditioning facilities adjacent. The lease from the College expired at the end of June 2021 and will not be renewed, which will see the Gloucester Rugby first team move offsite to access daily training provision elsewhere. The development and increase in size of both organisations requires that Hartpury University and College need to take back the use of the physical resources that were previously used by Gloucester Rugby.

Pitch quality

The quality of rugby pitches across the Forest of Dean have been assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments as determined by RFU²³) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◀ Good
- ◀ Standard
- ◀ Poor

The methodology for assessing rugby pitch quality looks at two key elements: the maintenance programme and the level of drainage on each pitch. An overall quality based on both drainage and maintenance can then be generated. The agreed rating for each pitch type also represents actions required to improve pitch quality.

²³ See Appendix 3 for the non-technical assessment for rugby pitches

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A breakdown of actions required based on the ratings can be seen below:

Table 5.5: Definition of maintenance categories

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

Table 5.6: Definition of drainage categories

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

Table 5.7: Quality rating matrix

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

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

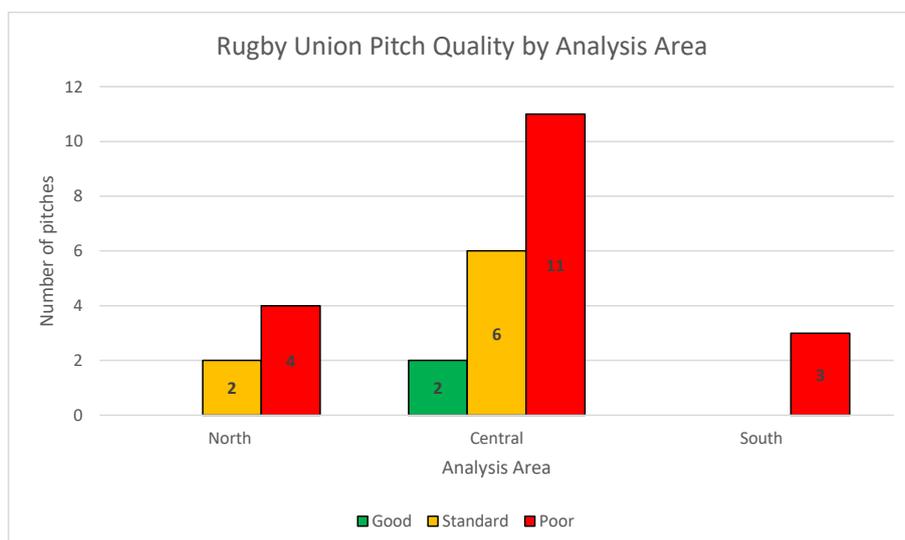
Table 5.8: Summary of grass rugby union pitch quality (community accessible pitches only)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Number of pitches /type	Sports lighting	Non-technical assessment rating	Quality rating
3	Bathurst Park	Central	1x Mini	No	M0 / D1	Poor
5	Beavis Memorial Ground (Cinderford RFC)	Central	1x Senior	Yes	M2 / D1	Good
8	Berry Hill RFC	Central	1x Senior 3x Mini	Yes Yes (partial)	M0 / D1	Poor
11	Bream RFC	Central	2x Senior	No	M0 / D1	Poor
17	Dene Magna School	Central	2x Senior	No	M0 / D1	Poor
18	Drybrook RFC	Central	1x Senior 1x Senior 1x Junior 2x Mini	No No Yes No	M2 / D1 M1 / D1 M1 / D1 M1 / D1	Good Standard Standard Standard
23	Five Acres	Central	1x Senior	No	M0 / D1	Poor

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Number of pitches /type	Sports lighting	Non-technical assessment rating	Quality rating
24	Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community School)	North	2x Senior	No	M0 / D1	Poor
25	Freedom Leisure Sedbury (Wyedean School & Sixth Form)	South	1x Senior	No	M0 / D1	Poor
			2x Junior	No	M0 / D1	Poor
37	Lydney Recreation Ground	Central	1x Senior	No	M0 / D1	Poor
38	Lydney Rugby Club	Central	1x Senior	Yes	M1 / D1	Standard
43	Newent Recreation Ground	North	2x Senior	No	M0 / D1	Poor
73	Westbury-On-Severn Rugby Football Club	North	2x Senior	No	M1 / D1	Standard
79	Valley Road Recreation Ground	Central	1x Senior	No	M0 / D1	Poor

Figure 5.3: Summary of grass rugby union pitch quality by analysis area (community use pitches)



Most available rugby union pitches (19 of 28 pitches – 68%) in the District are rated as poor quality, with seven pitches (25% of available provision) rated as standard quality. There are six good quality pitches, the single main pitches at Beavis Memorial Ground (Cinderford RFC) and Drybrook RFC available community use, as well as the four unavailable pitches at Hartpury College.

The South Area has just three pitches, all located at dual-use site Freedom Leisure Sedbury (Wyedean School & Sixth Form), which are all rated as poor quality.

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

The RFU reports that Cinderford RFC is restricted in terms of pitch space, relative to the level of play and extent of demand at the Club. The Club plays at National 1 in the RFU rugby union league system but have just one pitch in middle of the Town at Beavis Memorial Ground, which is largely protected for use by the men's first team as a result. The Club relies on pitches offsite at Valley Road Recreation Ground where there is one senior pitch and surrounding the land the Club uses to mark mini pitches with cones, though there are no onsite ancillary facilities.

Cinderford RFC reports that the playing field at Valley Road Recreation Ground is of poor quality. It is marked with one senior pitch and surrounding land is used for mini rugby, however is on a significant slope and has been subject to some damage from wild boars. The Club states that the field drains naturally and that the sub-soil make up is of high clay content roughly six inches below the surface. Despite this, the Club states that the site drains relatively well, possibly due to the sloping of the surface helping water to run off.

Lydney Rugby Club, the adjacent Lydney Recreation Ground, as well as Bathurst Park located to the west, form a conurbation of sites located on a floodplain and which all flood significantly in times of consistent and heavy rainfall. The sites last flooded from the River Severn in Winter and Spring in 2020 which left the entire local area under deep water. The collection of sites services a number of sports including football, cricket, bowling and tennis making this a key and shared issue for sport in the Town. Lydney RFC plans to improve drainage at Lydney Rugby Club in the coming months.

Figure 5.4: Flooding at Lydney Rugby Club and Lydney Recreation Ground (Feb 2020)



FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT



Lydney RFC is also concerned about the future maintenance of its pitches. They are currently maintained by a volunteer groundsman who is set to retire in the near future. As no-one else within the Club is sufficiently qualified to maintain the pitches to the same level, they expect to outsource most of this work at high cost.

Drybrook RFC states that the main pitch was last levelled in 1988/89 and drains underneath the pitch were installed around that time. The second pitch and training pitch have some drainage systems underneath but are not fully drained, though the site is considered to drain sufficiently. The pitches are aerated, overseeded, fed and scarified regularly.

Overmarking of pitches

Some sports pitches are overmarked or share playing field with other sports pitches. Whilst making effective seasonal use of space and opportunities for multi-sport sites to share and maximise the likes of ancillary use and social facilities, this can also have a detrimental effect on pitch provision for all user sports if not rigorously managed.

Overmarking can lead to issues with seasonal clashes, for example, with summer sports such as cricket or rugby league when the summer season begins and rugby union season has not finished, though clubs in Forest of Dean do not report this as a key issue. This could mean some sports may have to seek alternative temporary venues due to seasonal clashes.

Furthermore, the use of playing field land year-round during both winter and summer seasons limits the scope for off-season repair and rejuvenation, with any quality issues sustained unable to be rectified and likely to subsequently impact on users. Without proper off-season maintenance or rotation of pitches this lack of scope for off-season works can lead to decline in quality over time.

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Overmarking of rugby union pitches takes place at the following sites shared with the following sports:

- ◀ Bathurst Park (Lydney) – mini rugby union pitch and football pitch marked onto the outfield area shared with cricket.
- ◀ Bream RFC – use of rugby union pitches for rugby league by Gloucester All Golds Rugby League Club and for football by Lydney U8s football team.
- ◀ Dene Magna School – rugby union pitches share outfield area with non-turf cricket pitches.
- ◀ Newent Community School - (Freedom Leisure Newent) – rugby union pitches share outfield area with non-turf cricket pitch.
- ◀ Wyedean School & Sixth Form (Freedom Leisure Sedbury) – one junior rugby union pitch shares outfield area with non-turf cricket pitch.

Ancillary facilities

Ancillary facilities refer to the type of amenities which are available on a site accompanied by their quality, such as a clubhouse, changing rooms, showering provision, car parking, dedicated official and spectator facilities and boundary fencing.

The quality of ancillary facilities (changing pavilions and accompanying car parking) across the Forest of Dean has been assessed via a combination of site visits and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◀ Good
- ◀ Standard
- ◀ Poor

Bream RFC was granted planning permission in October 2020 for the development of a new clubhouse, to be constructed to low carbon and environmentally sustainable design. The Club states that it plans to use the soil from the groundworks to level more playing areas across the site.

The project includes the sale of the existing clubhouse to the southeast corner of the site for residential development in order to help fund the build., The Club hopes to bridge any financial shortfall with savings and grants. Permission has been successfully obtained for the construction of eight new homes where the existing clubhouse presently stands.

The Club reports that site security is presently a problem and that because the existing clubhouse is located 200m away from the pitches there are issues with misused by local youths and broken glass left. The new clubhouse will be developed alongside the existing pitch area, incurring a loss of some playing field land.

The current changing and shower facilities are in poor condition having been built in the 1960s. The Club states that it needs to build a new clubhouse to improve these facilities and encourage players that left to return to play for the Club, as well to facilitate the growth of female rugby participation and junior sports teams to use the site. It states that the main feedback from those that have left the Club highlighted this as the main reason. The development will benefit other external site users too, including Lydney FC U8s, Gloucester All Golds Rugby League Club and Forest of Dean Athletics Club, all of which, are based on site.

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Newent RFC has progressed through the levels of local rugby union leagues and the RFU reports that its facilities now fall short of the requirement and expectation of clubs playing at that level of competition, where most opposition clubs have stadia sites and dedicated provision. The Club aspires to improve built facilities onsite, where it currently has a pavilion building but no clubhouse facilities, accessing social provision offsite elsewhere in the Town. It has installed a portacabin style building onsite and a container for storage.

The Club states that the Town Council seeks to develop a shared building onsite rather than support rugby-led plans or projects and that any new building would only be accessible during the times when sport is being played onsite. It would like to develop a better relationship with the Town Council but currently has limited influence over facilities or scope to acquire external funding due to tenure arrangements and continues to explore possible options to relocate to develop a new site which better meets rugby needs elsewhere.

Drybrook RFC has four separate changing rooms, with portacabins purchased for additional changing. These have two changing rooms but the Club is planning to remove them as they are not often used and have been subject of lots of complaints from club members. The Club deems changing rooms insufficient to suitably service current teams if there are three home games being held at the same time.

The clubhouse onsite is to receive a £170,000 refurbishment which will also help to safeguard from roof leaking issues. The clubhouse building is in good condition but insufficient for current levels of site use and has insufficient car parking provision. The clubhouse building is a well-used community building, hosting a variety of local interest groups. The Club plans to develop a spectator stand beside its main pitch and aspires to develop an artificial surface in place of the training pitch or land adjacent to the training pitch where it sometimes marks two mini rugby pitches.

Cinderford RFC states that ancillary provision at Beavis Memorial Ground is good and that the four changing rooms have recently been refurbished. There is a need to repair sports lighting in 2021 as it is now 30 years old and does not meet required standards.

Lydney RFC reports no issues with ancillary provision at Lydney Rugby Club, however, it is exploring funding opportunities to provide dedicated ladies changing facilities on site.

5.3: Demand

Demand for rugby pitches in the Forest of Dean falls mainly within the categories of organised competitive play and organised training.

Competitive play

There are eight affiliated rugby union clubs based and playing within the District, identified as fielding a total of 77 affiliated teams.

There are 22 men's and four women's teams identified as playing competitive matches regularly, of which four men's and one women's team are student teams fielded by the University of Hartpury in the British Universities & Colleges (BUCs) leagues on Wednesday afternoons. University of Hartpury RFC is the associated club operated by the University, which links to its rugby union academy programme. It has a men's team playing in the RFU Championship, the second tier of English rugby union, whilst its women's team fielded in partnership with local professional club Gloucester Rugby plays in the Premier 15s, the highest level of women's rugby union in England.

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There are 25 mini rugby and 24 junior teams identified, of which, eight are junior girls' teams. Drybrook RFC, Cinderford RFC, Lydney RFC and Berry Hill RFC all have junior girls' teams, whilst Drybrook RFC also has a women's team.

Competitive play for mini and junior teams typically takes the format of friendly matches against other local clubs; with training weekends often built into the season, allowing players to develop core skills and tactical awareness. Junior teams will also compete in County level cup competitions as an introduction to competition rugby. Colts (U18/17) teams often compete in organised league structures providing frequent competitive fixtures, with the leagues acting as a bridge to senior rugby.

Table 5.9: Summary of affiliated rugby union club demand in Forest of Dean District (2019/20 season)

Club	Site	Number of teams					Total teams
		Men's	Women's	Colts	Junior	Mini	
Berry Hill RFC	Berry Hill RFC	3	-	-	5	5	13
Bream RFC	Bream RFC	2	-	-	-	-	2
Cinderford RFC	Beavis Memorial Ground Valley Road Recreation Ground	3	-	1	5	6	15
Drybrook RFC	Drybrook RFC	3	1	1	7	7	19
Lydney RFC	Lydney Rugby Club	2	-	-	5	3	10
Newent RFC	Newent Recreation Ground	2	1	-	2	4	9
University of Hartpury RFC	Hartpury College	5	2	-	-	-	7
Westbury-on- Severn RFC	Westbury-On-Severn Rugby Football Club	2	-	-	-	-	2
Total		22	4	2	24	25	77

Training

Throughout the Country, many rugby teams train at their home ground on match pitches. As a result, usage is concentrated which reduces the capacity for match play on these pitches and means they are more likely to be overplayed. A key factor in determining the extent of training on match pitches is the presence of sports lighting.

An alternative to training on grass pitches with sports lighting is via a World Rugby compliant 3G pitch. For an artificial grass pitch to be suitable for contact rugby, it must be a 3G surface and must be approved by World Rugby (WR). A WR compliant pitch also enables the transfer of match demand from grass pitches onto third generation artificial grass pitches, which alleviates overplay of grass pitches and as a result protects quality.

There is one WR compliant 3G pitch in the District at Hartpury College, constructed for contact rugby union use and listed on the RFU register of WR compliant 3G pitches. The pitch is predominantly programmed for rugby union and is full senior rugby union pitch size with line markings and pitch furniture. The certification and registration are due for renewal in July 2021 to ensure retention on the RFU register and ensure continued sanction for use.

The only identified external 3G user for rugby union at Hartpury College beyond the Hartpury-Gloucester Rugby partnership is Ledbury RFC, demand imported from Herefordshire. Cinderford RFC and more recently Old Centralians RFC (Gloucester City) have previously used the site but no longer do so.

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There is another pitch in neighbouring Gloucester City, a junior size pitch at St Peter's School, used by Cinderford RFC for one training session per week. The Club reports that it previously accessed the 3G pitch at Freedom Leisure Cinderford (The Forest High School, non-compliant rugby 3G surface) but that it lost access to the facility upon transfer of management from Freedom Leisure to Cinderford FC.

Clubs using grass rugby union pitches without lighting will typically use them for training until daylight hours no longer allow for evening use. Clubs then seek access to provision with sports lighting, either artificial grass pitches or other areas with sports lighting including natural turf. There are grass areas between pitches at Lydney Recreation Ground, Newent Recreation Ground, Westbury-On-Severn RFC and Bream RFC which have partial sports lighting for training use.

Table 5.10: Summary of rugby union club facility use for evening training

Club	Site	Facility type
Berry Hill RFC	Berry Hill RFC	Grass rugby union pitches – area partially lit with sports lighting also marked with mini pitches.
Bream RFC	Bream RFC	Grass training area – area with sports lighting located between pitches.
Cinderford RFC	Beavis Memorial Ground (Cinderford RFC)	Grass pitch with sports lighting – used for midweek training.
	St Peter's School (Gloucester)	World Rugby compliant 3G pitch – junior sized pitch used for first team training one session per week.
Drybrook RFC	Drybrook RFC	Grass pitch with sports lighting – junior pitch is used as the main training pitch.
Lydney RFC	Lydney Recreation Ground	Grass training area with sports lighting.
Newent RFC	Newent Recreation Ground	Grass training area – area with sports lighting located between pitches.
University of Hartpury RFC	Hartpury College	3G pitch – World Rugby compliant pitch. Grass rugby union pitch with sports lighting – senior first teams.
Westbury-on-Severn RFC	Westbury-On-Severn Rugby Football Club	Grass training area – area with sports lighting located between pitches.

Infrequent play

The RFU has plans to encourage participants which have previously played rugby union to re-engage through participation as part of a more casual sporting offer. The league will provide opportunities for teams and players which are unable to play weekly or frequently for various reasons and will operate on an occasional basis. The league will also act as an entry point for newly created clubs and provide competitive opportunities. Matches will take place outside of peak time for senior rugby (Saturday PM), with Friday evenings or midweek being the most likely times for matches to take place.

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Use of artificial pitches

Nationally, clubs identify the use of 3G pitches for training as a method of protecting the match pitches and providing a high quality surface for full contact practice. Competitive play continues to take place on grass pitches for the most part, with ad hoc use of 3G pitches for fixtures in the case of unsuitable pitches due to waterlogging or frost. Further detail on use of 3G pitches can be found in Part 6: Third Generation Artificial Grass Pitches.

Drybrook RFC has previously shown aspiration for development of a full size World Rugby compliant pitch in place of one of the natural turf rugby union pitches at Drybrook RFC. The Club has in the past had dialogue with the RFU regarding the potential to develop a pitch onsite through its Rugby 365 investment programme into 3G pitches, however this was not progressed beyond the local partnership needs assessment stage.

The RFU states that there is sufficient demand in the area, notably amongst the three larger clubs Lydney RFC, Cinderford RFC and Drybrook RFC, however, a commitment to shared access and use by these other local clubs would be required for any development to be financially viable at Drybrook RFC.

The WR compliant 3G pitch at Hartpury College is used throughout the week by Hartpury College and university BUCs teams fielded by University of Hartpury RFC for both training and some matches. University of Hartpury RFC men's and women's first teams train on the natural turf pitch with sports lighting. The community use programme is heavily made up of use for football and the only community use for rugby union by external clubs is by Ledbury RFC (Herefordshire), imported demand for training.

Exported/imported demand

Exported demand refers to teams that are currently accessing pitches for home fixtures outside of the District, in this case to meet facility needs which are not able to be met in the District due to insufficient quality or access. Likewise, imported demand is demand based in neighbouring local authorities which may be accessing pitches in the Forest of Dean for the same purposes.

No clubs based in the Forest of Dean are identified as regularly exporting demand to access pitch provision outside of the District for matches, however Berry Hill RFC exports demand to some extent to Monmouth School Playing Fields (Monmouthshire, Wales) for training. Similarly, Cinderford RFC men's first team also exports demand for training to access the World Rugby compliant 3G pitch at St Peter's School (Gloucester City) for one of two training sessions per week.

There is identified imported demand from neighbouring Herefordshire, by Ledbury RFC which accesses the World Rugby compliant 3G pitch at Hartpury College for midweek training.

Unmet/latent demand

Latent demand is demand which is perceived to exist but is not presently realised, whereas unmet demand is demand which is known to exist but similarly is not able to be realised, in the case of the PPS due to lack of access to or poor quality of facilities. Rugby union clubs did not identify any unmet or latent demand for rugby union participation.

Future demand

Future demand can be defined in two ways, through using population forecasts and club growth aspirations.

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Population increases

Team generation rates are used below as the basis for calculating the number of teams likely to be generated in the future based on population growth (2041).

Population forecasts show the creation of one whole new senior men's team and three whole new junior teams, two at the junior boys age group and one at the junior girls age group. Figure also suggest that participation is likely to grow at the senior women's age group. It is likely that these new participants will join to become part of existing women's groups or squads.

Table 5.11: Change in future demand based on population change

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams ²⁴	Team Generation Rate	Future population within age group ²⁵	Predicted future number of teams (2041)	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population
Senior Men's (19-45)	1,340	22	1:61	1,436	23	1
Senior Women's (19-45)	1,144	4	1:286	1,288	4	0
Junior Boys (13-18)	253	18	1:14	290	20	2
Junior Girls (13-18)	283	8	1:35	342	9	1
Mini Mixed (7-12)	626	25	1:25	181	7	0

Participation increases

It is important to note that population growth does not account for specific targeted development work within certain areas or focused on certain groups. The RFU is focused on actively exploring opportunities to assist with the transition between late junior years and senior rugby with a specific focus on growing the senior game with the addition of adult teams (both men's and women's). This area has a strategic focus from the RFU and is being facilitated by encouraging casual play and midweek senior matches, along with O2 Touch and cross pitch 7s. The RFU recognises the traditional reduction in participation numbers at this time and it is hoped that by addressing the decrease and offering alternative match times then clubs may be able to retain a larger number of players.

Cinderford RFC states that it would like to grow the number of teams but is constrained by current level of access to facilities. The Club has access to just two senior pitches across two sites and some land where mini pitches are marked with cones.

Newent RFC states that it does not plan to increase the number of teams but to retain the overall number of teams fielded each year by introducing a new mini U7 age group each season and to transition colts players into senior teams.

Bream RFC intends to grow the number of teams across all formats of participation and hopes that the development of better facilities onsite will help to attract more players to the Club in order to be able to do so, including senior male, senior female, junior and mini activity.

Lydney RFC has plans to introduce a third senior men's team.

²⁴ Colts teams are accounted for as junior teams but require senior pitch provision.

²⁵ There is potential that the ONS projections may be under estimating future demand when compared to housing growth figures and as such, this should be subject to periodic review.

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If all reported club growth aspirations were realised, then there would be an additional requirement for senior match play capacity amounting to equivalent of one match equivalent sessions per week on Saturday afternoon for men's rugby and 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week on Sunday afternoons for junior teams playing on Sundays. As only Lydney RFC specified team formats, it is not possible to attribute population based growth projections to analysis areas and so future demand will be applied at a Districtwide level in the capacity analysis.

Education

Rugby union is traditionally a popular sport within independent schools, however the RFU is also active in developing rugby union in local state schools through the All Schools programme launched in September 2012. This aims to increase the number of secondary state schools playing rugby union, with such schools linking to a local club team.

Touch rugby

To actively encourage participation in rugby union clubs may provide alternative offers to traditional club competition. Touch rugby is one possible format which clubs can use; touch rugby is non-contact rugby sessions, during which participants compete in teams to score tries, following similar laws to traditional rugby union formats. Clubs, schools or community organisation can establish their own touch rugby sessions or can become hosts of The Touch Union rugby sessions.

The Touch Union sessions are 90 minutes long and combine music, fitness and rugby skills. Sessions are of mixed gender, ability and age and are based on touch rugby being a social activity. There are no The Touch Union sessions operating in the Forest of Dean. The nearest sessions are at Ross on Wye (Herefordshire) or in Gloucester City at Gordon League RFC or Oxstalls Sports Park.

Walking rugby

Walking rugby is a slower game of touch rugby that is accessible for disability groups and older participants, generally aged 55 years and above. The game is less physical than traditional rugby, but the general aim remains the same, with passing and scoring laws applying; and tackling involves a two-handed touch to the waist or below. Sessions for over 55's are an opportunity for participants to become physically active and for others to re-engage with rugby at a less strenuous pace.

At present there are no formal walking rugby sessions taking place in the District. Sessions are run by Gloucester Rugby Foundation in Gloucester City, Cheltenham and Stroud.

Rugby sevens

Rugby Sevens is the shorter, faster version of the game also called Sevens Rugby or just Sevens. Teams are made up of seven players playing seven-minute halves, instead of the usual 15 players playing 40-minute halves.

Lydney RFC has previously hosted an annual rugby sevens tournament although this was stopped last year due to the pandemic. It aims to restart this for the coming season.

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5.4: Capacity analysis

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

To enable an accurate supply and demand assessment of rugby pitches, the following assumptions are applied to site by site analysis:

- ✦ All sites that are used for competitive rugby matches (regardless of whether this is secured community use) are included on the supply side
- ✦ Use of school pitches by schools increases demand by one match equivalent session, unless school activity levels are known
- ✦ All competitive play is on senior sized pitches (except for where mini pitches are provided).
- ✦ From Under 13 upwards, teams play 15 v15 and use a full pitch
- ✦ Mini teams (Under 6-Under 12) play on half of a senior pitch i.e. two teams per senior pitch or a dedicated mini pitch
- ✦ For senior and youth teams the current level of play per week is set at 0.5 for each match played based on all teams operating on a traditional home and away basis (assumes half of matches will be played away)
- ✦ For mini teams playing on a senior pitch, play per week is set at 0.25 for each match played based on all teams operating on a traditional home and away basis and playing across half of one senior pitch
- ✦ Senior men's rugby generally takes place on Saturday afternoons
- ✦ Senior women's rugby generally takes place on Sunday afternoons
- ✦ Junior rugby generally takes place on Sunday mornings
- ✦ Mini rugby generally takes place on Sunday mornings
- ✦ Training that takes place on club pitches is reflected by the addition of match equivalent sessions per week to current usage levels

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

Table 5.12: Summary of rugby pitch carrying capacity

Drainage score	Match equivalent sessions per week		
	Maintenance score		
	M0 - Poor	M1 - Adequate	M2 - Good
D0 - Natural Inadequate	0.5	1.5	2
D1 - Natural Adequate or Pipe Drained	1.5	2	3
D2 - Pipe Drained	1.75	2.5	3.25
D3 - Pipe and Slit Drained	2	3	3.5

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

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Table 5.13: Key to spare capacity ratings

Spare capacity in peak period (examples)	Explanation of spare capacity
1	Highlighted in green with a number denotes that the pitches have actual spare capacity at peak time.
-	With a dash, this indicates that the pitch is unavailable in the peak period. If it were to be made available, actual spare capacity could exist.
0	Highlighted in orange with a zero, this indicates the pitch is played to capacity, either overall or during the peak period.
1	Not highlighted by with a value, this indicates that the pitch has spare capacity in the peak period; however, capacity has been discounted. This may be due to unsecure tenure and/or poor pitch quality.

Peak times for pitch use

In order to fully establish actual spare capacity, the peak period needs to be established. Peak time for men's rugby union matches is Saturday afternoons. Peak time for mini and junior pitches is Sunday mornings, with most play taking place on senior pitches. Peak time for women's rugby matches is Sunday afternoons.

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Table 5.14: Capacity analysis of grass rugby union pitches in the Forest of Dean (community use pitches)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Management	Security of tenure	Number of pitches	Pitch type	Non-technical rating ²⁶	Quality rating	Sports lighting	Match equivalent sessions (MES) per week			Comments
										Usage	Recommended capacity	Capacity balance	
3	Bathurst Park (Lydney)	Central	Trust	Unsecure	1	Mini	M0 / D1	Poor	No	1	1.5	-0.5	Used for mini matches and training by Lydney RFC. Some capacity for additional use exists but not at peak time.
5	Beavis Memorial Ground (Cinderford RFC)	Central	Sports Club	Secure	1	Senior	M2 / D1	Good	Yes	3	3	0	Main stadia pitch used for senior matches and one midweek training session, as well as junior activity on Sunday mornings. Space behind the goal area to the southeast not marked but used for mini activity.
8	Berry Hill RFC	Central	Sports Club	Secure	1	Senior	M0 / D1	Poor	Yes	3	1.5	1.5	Overplayed due to senior and junior match play. Not used for training.
					3	Mini			Yes (partial)	5	4.5	0.5	Land adjacent to the main pitch is used for training with lights surrounding the perimeter, as well as marked with mini pitches for mini matches and training on Sundays.
11	Bream RFC	Central	Sports Club	Secure	2	Senior	M0 / D1	Poor	No	1	3	-2	Used by two senior men's teams for matches only. Training on area with sports lighting between pitches. Capacity for additional use including at peak time.
17	Dene Magna School	Central	School	Unsecure	2	Senior	M0 / D1	Poor	No	3	3	0	Considered likely to be at least played to capacity through school use.
18	Drybrook RFC	Central	Sports Club	Secure	1	Senior	M2 / D1	Good	No	2.5	3	-0.5	Main pitch used for senior men's, senior women's, colts and junior matches.
					1	Senior	M1 / D1	Standard	No	2.5	2	0.5	Used for senior men's matches and junior matches and training.
					1	Junior	M1 / D1	Standard	Yes	10	2	8	Main training pitch for all club training activity and used for junior matches. Heavily overused.
					2	Mini	M1 / D1	Standard	No	4	4	0	Pitches marked by the clubhouse and used for mini training and matches. Played to capacity.
23	Five Acres	Central	Parish Council	Unsecure	1	Senior	M0 / D1	Poor	No	1	1.5	-0.5	Used by Berry Hill RFC for both senior fixtures and age grade activity.
24	Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community School)	North	School/ Commercial	Unsecure	2	Senior	M0 / D1	Poor	No	3	3	0	Considered likely to be at least played to capacity through school use.
25	Freedom Leisure Sedbury (Wydean School & Sixth Form)	South	School/ Commercial	Unsecure	1	Senior	M0 / D1	Poor	No	1.5	1.5	0	Considered likely to be at least played to capacity through school use.
					2	Junior	M0 / D1	Poor	No	3	3	0	
37	Lydney Recreation Ground	Central	Trust	Unsecure	1	Senior	M0 / D1	Poor	No	1	1.5	-0.5	Used for mini matches and training by Lydney RFC. Some capacity for additional use at senior peak time exists but not junior.
38	Lydney Rugby Club	North	Sports Club	Secure	1	Senior	M1 / D1	Standard	Yes	2	2	0	Used for senior matches and junior matches.
43	Newent Recreation Ground	North	Town Council	Secure	2	Senior	M0 / D1	Poor	No	3.5	3	0.5	Used for senior men's, senior women's and junior and mini matches by Newent RFC.

²⁶ See table 5.12 for definitions

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Management	Security of tenure	Number of pitches	Pitch type	Non-technical rating ²⁶	Quality rating	Sports lighting	Match equivalent sessions (MES) per week			Comments
										Usage	Recommended capacity	Capacity balance	
73	Westbury-On-Severn Rugby Football Club	North	Sports Club	Secure	2	Senior	M1 / D1	Standard	No	1	4	-3	Used for senior men's matches. Capacity for additional use including at peak time.
79	Valley Road Recreation Ground (Cinderford RFC)	Central	Sports Club	Secure	1	Senior	M0 / D1	Poor	No	2.5	2	0.5	Used for senior men's matches as well as junior and mini matches and training.
Pitches identified as unavailable for external community use													
4	Beachley Barracks	South	MOD	Unsecure	1	Senior	M0 / D1	Poor	No	1.5	1.5	0	Military site – secured access. Used only by military personnel onsite. Likely to be played to capacity by private use.
31	Hartpury College	North	University College	Secure	1	Senior	M2 / D2	Good	Yes	1	3.25	-2.25	Main pitch used only by University of Hartpury RFC Men's 1 st and Women's 1 st teams playing Saturday matches in RFU league system.
					3	Senior	M2 / D1	Good	No	9	9	0	Exclusively used by Hartpury College and University rugby academy programmes and for some fixtures and training by its associated league club University of Hartpury RFC. Tenure considered secure for this internal activity and pitches considered played to capacity. Two pitches were previously leased to professional club Gloucester Rugby for exclusive use.

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Actual spare capacity

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

There are six sites with pitches which show potential spare capacity, however, three at Bathurst Park, Lydney Recreation Ground and Five Acres do not offer secure tenure for users and therefore are considered able to offer actual spare capacity. Three sites offer secure tenure and have some potential capacity.

The main pitch at Drybrook RFC has a minimal degree of spare capacity, though this is not available at peak time and is likely to be retained to protect the good quality pitch given the level of competition the club plays at.

Both Bream RFC and Westbury-On-Severn Rugby Football Club exhibit both potential spare capacity and actual spare capacity, available at senior peak time. This actual spare capacity could accommodate growth in senior teams or could be used to accommodate the establishment and development of increased junior activity, as is a noted aspiration at Bream RFC particularly. Actual spare capacity totals two match equivalent sessions per week at a Districtwide level.

Table 5.15: Actual spare capacity at rugby union grass pitch sites

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Number of pitches	Pitch type	Pitch quality	Capacity balance	Actual spare capacity
11	Bream RFC	Central	2	Senior	M0 / D1 (Poor)	-2	-1
18	Drybrook RFC	Central	1	Senior	M2 / D1 (Good)	-0.5	-
73	Westbury-On-Severn Rugby Football Club	North	2	Senior	M1 / D1 (Standard)	-3	-1

Overplay

There are nine pitches overplayed across four sites, to a total of 11.5 match equivalent sessions per week. Overplay is due mainly to high levels of demand for matches and limited carrying capacity as a result of poor quality most sites, though in the case of Drybrook RFC concentrated use of the grass pitch with sports lighting for training is a major contributor. Of the four sites, only Drybrook RFC shows overplay deriving from training use under sports lighting, with training at the three other sites taking place either on training areas with sports lighting or other sites.

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Table 5.16: Summary of overplay at rugby union grass pitch sites

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Number of pitches	Pitch type	Pitch quality	Capacity balance
8	Berry Hill RFC	Central	1	Senior	M0 / D1 (Poor)	1.5
			3	Mini		0.5
18	Drybrook RFC	Central	1	Senior	M1 / D1 (Standard)	0.5
			1	Junior		8
43	Newent Recreation Ground	North	2	Senior	M0 / D1 (Poor)	0.5
79	Valley Road Recreation Ground (Cinderford RFC)	Central	1	Senior	M0 / D1 (Poor)	0.5

5.5: Supply and demand analysis

Having considered supply and demand, the table below identifies the overall spare capacity in each of the analysis areas for senior rugby union pitches based on match equivalent sessions per week. There is no increase in future demand based on population growth forecasts or participation increases.

Table 5.16: Supply and demand analysis of senior grass rugby union pitches

Analysis area	Match equivalent sessions per week				
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
North	-1	0.5	-0.5		-0.5
Central	-1	2.5	1.5		1.5
South	-	-	0		0
Total	-2	3	1	2.5	3.5

There is a current shortfall of capacity for grass rugby union pitches when considering capacity available against existing levels of overplay. Whilst there is some isolated capacity available at Bream RFC and Westbury-On-Severn RFC for greater use, overall, there are shortfalls at a Districtwide level. Forecasted increases in future demand exacerbate this capacity shortfall.

5.6: Conclusion

In conclusion, there is insufficient capacity for grass rugby union pitches to accommodate current or anticipated future demand. Pitch quality is generally poor, notably at sites used by clubs with high levels of demand such as Valley Road Recreation Ground (Cinderford RFC) and Newent Recreation Ground (Newent RFC), Berry Hill RFC and Five Acres (both used by Berry Hill RFC). This limits carrying capacity, whilst there are significant levels of demand which exceed capacity available.

Whilst the analysis focuses on senior grass rugby union pitches, in practice the position for rugby union is one of greater shortfall due to the pressures placed on training provision. For example, the junior pitch at Drybrook RFC is overplayed by eight match equivalent sessions per week, representing 70% of total overplay, though not accounted for within the position for senior pitches. This site particularly carries a requirement for additional capacity, which supports the club's interest in the development of 3G provision onsite and the initial RFU scoping for a 3G project there. Bream RFC plans to grow participation, supported by the development of new building provision and there is capacity onsite to accommodate this growth.

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Summary – rugby union

- ◀ **Overall, there is insufficient capacity to sufficiently service both senior and junior rugby union demand in Forest of Dean at present and in future.**
- ◀ In total, there are 33 rugby union pitches in the Forest of Dean across 16 sites. There are 24 senior pitches, six dedicated mini pitches and three junior size pitches.
- ◀ There are 28 pitches across 14 sites identified as being available for rugby union activity, all used by community clubs except for seven at education sites. Five pitches are unavailable for external community access, at Hartpury College (four senior pitches) and Beachley Barracks.
- ◀ There is also a full size World Rugby compliant 3G pitch at Hartpury College which accommodates a notable level of rugby union activity, mostly from the College and University in-house programmes and teams.
- ◀ Most available rugby union pitches (19 of 28 pitches – 68%) in the District are rated as poor quality, with seven pitches (25% of available provision) rated as standard quality. There are six good quality pitches.
- ◀ Drybrook RFC aspires to develop World Rugby 3G pitch provision onsite. The Club was previously in exploring the case with the RFU regarding development of a pitch onsite but was not progressed further due to a lack of support for development of a pitch at that site.
- ◀ Clubs are considered to have unsecure tenure at Five Acres (Berry Hill RFC), Lydney Recreation Ground and Bathurst Park (both Lydney RFC) through rental.
- ◀ There are eight affiliated rugby union clubs based and playing within the District, identified as fielding a total of 77 affiliated teams.
- ◀ Training typically takes place either on match pitches with sports lighting or on off-field training areas with sports lighting. Only Drybrook RFC has a dedicated training pitch as such.
- ◀ The 3G pitch at Hartpury College currently plays little part in supporting community rugby union use in the District. The pitch is available for use but is not identified as being used by clubs based in the District.
- ◀ Team generation rates based exclusively on population change forecast the growth of one senior men's team, two new junior boys teams and one junior girls team to 2041. Clubs state aspirations to grow but only Lydney RFC quantified this demand.
- ◀ Future demand from team generation rates would amount to five teams requiring additional match play capacity of 2.5 match equivalent sessions per week on senior pitches.
- ◀ Both Bream RFC and Westbury-On-Severn Rugby Football Club offer secure tenure and have some capacity to accommodate additional use at senior peak time (Saturday afternoon) or on Sundays for junior or women's activity.
- ◀ There are nine pitches overplayed across four sites, to a total of 11.5 match equivalent sessions per week. Overplay is due mainly to high levels of demand for matches and limited carrying capacity as a result of poor quality most sites, though in the case of Drybrook RFC concentrated use of the grass pitch with sports lighting for training is a major contributor.

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PART 6: HOCKEY

6.1: Introduction

Hockey in England is governed by England Hockey (EH) and in Forest of Dean District is administered regionally by the West Hockey Association and locally by Gloucestershire Hockey Association.

Following a 2017 resolution, England Hockey has over recent year undertaken a review of the way the sport is structured locally. In September 2020, the membership of England Hockey took the decision to support the proposed structural changes set out in A Structure Fit for the Future²⁷, which proposes a new structure of eight areas (increased from five currently) to divide the balance of clubs and players more equally in England.

Competitive league hockey matches and training can only be played on artificial grass pitches (AGPs). Although competitive, adult and junior club training cannot take place on third generation artificial grass pitches, some may be suitable for introductory level hockey, such as school curriculum low level hockey.

A typical artificial grass pitches pitch is constructed from a free draining, frost free sub-base, one or two tarmac layers, a 15mm shock pad and an artificial grass carpet, either sand filled, sand dressed or water based²⁸. Below is a brief summary of each type.

Sand filled artificial grass

On sand filled artificial grass the artificial grass fibres are infilled with sand. This is a low density durable carpet with sand infill to just below the pile for stability, these pitches are recommended for lower league hockey and more of a multi sports use rather than higher competitive hockey use.

Sand dressed artificial grass

The fibres on sand dressed artificial grass are much denser and therefore requires less sand to support the pile of the carpet and create stability. It is the most commonly used surface for hockey up to and including at a national level.

Water-based artificial grass

A very high-density carpet with no sand infill which requires irrigation via a sprinkler system to maintain a layer of water on the pitch. The water provides low slide resistance and reduces the risk of abrasions caused by coarse sand.

Competitive league hockey matches and training can only be played on sand filled, sand dressed or water based artificial grass pitches (AGPs). Although competitive, adult and junior club training cannot take place on third generation artificial grass pitches, some may be suitable for introductory level hockey, such as school curriculum low level hockey. EH's Artificial Grass Playing Surface Policy details suitability of surface type for varying levels of hockey, as shown below.

²⁷<https://www.englishhockey.co.uk/governance/about-england-hockey/agm-resolution/governance-review>

²⁸ For more detail, please refer to: [EH artificial pitch guidance.pdf](#)

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Table 6.1: England Hockey guidelines on artificial surface types suitable for hockey

Category	Surface	Playing Level	Playing Level
England Hockey Category 1	Water surface approved within the FIH Global/National Parameters	Essential International Hockey - Training and matches	Desirable Domestic National Premier competition Higher levels of EH Player Pathway Performance Centres and upwards England
England Hockey Category 2	Sand dressed surfaces within the FIH National Parameter	Essential Domestic National Premier competition Higher levels of player pathway: Academy Centres and Upwards	Desirable All adult and junior League Hockey Intermediate or advanced School Hockey
England Hockey Category 3	Sand based surfaces within the FIH National Parameter	Essential All adult and junior club training and league Hockey EH competitions for clubs and schools Intermediate or advanced schools hockey	EH competitions for clubs and schools (excluding domestic national league)
England Hockey Category 4	All 3G surfaces	Essential None	Desirable Lower level hockey (Introductory level) when no category 1-3 surface is available.

For senior teams, a full size pitch for competitive matches must measure at least 91.4 x 55 metres excluding surrounding run off areas which must be a minimum of two metres at the sides & three metres at the ends. England Hockey preference is for four metre side and five metre end run offs, with a preferred overall area of 101.4 x 63 metres though a minimum overall area of 97.4 x 59 metres is accepted.

The PPS Guidance considers that a hockey pitch can accommodate a maximum of four matches (match equivalent sessions) on one day (peak time) provided that the pitch has sports lighting. Training is generally midweek and requires access to a pitch and sports lighting.

Consultation

There are two hockey clubs identified as playing within Forest of Dean District, Lydney Hockey Club (HC) and Newent Hockey Club, as well as teams fielded by Hartpury College and University. Video consultation was completed with England Hockey, Hartpury College and University and both community clubs to inform this section of the report, representing a 100% club response rate.

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

6.2: Supply

The audit identifies two hockey suitable AGPs in the District, both of which, are available for community use and have sports lighting.

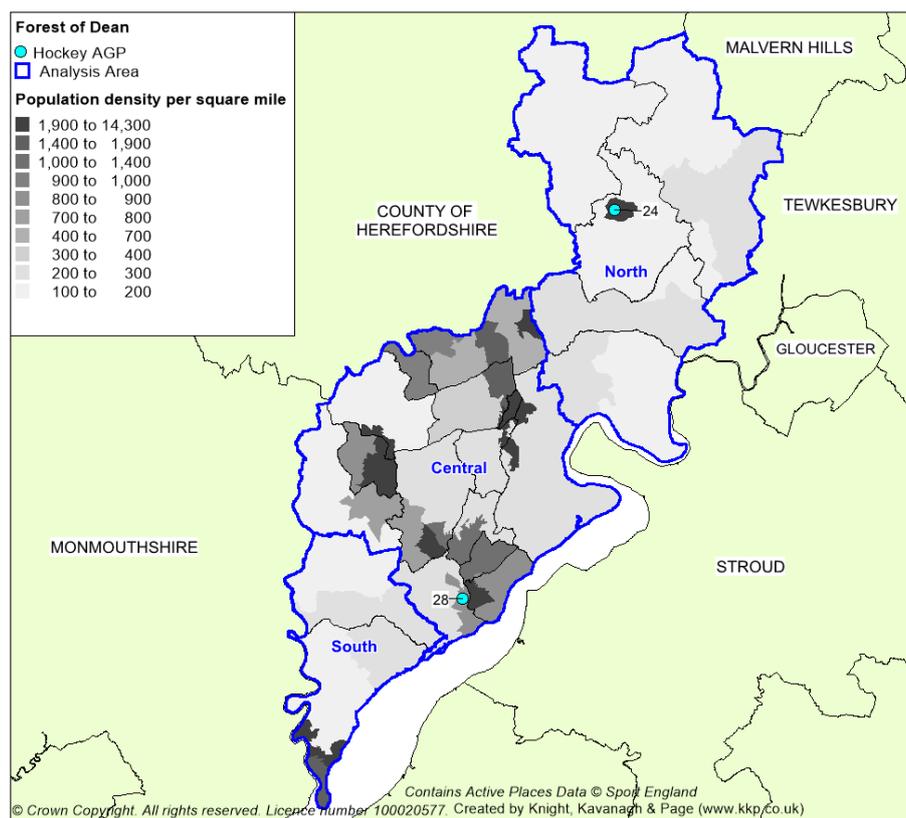
There is one pitch each in the North and Central analysis areas. There is no full size AGP provision in the South area.

Table 6.2: Summary of full size hockey suitable AGPs in Forest of Dean District

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Community use	Sports lighting	Size (metres)
24	Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community High School)	North	Yes	Yes	91.5 x 55
28	Freedom Leisure Lydney (The Dean Academy Lydney)	Central	Yes	Yes	91.5 x 55

For the location of AGPs, please see Figure 6.1.

Figure 6.1: Location of full size hockey suitable AGPs in Forest of Dean District



FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Future supply

As part of the wider development proposals at Five Acres, there is potential to upgrade the existing tennis courts on site with a sand based surface to act as a multi-sport facility. This would provide a new small size hockey suitable AGP in the District. England Hockey are keen to promote small sided AGPs in the Forest of Dean to cater for recreational and informal hockey to subsequently grow the sport.

Commented [JR2]: added

Management and ownership

Both AGPs in the District are based at dual use sites, owned by secondary schools but where leisure contractor Freedom Leisure manages community use of facilities outside of school hours.

Freedom Leisure Newent is based at Newent Community School, where the leisure operator manages only the indoor facilities onsite. The outdoor sports facilities, including the AGP, grass pitches and Clubhouse, are managed by the schools subsidiary company Newent Community Sports Limited.

Freedom Leisure Lydney is based at The Dean Academy in Lydney, where Freedom Leisure operates management of the indoor facilities as well as the AGP and tennis courts outdoors.

Security of tenure

Neither of the clubs in the District are asset owning and both rent use of facilities.

Newent HC is based at Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community School) where it rents use of the pitch. The Club was part of the initial funding and development of the pitch at the school site and as part of the funding contribution have a priority user agreement for use, having then again supported financially the resurfacing works undertaken in 2012. The Club feels that it remains a priority user and has a reportedly good relationship with the School, however, access is still by annual arrangement and therefore despite the Club's active engagement over the life of its existence, tenure for Newent HC is considered to be unsecure given the lack of formal agreement in place.

Lydney HC is based at Freedom Leisure Lydney (The Dean Academy Lydney) where it rents use of the pitch on an annual basis. The AGP is managed by Freedom Leisure on behalf of the Council via its leisure contract. Club use is on a rental basis but the venue is a key strategic site for hockey in the District. Despite the lack of formal agreement for future access, tenure for the Club is considered to be secure as part of the Council's maintained sport and leisure provision offering. However, there is currently no sinking fund in place for future refurbishment of this pitch.

Quality

Taking the above into account, the quality of hockey suitable artificial grass pitches has been assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments as determined by EH²⁹) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◀ Good
- ◀ Standard
- ◀ Poor

²⁹ See Appendix 3 for the non-technical assessment for artificial grass pitches

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

The percentage parameters used for the non-technical assessments were as follows; Good (>80%), Standard (60-79%), Poor (<60%). The quality ratings assigned to the sites also consider the user quality ratings gathered from consultation.

In addition, depending on use, it is considered that the carpet of an artificial grass pitch usually lasts for approximately ten years and it is the age of the surface, combined with maintenance levels, which most commonly affects quality.

Table 6.3: Summary of full size AGP quality

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Surface type	Year built	Year resurfaced	Quality
24	Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community High School)	North	Sand filled	1998	2013	Standard
28	Freedom Leisure Lydney (The Dean Academy Lydney)	Central	Sand dressed	1999	2011	Standard

Newent HC is of the opinion that the AGP at Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community School) is of standard quality and raises no specific issues, stating that it still plays well. It does, however, highlight that there can be issues with the sports lighting with bulbs failing on a frequent basis and needing replacement. The sports lighting dates back to the original construction in 1998 so are now relatively old, with bulbs comparatively expensive compared to current products. The pitch has a small spectator area and two dugouts.

Lydney HC believes that the pitch at Freedom Leisure Lydney (The Dean Academy Lydney) is not well looked after and is in likely need of replacement. It is reportedly often covered in litter and perceived not to be well supervised during school use hours, however, has not had complaints from members regarding quality and on balance is considered to be in adequate condition, especially due to notable levels of football and rugby union use.

The carpet of an AGP pitch is considered to have a surface life of approximately 10 years with assumed maintenance of the required standard, though its lifespan can be prolonged in some cases where maintenance is of particularly high quality and rigor.

The surface at Freedom Leisure Lydney (The Dean Academy Lydney) is approaching the recommended surface lifespan and surface quality should be monitored so not to deteriorate in quality due to relative age and use. Consideration should be given to resurfacing in the short-term, as maintaining quality at this site is a strategic priority for hockey in order to ensure its continued suitability for use for hockey activity. Forest of Dean District Council indicates that Freedom Leisure is due to rejuvenate the surface at The Dean Academy Lydney.

Providers should be encouraged to have in place a mechanism for sustainability, repair and eventual replacement such as annually ringfencing a proportion of revenue as a sinking fund to fund future works.

The surface at Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community School) is now eight years old and is also approaching end of lifespan. Newent HC states that a sinking fund was formed and was the main source of funding for the 2013 pitch resurface. It believes that a sinking fund remains in place for future resurfacing but is concerned about the prospect of any suggestion for conversion to 3G.

Freedom Leisure states that it is not sure whether the replacement of the AGP carpet is part of the management contract for the site but that it would likely be liable for approximately half of the cost should the Academy decide to resurface.

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Excluding bulb replacement for the sports lighting The Dean Academy Lydney shall be solely responsible for all revenue repairs and maintenance to the AGP at Freedom Leisure Lydney (The Dean Academy Lydney), including but not limited to carpet brushing, line marking, perimeter fencing and gates. The cost of replacing the bulbs shall be split equally between the School and Freedom Leisure.

The District Council shall bear the capital cost of replacing the AGP in line with at its sole discretion, as per the site management contract. The Council reports that a sinking fund is not kept and therefore does not exist.

Conversion of sand based AGPs to 3G surfaces

Since the introduction of 3G pitches and given their popularity for football, providers have seen this as a way of replacing their tired sand-based carpet and generating money from hiring out a 3G pitch to football clubs and commercial football providers. This has often come at the expense of hockey, with players now travelling further distances to gain access to a suitable pitch and many teams being displaced from their preferred geographical area.

Due to its impact on hockey, it is appropriate to ensure that sufficient sand based AGPs are retained for the playing development of hockey. To that end, a change of surface should require a planning application and, as part of that, the applicants will have to show that there is sufficient provision available for hockey in the locality. Advice from Sport England and EH should therefore be sought prior to any planning application being submitted.

It should also be noted that, if a surface is changed, it could require the existing sports lighting and drainage to be changed and, in some instances, noise attenuation measures may need to be put in place.

Based on the findings of the supply and demand analysis later in this section, there is no scope to convert any of the full size hockey suitable in the District to 3G surfaces and both full size hockey suitable AGPs should be retained and protected.

Availability

Sport England's Facilities Planning Model (FPM) applies an overall peak period for AGPs of 34 hours per week (Monday to Thursday 17:00-21:00; Friday 17:00-19:00; Saturday and Sunday 09:00-17:00). However, it should also be noted that England Hockey consider midweek peak time to be from 18:00-22:00 and from 10:00-17:00 at weekends.

Both sites offer full availability in the midweek peak period for community use, though hockey users compete with other sporting clubs for access to capacity, such as football team training, small sided football or rugby union activity. However, if England Hockey's peak times were utilised, both sites would lose four hours of peak time capacity through the week. This is particularly an issue at Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community School), where the potential extension of sports lighting hours to 22:00 is being explored.

There is also a good level of weekend availability for community use, with Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community School) available for the full complement of hours in the weekend peak period and Freedom Leisure Lydney (The Dean Academy Lydney) closing at 4pm rather than 5pm at weekends, therefore two hours short of the full peak period at weekends.

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Table 6.4: Availability of full size hockey suitable AGPs

Site ID	Site	Availability in the peak period (hours)	Comments
24	Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community High School)	Midweek – 18 Weekend - 16	Available to the community from 17:00 until 21:30 Mondays to Fridays and from 9:00 until 17:00 Saturdays and Sundays.
28	Freedom Leisure Lydney (The Dean Academy Lydney)	Midweek – 18 Weekend - 14	Available to the community from 17:00 until 21:00 Mondays to Fridays and from 9:00 until 16:00 Saturdays and Sundays.

Ancillary provision

Ancillary facilities refer to the type of amenities which are available on a site accompanied by their quality, such as a clubhouse, changing rooms, showering provision, car parking, dedicated official and spectator facilities and boundary fencing.

The quality of ancillary facilities (changing pavilions and accompanying car parking) across the District has been assessed via consultation with Freedom Leisure and user clubs to reach and apply an agreed rating of good, standard or poor.

The pitch at Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community School) is service by a pitch side clubhouse, whilst changing provision is via the school changing rooms, shared with a running club as well as football teams also using the grass pitches on Saturdays. There are six changing rooms, a bar, social lounge and small kitchen.

Built around 2000, the changing rooms and showers are reportedly showing signs of age, whilst the boiler is said to often break and is in poor condition. Newent HC feels that the facilities are in likely need of refurbishing, that the social space is good but that the small kitchen area is limited and so would like this to be expanded if possible. The Club also reports that access to the pitch from the car park requires walking through school grounds, however, the quickest way is up a grassed bank which becomes muddy and slippery and would like the School to do something about this, such as installing a path for direct access.

Lydney HC states that there are no catering facilities onsite but that it has access to changing and showers within the main Freedom Leisure operated part of the building. The Club is of the opinion that facilities are of standard quality having been refurbished circa five years ago. Teams return to a local public house for access to post-match social provision, an arrangement which the Club is happy with.

6.3: Demand

The two hockey clubs in Forest of Dean District, along with Hartpury College & University, field a total of 18 teams. As a breakdown this consists of four senior men's, nine senior women's and four junior teams as well as a mixed team at Newent HC.

Of the 13 senior teams, there is a men's and a women's masters team each. Across the two community clubs there are 355 playing members, made up of 100 men, 154 women and 101 juniors.

All of the clubs are large clubs catering for numerous teams. A summary of this, by club, is shown in the table below.

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Table 6.5: Summary of competitive club hockey demand (2019/20 season)

Club name	Number of teams				Members			
	Men's	Women's	Mixed	Juniors	Men's	Women's	Juniors	Total
Newent HC	4	4	1	2	60	82	78	220
Lydney HC	-	3	-	2	40	72	23	135
Hartpury University & College	-	2	-	-	Not known			
Total	4	9	1	4	100	154	101	355

Team demand and membership is based on 19/20 affiliation data captured before the Covid-19 pandemic which saw the cessation of sport through much of the 2020/21 season. The effects that restrictions have had on membership should be regularly assessed, with the clubs supported to ensure that they remain sustainable.

Newent Hockey Club

Through consultation Newent HC reports indicative 2021 membership of 57 men, 50 women and 94 juniors. Compared to pre-pandemic figures, this represents a reduction of 35 senior members, mostly amongst women (32 members less, 39% less). Contrastingly, it reports 94 junior members, representing an increase of 16 members.

Newent HC reports that the number of competitive senior teams has remained static from 2019/20, though it is unsure whether it will continue to field a junior boys' team and junior girls team due to uncertainty with the management of junior hockey.

The Club states it rarely fields junior boys' teams in Sunday tournaments on Sundays due to competition with other sports for their participation, more so than with girls. The pausing of play for sports such as rugby union throughout 2020 whilst hockey was able to be played may have had some influence on this increase in junior membership.

The Club states that up until the 2020/21 season and the Covid-19 pandemic, men's membership had dropped over the last five years although ladies membership had remained static. It believes this is because boys typically progress through the age groups quickly to play for the men's first team and then often move to a higher level club or to college or university elsewhere in the Country.

Newent HC has a men's vets' team which plays midweek matches and an occasional masters women's side which plays in England Hockey competitions. It has an active junior section, with boys' badgers and girls currently in hiatus but running occasional U12 and U14 girls' fixtures through Gloucestershire Hockey tournaments or club training.

Lydney Hockey Club

Lydney HC also reports that the number of teams it currently fields has remained static since 2019/20 season.

Hartpury College & University

Hartpury College and University fields two women's hockey teams, one university team playing in the British Universities & Colleges (BUCs) leagues and one college team playing local fixtures against other colleges.

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Matches are played on Wednesday afternoons at Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community School), or on occasion when it is not possible to gain access to the pitch teams export demand to neighbouring Gloucester City to play at Oxstalls Sports Park or The King's School.

The hockey programme is student led rather than a performance academy programme like football and rugby union is, with two training sessions held each week held in Gloucester City at The King's School.

Imported/exported demand

Displaced demand refers to either Forest of Dean based teams that currently access pitches outside of the District for home fixtures or training (exported demand), normally because their pitch requirements cannot be met. This is usually because of pitch supply, in some cases quality issues or stipulated league requirements for access to certain facilities. Similarly, demand may be displaced from other local authority areas into the District (imported demand) for the same reasons.

Neither of the two community clubs are identified as exporting demand to utilise AGP provision in other local authority areas, however, Hartpury College and University teams do export demand for two training sessions per week to The King's School in Gloucester, approximately four miles (10 minute drive) away. This may be due to travel and proximity, given that Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community School) is the nearest pitch in the Forest of Dean and is 6.6 miles away, approximately a 16 minute drive from the Hartpury College campus.

No hockey clubs or groups are identified as importing demand from other local authority areas to access AGP provision for hockey in the Forest of Dean.

Unmet/latent demand

Latent demand is demand which is perceived to exist but is not presently realised, for example when a club believes it could attract more players and subsequently field more players with better quality or increased access to facilities.

Unmet demand is demand which is known to exist but similarly is not able to be formalised into teams due to lack of access to sufficient capacity or poor quality of facilities. For example, clubs may operate a waiting list to join squads for training or match play or may have squad sizes in excess of optimal in order to provide opportunity for participation but cannot offer playing opportunities for these players.

Neither Newent HC nor Lydney HC identified unmet or latent demand.

Future demand

Newent HC feels that it could run a fourth women's team playing regular weekend fixtures and could formalise boys' sides to play competitively in tournaments but doesn't have capacity to do so as five home games are often played on Saturdays. The Club is hoping to run an occasional rather than regular women's fourth team in the meantime when possible. It states that it previously considered establishing a fourth men's league team when membership was higher in years previous but no longer have enough senior men to do so.

Lydney HC reports struggling to attract new players and for volunteers to take on roles in running the Club. It states that it does not expect to grow in the coming few years.

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In addition to the above, growing participation is a key aim within EH's Strategic Plan and key drivers include working with clubs, universities and schools, working with regional and local leagues, developing opportunities for over 40s and delivering a quality programme of competition. Overall, it has an aim to double participation over the next ten years.

Hockey Heroes

Hockey Heroes is a six-week hockey programme aimed at beginners (children aged five to eight) that not only focuses on helping children develop some physical hockey skills such as dribbling, passing and goal scoring, but also places as much emphasis on character development including teamwork, communication, perseverance and respect.

There is not presently a Hockey Heroes programme running in the District.

Back to Hockey

Back to Hockey sessions are fun, social and informal and are aimed at people who either have not played for a number of years or that are looking to play for the first time. They are generally hosted by clubs, with EH providing guidance on how to deliver the programme. Benefits of clubs being involved include:

- ◀ More members
- ◀ More casual players
- ◀ Additional income
- ◀ Extra publicity
- ◀ New volunteers

There are currently no Back to Hockey sessions operating in the Forest of Dean or within accessible neighbouring local authority areas.

Peak time demand

For matches, senior hockey activity in Forest of Dean typically takes place on a Saturday, whereas junior activity occurs on a Sunday. For training, peak time is midweek evenings.

Training for Newent HC takes place on Tuesday nights at 5:50-6:50pm for juniors, 6:50-8:20pm for adults, then first team training 8:20-9:20pm before the sports lighting is turned off at 9.30pm. This sees the Club make sole use of the pitch on Tuesday evenings, with football training and small sided football representing the majority of midweek use across the remaining evenings midweek.

Lydney HC training takes place on Wednesday evenings for adults across three hours, with one hour on Thursday evenings for juniors. The club states that whilst it is not pursuing growth in the number of teams at present, it would struggle to access additional capacity midweek to support growth in training demand due to other existing bookings.

Usage

The table overleaf summarises the usage of full size hockey suitable pitches within the District, comparing availability against hockey use and other activity as well as taking into consideration any remaining spare capacity.

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Table 6.7: Usage of full size hockey suitable AGPs

Site ID	Site name	Availability in the peak period (hours) ³⁰	% hockey use	% other use (e.g. football)	% spare capacity	Comments	Capacity for hockey
24	Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community High School)	34 hours	46%	Not known	Not known	Used by Newent HC all day on Saturdays for matches, as well as for one training evening midweek for 3.5 hours, two hours for men's Vets fixtures and one hour on the first Wednesday of the month for Walking Hockey. Also used on Wednesday afternoons for matches by Hartpur College and University teams.	Unknown - but unlikely to have spare capacity for midweek training. Some potential to accommodate additional senior match play on Saturdays with review of league programming. Some capacity may exist for additional junior activity on Sundays.
28	Freedom Leisure Lydney (The Dean Academy Lydney)	32 hours	22%	64%	14%	Used by Lydney HC from 12.30-4pm on Saturdays and for four hours across two evenings midweek for training. Other prominent football team users include Lydney Town Youth FC, Ellwood FC men's, women's and youth teams, St Briavels FC and Whitecroft FC.	Capacity available for additional use both midweek for training and at weekends for senior matches (Saturday) and junior activity (Sunday).

³⁰ Based on data from Sport England's Active Places and Freedom Leisure programming data

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

6.4: Supply and demand analysis

The PPS Guidance suggests that a pitch with sports lighting can accommodate four match equivalent sessions on a Saturday. With teams playing on a home and away format, this equates to one AGP being able to cater for eight 'home' teams (one team requires 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week on its 'home' AGP).

On this basis, with 12 senior teams currently playing Saturday league matches in the Forest of Dean, there is a need for one full size pitch (rounded up from 0.75). However, due to the distance between the two parts of the District where the two community clubs are based there is a need for a full size hockey suitable AGP in both the North and South analysis areas in order to meet demand locally within a reasonable travel to play catchment.

For junior hockey matches, the demand and subsequent need for pitches is less than it is for senior hockey. This is because younger age groups can play on half a pitch (meaning two fixtures can take place at one time) and because there are also significantly fewer junior teams in the District than there are senior teams, with competitive opportunities less frequent in the form of occasional tournaments and the greater need being for access for training.

Analysis of programming information at Freedom Leisure Lydney (The Dean Academy Lydney) indicates that there is some spare capacity midweek to accommodate additional training demand, albeit these are early evening timeslots which are generally less attractive to community users, which may be reflected in their availability.

It is less clear whether midweek capacity exists to accommodate additional midweek hockey activity at Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community School). Newent HC reports that the pitch is well used for small sided football and by running clubs and that it is unable to access further training slots, suggesting that there is no capacity to support additional midweek use.

6.5: Conclusion

In conclusion, current demand for hockey is able to be met by existing provision in the District, on the basis that both sufficient quality for use and level of access is sustained or improved/increased. With two pitches, each available for community use and located in the respective analysis areas that the two community clubs are based in, there is a sufficient supply of provision to cater for demand.

There is little scope to accommodate growth in senior hockey at Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community School) at peak time if Newent HC continues to accommodate up to five home matches at once on some Saturdays. The pitch is not known to have limitations to hours of access on Saturdays and therefore can accommodate growth of up to two more senior teams, to a club total of eight teams using the pitch on a home and away basis in line with the PPS Guidance, with greater planning and co-ordination with the league fixture planners.

The capacity position midweek at Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community School) is not known, therefore it is not clear as to whether there is midweek capacity to accommodate additional hockey activity, such as growth in training demand, off-peak senior play or participation programmes and initiatives such as walking hockey.

There is a need to retain both hockey suitable AGPs to continue to be able to meet demand for hockey locally in the respective areas of the District in which hockey is played.

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Hockey summary

- ◀ **Current demand for hockey is able to be met by existing provision in the District, on the basis that both sufficient quality for use and level of access is sustained or improved/increased.**
- ◀ **There is a requirement for both of the two full size AGPs in the District to be protected and retained as hockey suitable surfaces for continued hockey use.**
- ◀ There are two full size hockey suitable AGPs in the Forest of Dean District, both of which have sports lighting and available for community use.
- ◀ There is one pitch each in the North and Central analysis areas. There is no full size AGP provision in the South area.
- ◀ Both of the two pitches are considered to be of standard quality, though the surface at Freedom Leisure Lydney (The Dean Academy Lydney) exceeds the recommended lifespan and consideration should be given to future replacement in the short-term when required. Additionally, the pitch at Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community School) is serviced by poor sports lighting.
- ◀ Use of Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community School) is rented from Newent Community Sports Limited. Newent HC is reportedly a priority user but tenure is considered insecure due to the lack of formal agreement committing to future access.
- ◀ Use of Freedom Leisure Lydney (The Dean Academy Lydney) for Lydney HC is rented but tenure for the Club is considered to be secure as part of the Council's maintained sport and leisure provision offering.
- ◀ Both sites offer a good extent of community use availability and neither is known to have limitations on operating hours.
- ◀ Each site is serviced by onsite changing and toilet provision, with no critical issues regarding quality, accessible or suitability.
- ◀ There are two hockey clubs, Newent HC and Lydney HC, which field a combined 16 teams, whilst Hartpury College and University has a further two ladies teams.
- ◀ Plans for growth are limited. Newent HC aspires to establish a women's fourth team but Lydney HC does not expect to grow.
- ◀ No Hockey Heroes or Back to Hockey sessions are held in the District.
- ◀ There is significant use of hockey suitable AGPs for other activities, mostly for formal training or informal use for football.
- ◀ There is capacity to accommodate further midweek and weekend hockey activity at Freedom Leisure Lydney (The Dean Academy Lydney).
- ◀ There is considered to be no midweek capacity for further midweek activity at Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community School), though there is likely capacity to accommodate additional hockey match play at weekends albeit greater co-ordination of home fixtures with league planners is required.

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

PART 7: TENNIS COURTS

7.1: Introduction

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) is the organisation responsible for the governance of tennis and administers the sport locally across the Forest of Dean. It has recently restructured its strategic approach to target several national focus areas, with a priority on developing the sport at park sites.

Consultation

There are four tennis clubs in the District: Lydney TC, Redmarley TC, Aston Ingham TC and Taynton & Tibberton TC. Three clubs responded to an electronic survey, resulting in a 75% response rate. The only unresponsive club was Aston Ingham TC.

7.2: Supply

There are 36 tennis courts identified in the Forest of Dean across 13 sites, all of which, are available for community use to some extent.

Please note that courts are classified as being available for community use if they are deemed to be easily accessible to the general population, either via pay and play or through a membership at a club (or a mixture of both).

The Central Analysis Area contains the highest number of available courts with 21, whilst the North Analysis Area has the lowest amount of provision with seven.

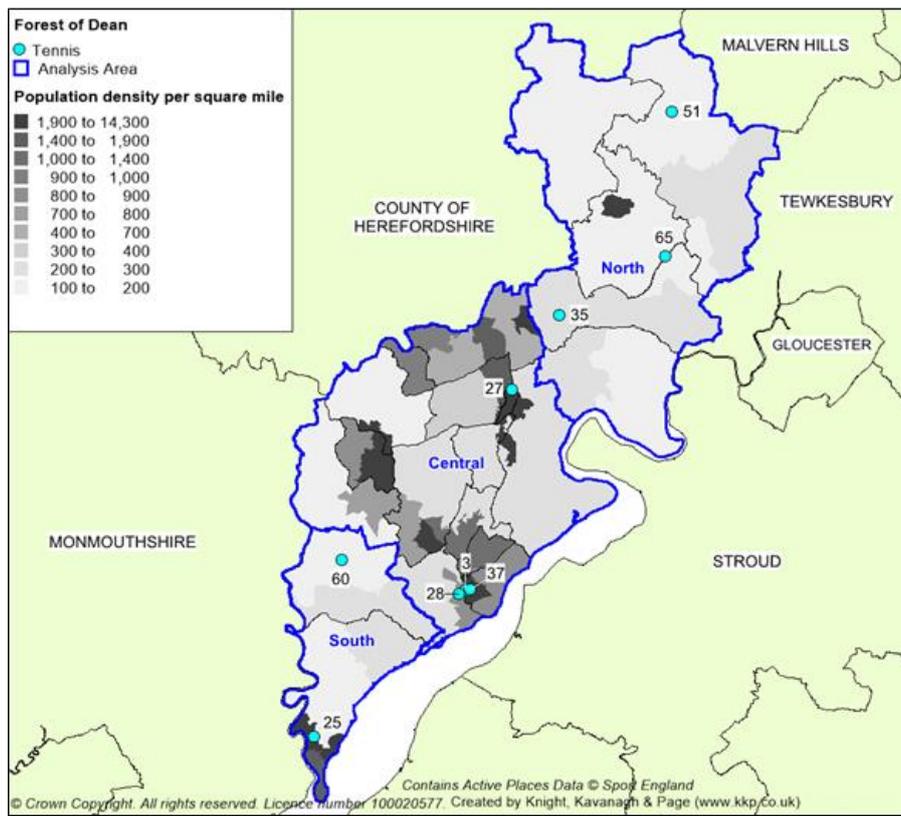
Table 7.1: Summary of the number of courts by analysis area

Analysis area	Number of courts available for community use	Number of courts unavailable for community use
North	7	-
Central	21	-
South	8	-
Total	36	-

Figure 7.1 shows the location of the courts servicing the Forest of Dean, regardless of community use. For a key to the map, see Table 7.2.

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Figure 7.1: Location of tennis courts in the Forest of Dean



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Table 7.2: Tennis courts in the Forest of Dean

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Management	Community use	Number of courts	Sports lighting	Court type	Court quality
3	Bathurst Park	Central	Trust	Yes	2	No	Macadam	Poor
35	Longhope Recreation Ground	North	Community	Yes	1	No	Macadam	Standard
60	St Briavels Recreation Ground	South	Community	Yes	1	No	Macadam	Poor
37	Lydney Recreation Ground (Lydney Tennis Club)	Central	Council	Yes	4	Yes	Macadam	Good
65	Taynton and Tibberton Village Hall (Taynton & Tibberton TC)	North	Community	Yes	2	No	Macadam	Poor
51	Redmarley Playing Fields (Redmarley TC) ³¹	North	Club	Yes	2	No	Macadam	Standard
28	Freedom Leisure Lydney (The Dean Academy Lydney)	Central	Trust	Yes	6	No	Macadam	Poor
25	Freedom Leisure Sedbury (Wyedean School & Sixth Form)	South	School	Yes	7	No	Macadam	Poor
27	Freedom Leisure Cinderford (The Forest High School)	Central	Trust	Yes	2	No	Macadam	Standard
17	Dene Magna School	Central	School	Yes	3	No	Macadam	Standard
45	Newnham Recreation Ground	Central	Council	Yes	1	No	Macadam	Poor
64	Stockings Field (Ashton Ingham TC)	North	Club	Yes	2	Yes	Macadam	Standard
81	Five Acres High School	Central	School	Yes	3	Yes	Macadam	Standard

³¹ The site has a poor quality multi-use games area (MUGA) which is known to have been used for tennis previously. However, it is not large enough for a formal tennis court and so has not been included in the supply audit.

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Future supply

LTA insight data suggests there is scope and demand for additional facilities linked to larger population areas across the District:

- ✦ Community accessible courts in East Lydney to support increased demand following proposed housing developments
- ✦ Three new public pay & play courts in Cinderford (if strategic developments arise in the area)
- ✦ Three new public pay & play courts in Coleford & Coalway (if strategic developments arise in the area)
- ✦ Two new public pay & play courts within recreational green space in Newent

Quality

The quality of tennis courts has been informed through non-technical site assessments and consultation with providers to assign each court a rating of good, standard or poor. Key aspects informing the findings include surface quality, grip underfoot, line marking quality, evenness and evidence of inappropriate use (e.g. vandalism and/or littering).

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

Of the courts in the Forest of Dean, most (53%) are assessed as poor quality, and 36% are of standard quality. Only 11% of courts in the District are of good quality, as shown below.

Table 7.4: Quality of community available tennis courts

Community use	Court quality		
	Good	Standard	Poor
Available	4	13	19
Unavailable	-	-	-
Total	4	13	19

The courts assessed as poor quality are located at the following sites:

- ✦ Bathurst Park
- ✦ St Briavels Recreation Ground
- ✦ Taynton and Tibberton Village Hall
- ✦ Newnham Recreation Ground
- ✦ Freedom Leisure Lydney (The Dean Academy Lydney)
- ✦ Freedom Leisure Sedbury (Wyedean School & Sixth Form)

Issues recorded at these sites include poor grip underfoot, the presence of moss, glass, stones and/or litter, worn line markings and loose gravel. Moreover, maintenance is also considered to be basic and infrequent at most of the poor quality sites, which can lead to further deterioration.

Taynton and Tibberton TC reports court quality at Taynton and Tibberton Village Hall has deteriorated in the last year due to weathering and the age of the court.

The courts at Lydney Recreation Ground were fully resurfaced in spring 2021 through a loan from the LTA. The LTA reports that the next step for these courts is to open them up for pay and play through the Clubspark initiative as stipulated within the LTA's loan agreement. Lydney TC also has plans to replace the fencing surrounding the courts onsite.

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Court type

All outdoor tennis courts in the Forest of Dean have a macadam surface. The estimated lifespan of a macadam court is ten years, depending on levels of use and maintenance levels. To ensure courts can continue to be used beyond this time frame, it is recommended that a sinking fund is put into place for eventual refurbishment.

Nationally, macadam courts are the most common, although other courts can have an artificial, clay or grass surface.

Sports lighting

Courts with sports lighting enable use throughout the year and are identified by the LTA as being a key priority for growing participation nationally. The LTA reports that sports lighting allows for a 35% increase in available court time on an annual basis.

In the Forest of Dean, nine of the 36 tennis courts are serviced by sports lighting, representing just 25% of the provision. Four courts with sports lighting are located at Lydney Recreation Ground, three at Five Acres High School and the remaining two are at Stockings Field. The lack of sports lighting limits recreational and casual demand and reduces the effectiveness of LTA initiatives such as Clubspark and Gate Access (detailed later) across the District.

Redmarley TC aspires to install sports lighting on the two courts at Redmarley Playing Fields. Planning permission has been granted for this but the Club does not currently have the funds in place for the development. Taynton and Tibberton TC suggests it could attract more members if the courts at Taynton and Tibberton Village Hall had sports lighting.

LTA Quick Access Loan Scheme

The LTA's facility loan scheme provides interest free loans from £25,000 up to £250,000. The funding stream will prioritise investment into low cost indoor structures and sports lighting to enable communities to grow participation by accessing all year round facilities. The objectives of the fund are:

- ◀ To provide indoor courts or with sports lighting and year round playing facilities to encourage community accessible play all year
- ◀ Enhance facilities to create better playing environments to encourage play all year (link to 'what we will fund')
- ◀ Retain and increase the number of participants at the venue
- ◀ Offer and increase both non-member pay and play usage and coaching opportunities
- ◀ Grow the numbers of adults and juniors on the coaching programme
- ◀ Provide online booking through ClubSpark with courts available through LTA Rally.

Overmarking

Tennis courts, particularly within schools, are often over marked by netball, basketball and/or football courts. Courts which are over marked tend to receive higher levels of use which can be detrimental to quality over time, as well as creating capacity issues if there is community demand from more than one sport.

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In the Forest of Dean, some or all of the courts at the following sites are overmarked with netball courts:

- ◀ Longhope Recreation Ground
- ◀ Freedom Leisure Lydney (The Dean Academy Lydney)
- ◀ Freedom Leisure Sedbury (Wyedean School & Sixth Form)
- ◀ Freedom Leisure Cinderford (The Forest High School)

The courts at Freedom Leisure Lydney (The Dean Academy Lydney) are reported to be used for ad-hoc netball training demand.

Ancillary provision

Ancillary facilities servicing Redmarley TC are reported to be of standard quality although the changing facilities are in poor condition. Taynton and Tibberton TC deems its ancillary provision to be sufficient and adequate whilst Lydney TC reports ancillary provision to be in good condition.

For non-club courts, ancillary provision is generally considered to be an issue, although good quality ancillary facilities are provided at St Briavels Recreation Ground. Whilst most of the other sites do provide changing facilities and/or toilets, they are not specific for tennis and are generally located too far away from the courts to be used.

Insight from the LTA indicates good quality ancillary facilities such as toilets, changing rooms and cafes encourage players to visit community available provision and stay for extended periods of time. Therefore, a potential way to increase usage of such provision would be to invest in suitable ancillary amenities, which can then also provide a source of income.

Management and security of tenure

The table below highlights the management of tennis courts within the Forest of Dean. The majority are operated by Trusts or Schools, although both the Council and Community groups also manage courts across the District.

Table 7.3: Tennis courts by management type

Community use	Number of courts				
	Community	Council	School	Trust	Club
Available	4	5	13	10	4
Unavailable	-	-	-	-	-
Total	4	5	13	10	4

Redmarley and Aston Ingham tennis clubs are the only clubs to own their facilities, located at Redmarley Playing Fields and Stockings Field respectively, whilst Lydney TC rents the courts at Lydney Recreation Ground from the District Council. Taynton and Tibberton TC manages and maintains the courts at Taynton and Tibberton Village Hall although the courts are owned by the Village Hall and there is no formal agreement in place for this use.

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7.3: Demand

All three responding clubs indicate both senior and junior membership levels have increased in recent years. Nationally, demand for tennis provision during the Covid-19 pandemic has increased substantially compared to prior levels when restrictions were not in place (potentially linked to tennis being one of the first sports to be allowed to resume). This should therefore be monitored moving forward to ensure that any growth can continue to be accommodated for and sustained.

Affiliated club tennis

Of the three responding clubs in the District, Lydney TC is the largest with 212 members whilst Taynton and Tibberton TC is the smallest with 97 members.

Table 7.5: Summary of tennis club demand

Club	Number of members		
	Senior	Junior	Total
Aston Ingham TC	<i>Unknown</i>	<i>Unknown</i>	<i>Unknown</i>
Redmarley TC	90	32	122
Lydney TC	143	69	212
Taynton and Tibberton TC	74	23	97
Total	307	124	431

Latent/unmet demand

Latent demand for tennis nationally is reported to be high by the LTA, which has an insight tool that suggests that 18% of the five million players that pick up a racket each year would play more often if key barriers such as poor promotion of opportunities to get on court, unclear booking journeys (especially those that are 'offline') and low quality facilities were addressed. As such, there is a potential opportunity in the Forest of Dean for the Council and other providers to address such barriers, whilst also bettering understanding of court usage.

Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in tennis but 'are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 1,572 people within the Forest of Dean. 207 (13.2%) of these people fall into the category of 'Tim – settling down males'. This is fairly low when compared to West Oxfordshire (2,122 people).

LTA periscope reports for the Forest of Dean indicates there is demand for nearly 2,200 participants based on the profiles of the users. The majority of the public picking up a racket would do so within a 10 minute walk or drive time of open access tennis courts.

In relation to clubs, as mentioned previously, Taynton and Tibberton TC suggests it could attract more members if the courts at Taynton and Tibberton Village Hall had sports lighting.

Future demand

In total, growth of 120 tennis club members is targeted by clubs within the coming years. Lydney TC expects to add 100 members whilst Redmarley TC expects to add 20 members.

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Table 7.6: Summary of tennis club future demand

Club	Number of additional members	
	Senior	Junior
Redmarley TC	15	5
Lydney TC	50	50

Taynton and Tibberton TC reports that it has plans to increase its membership but did not quantify this potential growth.

Informal and parks tennis

It is generally considered that all local authority courts available for community use nationally have spare capacity for a growth in demand. However, in the Forest of Dean, the only local authority courts are located at Lydney Recreation Ground and used by Lydney TC.

The open access courts in the authority are generally managed by the Community (Longhope Recreation Ground and St Briavels Recreation Ground) for which spare capacity is difficult to quantify as use is not always recorded due to the open access nature of many sites. Most of the current use is assumed to take place throughout the summer months although it is also accepted that many courts are accessed unofficially for activities unrelated to tennis.

The LTA indicates that the current offer of open access courts across the Forest of Dean is insufficient to service informal and recreational tennis demand in the District.

It is generally considered that public courts are at their busiest during summer months, with less activity taking place outside of this. Following events such as Wimbledon, demand is likely to increase for recreational play and pay. The LTA conducted some research to understand how the public feels about tennis and the main barriers to accessing the sport. The research was split into club, community and education sectors, the headline findings of which are below:

- ◆ Around 5 million people play once per year – majority of this in parks.
- ◆ 46% of tennis played by those 14 years or older in London is on park courts.
- ◆ 80% of those that do not play tennis but would like to, see parks as their first option.
- ◆ Barriers preventing use of courts located in parks include the quality of the courts, ease of booking and the number of courts available to play.
- ◆ Demand for tennis amongst those who stopped playing in the last five years is from 14 upwards.
- ◆ Although there is demand for tennis amongst working class individuals, the highest latent demand is from upper middle, middle and lower middle classes.

The Sport England Active Lives Survey confirms that seasonal participation peaks in the Summer. This is particularly pronounced amongst non-club and occasional players. It is key to note that the correlation between the lack of 'community' tennis in the non-summer months is likely to be heavily influenced by the lack of sports lighting, which is often a characteristic of local authority owned courts.

Further research carried out by the LTA suggests that many more people would play tennis if they knew where courts were located, particularly local authority courts. Its assertion is that better promotion would increase demand.

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Technology development is evolving, and it is now possible for an access gate to have a unit that is opened by keypad or swipe card. This keypad can be used to open the gate with a code, automatically generated by an online booking system. There are also now mobile phone and tablets applications that can allow customers to book and pay for courts.

It is hoped that increasing the awareness of facility location and availability, the ease of bookings and the security of facilities from petty crime and vandalism will increase the conversion of latent demand to actual demand across the country. The LTA is therefore keen to work with local authorities, especially those in areas of high population, to deliver fit-for-purpose projects at sites with community access.

Improving the quality, offer and experience of tennis in parks is a strategic priority for the LTA to open up tennis. It reports that the biggest barriers to participate in tennis are not knowing where the closest courts are, not knowing how to book or play on the courts and not knowing the condition of the surface. Park tennis courts can be opened up in a variety of ways to ensure greater use by local residents. This can range from booking courts to offering coaching programmes.

The LTA has developed a package of support for local authorities to grow the use of park tennis courts by removing key barriers to participation. The three products are ClubSpark, Rally and Gate Access and can be used individually or in combination. None of these products are currently in place in the Forest of Dean, although the LTA plans to open the courts at Lydney Recreation Ground for pay & play through Clubspark. It has further identified Bathurst Park, Freedom Leisure Lydney (The Dean Academy), Freedom Leisure Cinderford (The Forest High School) and Freedom Leisure Sedbury (Wyedean School & Sixth Form) as key sites across the District for the development of informal tennis. In order to facilitate this demand, it is likely that sports lighting would have to be provided, in addition to court improvements and potential provision or improvement of changing facilities.

The LTA and Government have also in 2021 announced a £30 million package to refurbish more than 4,500 public tennis courts in poor or unplayable condition at more than 1,500 venues in the most deprived parts of the UK³².

ClubSpark – Improving the booking process

ClubSpark is a flexible and simple venue management platform with multiple products and applications to help venues, local authorities and coaches manage their sport. ClubSpark is a tool that is offered for free as part of LTA venue registration and allows administrators to manage all functions at their venue(s), including:

- ◀ Managed website - create and manage a mobile friendly website tailored to LA/club requirements to promote events and activities.
- ◀ Managed coaching – set up coaching lessons and courses online.
- ◀ Membership management - improve membership engagement by making it easier for the venue and for members to pay, renew and keep in touch (includes online payments, direct debits and the monitoring of revenue streams; membership modules can also be used to take season ticket payments for venues operating a non-traditional annual facility fee).
- ◀ Organise payments - set the way payments are taken, whether it's immediate pay and play, or bookable as part of a membership package
- ◀ Court bookings – reduced administration for managing bookings; give staff, coaches, members and the general public access to book and pay for courts, classes or other resources online.

³² <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/30-million-package-to-refurbish-4500-public-tennis-courts-in-deprived-parts-of-uk-announced>

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- ✦ Scheduling - set unique booking and price rules to suit the venue and enable lights to switch on/off automatically when linked to the LTA Premium Gate Access system.
- ✦ Book and pay remotely - customers can make bookings and payments for a venue anytime, anywhere via the real-time booking app.
- ✦ Reporting - ClubSpark allows administrators to view reports highlighting income, court usage, revenue and number of members and season ticket holders; this allows for identification of trends and patterns and evidence to demonstrate participation levels and impact.

Rally

Rally is an aggregator that collects all booking and coaching information via ClubSpark pages and displays it for participants in one easy to view page. It allows players to search for venues close to them and provides booking options, removing the barriers of not knowing where courts are or how to book.

Rally provides a helpful customer journey, with a personal profile to review and manage bookings, and helpful reminders. Courts can be set to book for free of charge or at a fee agreed by the provider.

Smart Access

The LTA has developed two Smart Access gate access systems that work in association with ClubSpark to secure courts and to allow access to booked customers only. Members of the public can book a court online (making payment if required) and receive a four digit access code via email to enter using a courtside keypad. The gate access system then allows entry for the time booked if a correct code is entered.

There are two gate options available: SmartAccess Premium and SmartAccess Lite. The demands and needs of users plus the setup of the venue determines the most appropriate system for each site.

Nationally, the LTA report that in the last three years, sites with a gate access system installed have attracted 64,841 unique players, leading to 609,671 courts being booked. This has generated income of over £1 million.

Additional demand

The LTA operates various tennis initiatives across the Country which result in some courts receiving additional demand. Furthermore, there are other formats away from traditional tennis that can result in increased usage. These are all detailed below.

Parks tennis

Parks tennis leagues are less formal in comparison to established club play, offering greater flexibility and an opportunity for all abilities to engage in competition at local venues. The leagues are run by Local Tennis Leagues and are available to all aged 18 years and above, with administration and support based online. Players are organised into mixed sex leagues of eight based on similar ability levels, with matches arranged between the two players at whatever time and court is agreed. The flexibility of play is conducive to the use of park sites which are typically more easily accessible.

There is no Local Tennis League in the Forest of Dean, with the closest based in Cheltenham.

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LTA Youth Programme

The LTA coordinate courses for children aged 4 – 18, consisting of fun games and dynamic training. Specialist coaches make sure every child has the best start to their tennis journey in a safe and inclusive environment. Sessions cater to all abilities.

Youth stages:

- ◀ Blue Stage (Age 4-6)
- ◀ Red Stage (Age 6-8)
- ◀ Orange Stage (Age 8-9)
- ◀ Green Stage (Age 9-10)
- ◀ Yellow Stage (Age 10+)

Key points:

- ◀ There are assigned ages to each stage, but this only serves as a guide.
- ◀ Young people want to play in groups and with their friends, and so whatever stage they start at, all kids will see progression.
- ◀ In every LTA Youth stage, young people will be active, having fun and developing skills.

LTA Youth Start

This is the fun starter course for children who have never played the sport before or may have played very little. Packed full of fun games and training drills, it also gives parents the chance to join in too. For £34.99, kids get six sessions of coaching by an LTA Accredited coach, along with a free racket, pack of balls and personalised t-shirt so that they can continue playing.

There are currently no LTA Youth Start sessions operating in the Forest of Dean, with the closest sessions running in South Gloucestershire.

Tennis for Free

Tennis for Free is a community sports charity that works in partnership with the LTA. The charity delivers free, fully inclusive weekly coaching sessions for all ages and abilities in local communities across the UK, especially those in low-income areas.

Tennis for Free offers a package for local authorities and court operators that includes financial support for local LTA Accredited coaches to deliver the sessions, tennis equipment for attendees and coaches and promotional support. Sessions are typically delivered across three courts, although the charity have recently launched 'Tennis for Free Lite', available to clubs that wish to open their doors to non-members.

Through its offer, Tennis for Free aims to:

- ◀ Reinvigorate under-used public facilities
- ◀ Make tennis a sport for all
- ◀ Make tennis more financially accessible in the UK
- ◀ Improve the physical and mental wellbeing of local communities through tennis

No Tennis for Free sessions currently operate in or around the Forest of Dean.

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LTA Big Tennis Weekend

The LTA Big Tennis Weekend (BTW)³³ is an LTA initiative which all registered venues can access. Clubs have the ability to sign up to host a GBTW open day, which are free of charge, and create a relaxed and welcoming environment for those new to tennis to participate. This in turn can potentially lead to the clubs attracting new members.

The LTA hosts three dedicated BTWs a year, one each in May, July and September which are the UK's biggest public tennis events. Venues are able to run additional events outside these dates and will benefit from their events being promoted on the national LTA campaign website. All clubs running a BTW Open Day are asked to promote a follow on offer to all attendees, such as a reduced rate introductory membership or a number of free coaching sessions, to encourage people to continue playing after the event.

No venues in the Forest of Dean currently host the Big Tennis Weekend.

Padel

One of the LTAs key strategies is to find new ways to grow participation and Padel is an innovative format of tennis that is fun, flexible, easy to play and extremely sociable. Padel is played mainly in a doubles format on an enclosed court about a third of the size of a tennis court and can be played in groups of mixed ages and abilities, as it is not power dominant. The rules are broadly the same as tennis, although you serve under-arm and the walls are used as part of the game with the ball allowed to bounce off them.

One of the fastest growing sports across Europe, Padel has gained increasing popularity over recent years, with over six million people currently playing in Spain.

Padel has been integrated into the LTA and is recognised as a format of tennis. This has provided a platform to facilitate the growth of the sport, with tennis venues throughout Great Britain exploring the potential opportunities it can bring to a facility.

There are currently no padel tennis courts in or around the Forest of Dean.

7.4: Supply and demand analysis

The LTA suggests that, at volunteer led member clubs, a court without sports lighting can accommodate a maximum of 40 members, whereas a court with sports lighting can accommodate 60 members. This is based on a sustainable financial model.

Site ID	Site name	Club	Current demand	Site capacity	Current capacity	Future demand	Future capacity
37	Lydney Recreation Ground	Lydney TC	212	240	28	100	72
51	Redmarley Playing Fields	Redmarley TC	122	80	42	20	62
65	Taynton and Tibberton Village Hall	Taynton and Tibberton TC	97	80	17	-	17

³³ www.lta.org.uk/gbtw.

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Currently, only Lydney TC has sufficient capacity to accommodate its membership. In total, tennis courts in the Forest of Dean are overplayed by a total of 31 members. If Redmarley and Taynton & Tibberton TC were supported in their aspirations to install sports lighting at their respective home venues, overplay would be alleviated.

When considering future demand, all three sites become overplayed by a total of 151 members. Additionally, informal and recreational demand in the authority is expected to increase following the LTA's plans to open the courts at Lydney Recreation Ground for pay & play through Clubspark. This should also encourage more community sites to improve their customer journey to get more people playing tennis. Priority should therefore be placed on increasing capacity which will be explored further in the Strategy.

7.5: Conclusion

In conclusion, there is a shortfall of tennis courts to sufficiently accommodate club demand in the Forest of Dean. This shortfall is expected to be exacerbated after considering future demand. There is also a lack of tennis facilities in public green spaces across the Forest, especially in key population areas. Where courts are in place they are poor quality and lack a booking system and clear customer journey. A similar picture is seen for courts located at Education sites.

Court quality is generally poor across the Authority, limiting recreational and informal demand for the sport. Sport England's Segmentation Tool identified latent demand of 1,572 people in the Forest of Dean. Providing more informal/recreational opportunities within the Forest of Dean such as parks tennis leagues or Gate Access could help to activate this demand although courts would have to be of a suitable quality to accommodate this.

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Tennis summary

- ◀ **Lydney TC has a sufficient number of courts to meet its current membership whilst Redmarley TC and Taynton and Tibberton TC have memberships that exceed the capacity of their home site.**
- ◀ **If future demand aspirations are realised, Lydney TC will also become overplayed. This would lead to a total shortfall of 151 members in the Forest of Dean.**
- ◀ **As no non-club courts are identified as have any capacity issues, precedence should be placed on improving quality to an adequate standard for informal play, particularly at publicly available sites hosting multiple courts.**
- ◀ There is a total of 36 tennis courts identified in the Forest of Dean across 13 sites, all of which are available for community use.
- ◀ The majority of courts are operated by Trusts or Schools and all of the courts have a macadam surface.
- ◀ In total, nine of the 36 tennis courts are serviced by sports lighting, representing just 25% of the provision. Redmarley TC and Taynton and Tibberton TC both have demand to install sports lighting at their respective home venues.
- ◀ Of the courts, four are assessed as good quality, 13 as standard quality and 19 as poor quality.
- ◀ The courts at Taynton and Tibberton Village Hall are said to be weathered and dated whilst those at Lydney Recreation Ground were resurfaced in spring 2021.
- ◀ Ancillary facilities accessed by all clubs are deemed to be adequate although Redmarley TC indicates changing facilities at Redmarley Playing Fields are in poor condition.
- ◀ For non-club courts, ancillary provision is generally considered to be problematic.
- ◀ There are four tennis clubs in the Forest of Dean.
- ◀ Lydney TC is the largest club in the District with 212 members whilst Taynton and Tibberton TC is the smallest with 97 members.
- ◀ All three responding clubs have plans to add more members, equating to a total future demand of 120 members.
- ◀ Away from clubs, it is considered that all local authority courts available for community use in the Forest of Dean have spare capacity for a growth in demand, although this is difficult to quantify as use is not always recorded due to the open access nature of many sites.
- ◀ Clubspark is not currently utilised in the Forest of Dean although the courts at Lydney Recreation Ground will soon be available for pay & play via Clubspark.

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PART 8: BOWLING GREENS

8.1: Introduction

Outdoor bowls in the Forest of Dean is played on flat greens, with a typical season running in the Summer from May until September. Bowls England (BE) is the governing body covering flat green bowls with overall responsibility for ensuring effective governance of the sport. Regionally, it is administered by the Gloucestershire Bowling Association (GBA - known locally as Glos Bowls). The flat green bowling season runs from May to September.

There are no crown bowling greens (British Crown Green Bowling Association) in the Forest of Dean.

Consultation

There are four bowls clubs identified as currently using outdoor bowling greens in the Forest of Dean. Of these, two responded to consultation requests, representing a response rate of 50%.

Table 8.1: Summary of consultation response

Name of club	Response received
Coleford Bowling Club	No
Cinderford Bowls Club	Yes
Lydney Bowling Club	Yes
Royal Forest of Dean Bowling Club	No

8.2: Supply

There are currently four flat green bowling greens in the Forest of Dean provided across the same number of sites. All of the greens are available for community use.

Table 8.2: Summary of the number of greens by analysis area

Analysis area	Number of greens
North	-
Central	4
South	-
Total	4

As shown in the table above, all four greens are located in the Central Analysis Area, with no greens identified in either the North or South areas.

Figure 8.1 overleaf shows the location of all bowling greens currently servicing the Forest of Dean. For a key to the map, see Table 8.3.

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Figure 8.1: Location of bowling greens in the Forest of Dean

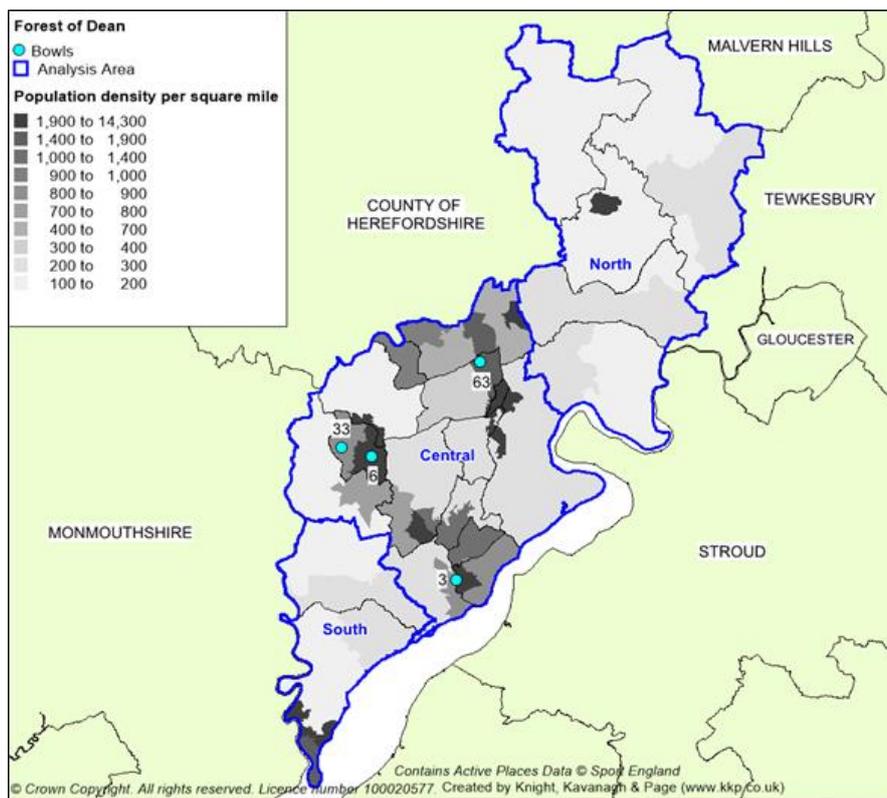


Table 8.3: Summary of bowling green provision in Forest of Dean District

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Club user	Number of greens
3	Bathurst Park	Central	Lydney BC	1
6	Bells Hotel & Golf Club	Central	Royal Forest of Dean BC	1
33	King George V Playing Fields (Coleford)	Central	Coleford BC	1
63	Steam Mills Recreation Ground	Central	Cinderford BC	1

Quality

The quality of bowling greens across the Forest of Dean has been assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ♣ Good
- ♣ Standard
- ♣ Poor

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For bowling greens, the non-technical assessment considers several attributes of the site including the surrounding hard surfaces to the green, disability access, evenness, grass coverage and signs of unofficial use. For further detail regarding the site assessment criteria, see Appendix 2.

Overall, three greens are assessed as good quality, with just one assessed as standard. No greens are assessed as poor quality.

Table 8.4: Summary of bowling green quality

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Number of greens	Quality
3	Bathurst Park	Central	1	Good
6	Bells Hotel & Golf Club	Central	1	Good
33	King George V Playing Fields (Coleford)	Central	1	Standard
63	Steam Mills Recreation Ground	Central	1	Good

The green at King George V Playing Fields (Coleford) is rated as standard quality due to some signs of wear, the prevalence of litter/glass/fouling/leaf fall on the green and only adequate ditches and boards surrounding the playing surface.

Cinderford BC reports it has recently installed a new green at Steam Mills Recreation Ground which is currently bedding in and requires some time to do so before it can be used.

Lydney BC indicates that the rinks at Bathurst Park have recently been re-marked although this needs doing again in order to have the correct playing surface.

Ancillary provision

All clubs can access ancillary provision at their home greens.

Lydney BC states ancillary provision at Bathurst Park is of good quality. It aspires to provide shelters on the green to protect players from sun and rain.

Cinderford BC indicates ancillary provision at Steam Mills Recreation Ground is in poor condition. The clubhouse is said to be outdated due to a lack of investment in recent years. There are no catering or bar facilities and to ensure the clubhouse is COVID safe, an internal changing room had to be removed to make more space.

Sports lighting

In the Forest of Dean, no greens are serviced by sports lighting. Greens with sports lighting offer opportunities to access provision for training and matches during evenings outside of the summer months. However, they are relatively less common across the Country, with the level of supply with sports lighting in the District considered to be comparable to national levels.

Ownership/management

Details around the ownership and management arrangements for clubs which responded to consultation requests are provided in the table below. Lydney BC rents its green whilst Cinderford BC is looking to update its lease agreement.

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Table 8.5: Ownership/management arrangements for bowling clubs in the Forest of Dean

Name of club	Ownership/management details
Lydney BC	Rents the green at Bathurst Park from the Lydney Recreation Trust.
Cinderford BC	Leases the green at Steam Mills Recreation Ground from Cinderford Town Council. However, this agreement expired in 2019. The Club reports an updated agreement is being worked on by solicitors.

Cinderford BC's tenure agreement is currently deemed to be unsecure although if a new long-term lease can be agreed, this will become secure. As Lydney BC rents its green from the Lydney Recreation Trust, this is deemed to be a secure arrangement.

Details regarding tenure agreements for Royal Forest of Dean and Coleford bowls clubs are unknown.

8.3: Demand

There are four clubs using bowling greens in the Forest of Dean. Of the two clubs that have responded to consultation requests, these have a total of 76 members, equating to 59 senior men and 27 senior women. There are no known junior members in the District.

Given that two clubs did not respond to consultation requests, it is likely that actual participation in the Forest of Dean is higher than displayed in the table below.

Table 8.6: Summary of bowling club membership

Club name	Members			
	Men	Women	Juniors	Total
Lydney BC	30	10	0	40
Royal Forest of Dean BC	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Coleford BC	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Cinderford BC	19	17	0	36

From respondents, the average club membership is 38, though both Lydney BC (40 members) and Cinderford BC (36 members) are comparatively sized.

Participation trends

In line with a national trend of declining membership, Lydney BC indicates membership has declined in recent years due to its ageing player base. However, Cinderford BC reports membership has increased in recent years thanks to an increase in the Club's revenue, which has enabled it to play more games and field more teams.

Latent and unmet demand

Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in bowl but 'are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 165 people within the Forest of Dean, 35 (21.2%) of these people fall into the category of 'Ralph & Phyllis – comfortable retired couples'. This is comparable with West Oxfordshire (180 people).

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Both responding clubs report that existing membership can be accommodated by current provision available to them and that no potential members are being turned away due to capacity issues. As such, no clubs report any latent or unmet demand, with the majority actively trying to recruit new members.

Future demand

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

Using population projections³⁴, the number of persons aged 65 and over is likely to significantly increase for the period up to 2041. The number of persons aged 65+ living in Forest of Dean is likely to increase from 21,034 to 30,692 in 2041, equivalent to an increase of 45.9%.

Due to this age band being the most likely to play bowls, demand for greens could increase to some degree in the future or at least remain static. Additionally, Sports England's Segmentation Tool highlights latent demand of 165 people although ageing membership is a concern for bowls nationally.

Participation increases

From consultation, Cinderford BC and Lydney BC report future plans to increase their membership, with this collectively equating to the potential growth of 20 senior and seven junior members.

Table 8.7: Summary of future demand

Club name	Future demand (members)	
	Senior	Junior
Cinderford BC	10	2
Lydney BC	10	5
Total	20	7

As Royal Forest of Dean BC and Coleford BC were unresponsive to consultation requests, it is unknown whether these clubs have plans to grow further.

8.4: Supply and demand analysis

The capacity of a bowling green is very much dependent on the leagues and the day that they operate. A green may have no spare capacity on an afternoon or evening when a popular league operates but may be unused for the rest of the week. However, in many cases, greens are used during the afternoons by club members who bowl socially, with access a potential issue during peak times if membership is particularly high.

Bowls England does not have specific guidance on bowling green capacity, stating that it can vary by site and by club. However, as a guide, it states that any green used by at least 20 members is generally considered to be sustainable, whilst any green operating with a membership of over 60 may need additional resource to ensure that it is meeting its required level of demand.

³⁴ Source: ONS projections (2018-2043). There is potential that the ONS projections may be under estimating future demand when compared to housing growth figures and as such, this should be subject to periodic review.

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Therefore, capacity ratings for bowling greens in Forest of Dean are classified as follows:

Within capacity range	Membership ensures green is sustainable without capacity issues
Outside capacity range	Membership is below or above the recommended capacity range

The table below highlights the level of use each green in the District receives, where the information is known. Where no membership information is known, further exploration is required with clubs to fully understand their needs and any potential capacity or sustainability issues.

Table 8.8: Supply and demand balance of bowling greens in the Forest of Dean

Site ID	Site	No. of greens	Club user	Current members	Future demand
3	Bathurst Park	1	Lydney BC	40	55
6	Bells Hotel & Golf Club	1	Royal Forest of Dean BC	Unknown	Unknown
33	King George V Playing Fields (Coleford)	1	Coleford BC	Unknown	Unknown
63	Steam Mills Recreation Ground	1	Cinderford BC	36	48

Neither club is currently operating above the recommended capacity threshold. As such, supply is considered sufficient to meet demand at both responding clubs, although further exploration is required to determine the capacity position at greens used by the two unresponsive clubs. Support may also be required in relation to Lydney BC if future demand aspirations are realised as it would be operating close to the limit of the capacity threshold.

8.5: Conclusion

In conclusion there is sufficient capacity of outdoor bowling greens to meet both current and future demand. Although Lydney BC may require support if future demand aspirations are realised. Green quality is generally good, with only the green at King George V Playing Fields (Coleford) failing to be rated as good quality (standard). Cinderford BC may require support to improve ancillary provision at Steam Mills Recreation Ground.

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Bowls summary

- ◀ **Current supply of outdoor bowling green provision is sufficient to meet both current and future demand expressed by Lydney BC and Cinderford BC.**
- ◀ **Lydney BC may require support if future demand aspirations are realised as the green would be operating close to the limit of the capacity threshold.**
- ◀ **Further exploration and understanding is required to determine the capacity position for Coleford BC and Royal Forest of Dean BC, neither of which provided a consultation response.**
- ◀ There are four flat bowling greens in the Forest of Dean provided across four sites.
- ◀ Lydney BC rents the green from the Lydney Recreation Trust whilst Cinderford BC is working to renew its lease agreement for its home green at Steam Mills Recreation Ground.
- ◀ In total, three greens are rated as good quality and one is rated as standard quality (at King George V Playing Fields (Coleford)).
- ◀ Cinderford BC indicates that ancillary provision at Steam Mills Recreation Ground is outdated and a changing room had to be removed to ensure the facility is COVID safe.
- ◀ There are four clubs using bowling greens in the Forest of Dean; where membership is known across two responding clubs to total 76 members, equating to 49 senior men and 17 senior women.
- ◀ Lydney BC indicates membership has declined in recent years due to its ageing player base. However, Cinderford BC reports membership has increase in recent years thanks to an increase in the Club's revenue, which has enabled it to play more games and field more teams.
- ◀ Due to a predicted increase in persons aged 65 and over (to 2041), demand is likely to increase for greens over the coming years. Additionally, Sports England's Segmentation Tool highlights latent demand of 165 people although ageing membership is a concern for bowls nationally.
- ◀ Both Cinderford BC and Lydney BC report future plans to increase membership, with this collectively equating to 20 senior and seven junior members.
- ◀ Both clubs report that existing membership can be accommodated by current provision and that no potential members are being turned away, suggesting that there is no latent or unmet demand not currently able to be met.

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PART 9: ATHLETICS FACILITIES

9.1: Introduction

As a Governing Body, UK Athletics is responsible for developing and implementing the rules and regulations of athletics, including everything from anti-doping, health and safety, facilities and welfare, to training and education for coaches and officials as well as permitting and licensing.

Locally, the sport is governed through England Athletics, which is the development and membership body for athletics and running clubs in England. It has a National Head of Clubs and Participation as well as a team of five club support managers across the Country, with one of these covering activities in the Forest of Dean as part of the South West region.

Consultation

One athletics club is identified as operating and competing within the District, Forest of Dean Athletic Club (AC) which was consulted with via telephone, representing a 100% response rate.

9.2: Supply

There is one built athletics track in the Forest of Dean at Five Acres High School. The track has a cinder surface and is adjudged by Forest of Dean AC as being in poor condition and reported to no longer be fit for purpose.

It is serviced by sports lighting, although it is reported that there is insufficient illumination and that greater lighting is required. Forest of Dean AC has purchased mobile sports lighting to support the existing sports lighting.

The track is owned by Five Acres High School but managed by The Greenshaw Learning Trust. Forest of Dean AC previously used the track six days a week and paid a flat annual fee to the school for this use. However, since The Greenshaw Learning Trust took over management of the site, the track has been fenced off and the Club pays for hire on an hourly basis. The Club now has just four hours use each week as it is now only able to afford to access the facility on Saturday mornings from 9-11am and on Tuesday evenings from 6-8pm. The Club's tenure on site is therefore unsecure.

Maintenance of the track is reported to be basic, with the School only sustaining quality to ensure it remains suitable for ad-hoc curricular use.

TrackMark

TrackMark³⁵ is a UK athletics quality assurance scheme for outdoor track & field facilities. Accreditation of a facility can demonstrate to hirers, athletes, clubs etc, that a facility is well managed, well maintained, and accessible to all potential users.

Due to a lack of competition compliant facilities within the District, Forest of Dean Athletic Club participates in competitions in Hereford, Cheltenham and Gloucester. These tracks at Hereford Leisure Centre in Hereford, Prince of Wales Stadium in Cheltenham and Blackbridge Athletics Track in Gloucester are all currently working towards TrackMark accreditation.

³⁵ <https://www.uka.org.uk/governance/facilities/>

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Ancillary provision

Changing and toilet facilities at Five Acres High School are also reported to be in poor condition. The Club owns three portacabins across the road from the track which function as the clubhouse and additional storage space for Forest of Dean AC. These portacabins are also old but in adequate condition and sufficient for the Club's needs in the short-term.

9.3: Demand

There is one athletic club based in the Forest of Dean, Forest of Dean AC, which requires dedicated athletics facilities.

At the time of consultation, the Club reports that its current membership is low due to the amnesty period from UK Athletics running until the end of August 2021³⁶. However, it indicates that in a normal year, there would be approximately 200 senior and 70 junior members and all are in the process of re-joining the Club.

The Club is aiming to grow to around 300 members. It also notes that many of the Club's higher performing junior members often leave the Club for larger clubs in the region due to a lack of suitable facilities.

Additionally, as the Club is unable to afford the cost of a throwing cage, it is currently only able to provide training for shotput and javelin. For jumping events, the Club owns high jump mats and has access to long jump and triple jump pits onsite, although there is not a fully suitable run to support these events.

Other demand

Parkrun

Parkrun is a series of weekly five kilometre (k) runs held on Saturday mornings in areas of parks and open space across 850 locations in 12 countries including the UK. They are open to all, free, and are safe and easy to take part in. Parkrun events are all ability runs open to all aged 14 years and older, whilst there are shorter 2k Junior parkrun events available on Sunday mornings for runners aged four to fourteen years old.

There are three Parkrun events across the Forest of Dean, these are accommodated at Lydney Boating Lake, Mallards Pike and the Coverham Enclosure (Five Acres).

It should be noted that Forest of Dean AC provides storage to facilitate the Parkrun at Coverham Enclosure and approximately 180 of the Club's members participate regularly in the event.

³⁶ England Athletics registration must be renewed by 30th June each year. However, for the 2021/22 year, in direct response to the ongoing challenges of COVID-19, England Athletics is continuing to provide flexibility for clubs and athletes by extending this deadline.

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Couch to 5k

Couch to 5k is a national health initiative promoted by the National Health Service to encourage absolute beginners get into running as part of establishing and maintaining an active and healthy lifestyle including regular exercise. The plan consists of three runs per week and a day of rest in between, with a different schedule for each of the nine weeks to completion. It starts with a mix of running and walking, to gradually build up fitness and stamina, in order to create realistic expectations and a sense of achievability to encourage participants to stick with it. The end goal of the plan is for the participant to be able to run 5k.

Through the Couch to 5k plan the National Health Service particularly promotes the health benefits of running and regular exercise which underpin the initiative, such as improved heart and lung health, weight loss and possible increases in bone density which can help protect against bone diseases such as osteoporosis. This also includes mental benefits of running through goal setting and challenge setting, which can help boost confidence and self-belief. Furthermore, running regularly has been linked to combating depression.

It is believed that an increase in people running through the Couch to 5k plan may increase interest and possibly have a knock-on effect leading to increased demand at running groups and clubs as people may wish to continue develop their running further.

Members of Forest of Dean AC previously ran Couch to 5k sessions at Five Acres High School although are no longer able to do so due to the cost involved. These sessions have since relocated to Berry Hill RFC.

Latent demand

Latent demand refers to potential demand; individuals who would like to participate within the sport but do not do so. This can be for a variety of reasons including a lack provision or appropriate facilities.

Sport England's Market Segmentation Tool³⁷ enables an analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in athletics within the Forest of Dean but are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 1,774 people, 274 (15.4%) of which are within the segment 'Tim – settling down males'.

9.4: Supply and demand analysis

Although there is a sufficient number of athletics facilities within the District, issues surrounding accessibility and quality results in a current shortfall. The track at Five Acres High School is not deemed fit for purpose to accommodate the level of demand within the District and the cost of accessing the facility is prohibitive.

Due to the quality and lack of access to the track at Five Acres High School, Forest of Dean AC has started to search for a location to create a new athletics facility within the District. Discussions did take place with Bream RFC regarding the installation of throwing facilities at the rugby club site which were positive, although this was not permitted by England Athletics as the cage did not meet safety standards. Forest of Dean AC notes that the cost of purchasing a new cage is prohibitive. Therefore, the Club is continuing to search for any flat areas of land in the District where it could create a new home site.

³⁷<https://segments.sportengland.org/results.aspx?query=Sports#output=table&map=polygon&polygonType=OA&catchmentType=focus&querySource=Sports&queryType=CharPop&sportBox=1&sport=84&sportPlay=want-to&focusType=LA&focusName=2>

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9.5: Conclusion

In conclusion, whilst there is sufficient supply of athletics tracks in the Forest of Dean, quality and accessibility issues mean current supply cannot meet demand. Therefore, Forest of Dean AC should be supported to find a new home venue unless aforementioned issues at with the track Five Acres High School can be resolved.

Athletics –summary

- ◀ **Although there is sufficient quantitative supply of athletics facilities in principle, issues with accessibility and quality results mean that current supply cannot meet demand.**
- ◀ **As a result of quality issues, the Forest of Dean Athletics Club is searching for a suitable location where it could create a new home site.**
- ◀ There is one formal athletics track in the Forest of Dean, located at Five Acres High School. The track has a cinder surface and is in poor condition and no longer fit for purpose.
- ◀ Changing and toilet facilities onsite are also in poor condition.
- ◀ One athletics club is based in the District, Forest of Dean Athletic Club. The Club has approximately 270 members and is based at Five Acres High School. It previously utilised the track six days a week although now is only able to access the track four hours a week. The Club aspires to increase its overall participation to 300 members.
- ◀ In the Forest of Dean, three different Park Run events are held each week. The events are accommodated at Lydney Boating Lake, Mallards Pike and the Coverham Enclosure.
- ◀ Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in athletics but 'are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand amounting to 1,774 people within the Forest of Dean.

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APPENDIX 1: SPORTING CONTEXT

The following section outlines a series of national, regional and local policies pertaining to the study and which will have an important influence on the Strategy.

National context

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

Department of Media Culture and Sport Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation (2015)

The Government published its strategy for sport in December 2015. This strategy confirms the recognition and understanding that sport makes a positive difference through broader means and that it will help the sector to deliver five simple but fundamental outcomes: physical health, mental health, individual development, social and community development and economic development. In order to measure its success in producing outputs which accord with these aims it has also adopted a series of 23 performance indicators under nine key headings, as follows:

- ◀ More people taking part in sport and physical activity.
- ◀ More people volunteering in sport.
- ◀ More people experiencing live sport.
- ◀ Maximising international sporting success.
- ◀ Maximising domestic sporting success.
- ◀ Maximising domestic sporting success.
- ◀ A more productive sport sector.
- ◀ A more financially and organisationally sustainable sport sector.
- ◀ A more responsible sport sector.

Sport England Uniting the Movement: Our 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport (2021-2031)

Sport and physical activity make people happier and healthier, and movement is the lens through which we can make that happen. It does the same thing for our communities, with life-changing, sustainable benefits that have huge economic and social value. That's why Sport England wants sport and physical activity to be recognised as essential to help overcome these national challenges.

The Strategy recognises the need to invest in sport and physical activity through NGBs, other sports bodies and local sports clubs, organisations and community groups to increase engagement for different groups as part of our core purpose. It states that there is now a need to go further in promoting movement in general as the means to unlock sport and activity for some people.

Tackling inequalities

There are deep-rooted inequalities in sport and physical activity, which means that there are people who feel excluded from being active because the right options and opportunities aren't there. These inequalities are at the very core of the Uniting the Movement.

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Sport England plans on having a laser focus on tackling inequalities in all that it does, because providing opportunities to people and communities that have traditionally been left behind and helping to remove the barriers to activity is vitally important.

National Planning Policy Framework (updated 2021)

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

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

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

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

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

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

The FA National Football Facilities Strategy (2018-28)

The Football Association's (FA) National Football Facilities Strategy (NFFS) provides a strategic framework that sets out key priorities and targets for the national game (i.e., football) over a ten-year period.

The Strategy sets out shared aims and objectives it aims to deliver on in conjunction with The Premier League, Sport England and the Government, to be delivered with support of the Football Foundation.

These stakeholders have clearly identified the aspirations for football to contribute directly to nationally important social and health priorities. Alongside this, the strategy is clear that traditional, affiliated football remains an important priority and a core component of the game, whilst recognising and supporting the more informal environments used for the community and recreational game.

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Its vision is: *“Within 10 years we aim to deliver great football facilities, wherever they are needed”*

£1.3 billion has been spent by football and Government since 2000 to enhance existing football facilities and build new ones. However, more is needed if football and Government’s shared objectives for participation, individual well-being and community cohesion are to be achieved. Nationally, direct investment will be increased – initially to £69 million per annum from football and Government (a 15% increase on recent years).

The NFFS investment priorities can be broadly grouped into six areas, recognising the need to grow the game, support existing players and better understand the different football environments:

- ✦ **Improve 20,000 Natural Turf pitches**, with a focus on addressing drop off due to a poor playing experience;
- ✦ **Deliver 1,000 3G AGP ‘equivalents’** (mix of full size and small sided provision, including MUGAs - small sided facilities are likely to have a key role in smaller / rural communities and encouraging multi-sport offers), enhancing the quality of playing experience and supporting a sustainable approach to grass roots provision;
- ✦ **Deliver 1,000 changing pavilions/clubhouses**, linked to multi-pitch or hub sites, supporting growth (particularly in women and girls football), sustainability and providing a facility infrastructure to underpin investment in coaching, officials and football development;
- ✦ **Support access to flexible indoor spaces**, including equipment and court markings, to support growth in futsal, walking football and to support the education and skills outcomes, exploiting opportunities for football to positively impact on personal and social outcomes for young people in particular;
- ✦ **Refurbish existing stock to maintain current provision**, recognising the need to address historic under-investment and issues with refurbishment of existing facilities;
- ✦ **Support testing of technology and innovation**, building on customer insight to deliver hubs for innovation, testing and development of the game.

Time for Change: The FA Strategy (2020-2024)

The new FA strategy aims to take the FA and English football forward with bold leadership and ambitious targets to build on the progress of the last four years. It identifies six Game Changer objectives and eight Serve the Game objectives which demonstrate its determination to substantially change the fabric of the game and address key societal issues.

The Game Changer objectives are:

- ✦ Win a major tournament
- ✦ Serve two million + through a transformed digital platform
- ✦ Equal opportunities for every girl
- ✦ Deliver 5,000 quality pitches
- ✦ A game free from discrimination
- ✦ Maximise the appeal and revenue of the FA cups and Women’s Super League

These are underpinned by its eight Serve the Game objectives, which are:

- ✦ Trusted, progressive regulation and administration
- ✦ Safe and inclusive football pathways and environment
- ✦ Personalised and connected learning experiences
- ✦ Maximum investment into the game

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- ◀ Diverse, high performance workforce and inclusive culture
- ◀ World class venues and events
- ◀ Strong reputation and clear brand identity
- ◀ Technology enabled and insight driven

The FA: National Game Strategy (2018-2021)

The FA launched its new National Game Strategy in July 2018 which aims to inspire a life-long journey in football for all. To achieve this, the strategy will focus on five key aspects of the game:

- ◀ A high quality introduction to football
- ◀ Developing clubs and leagues
- ◀ Embrace all formats of football and engage all participants
- ◀ Recruit, develop and support the workforce
- ◀ Develop sustainable facilities

Through these five pillars, The FA's objectives are to:

- ◀ Increase the number of male affiliated and recreational players by 10%.
- ◀ Double the number of female affiliated and recreational players via a growth of 75%.
- ◀ Increase the number of disability affiliated and recreational players by 30%.
- ◀ Ensure affiliated Futsal is available across the country in order to increase the number of Futsal affiliated and recreational players.

The sustainable football facilities should provide support to an agreed portfolio of priority projects that meet National Football Facility Strategy (NFFS) investment priorities.

England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) Inspiring Generations (2020-2024)

The England and Wales Cricket Board unveiled a new strategic plan in 2019. The strategic plan aims to connect communities and improve lives by inspiring people to discover and share their passion for cricket

The plan sets out six important priorities and activities, these are:

- ◀ ***Grow and nurture the core***
 - ◀ Create an infrastructure investment fund for First Class County Clubs (FCCs)
 - ◀ Introduce a new Community Investment Funding for FCCs and County Cricket Boards (CCBs)
 - ◀ Invest in club facilities
 - ◀ Develop the role of National Counties Cricket
 - ◀ Further invest in County Competitions
- ◀ ***Inspire through elite teams***
 - ◀ Increase investment in the county talent pathway
 - ◀ Incentivise the counties to develop England Players
 - ◀ Drive the performance system through technology and innovation
 - ◀ Create heroes and connect them with a new generation of fans

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◀ **Make cricket accessible**

- ◀ Broaden crickets appeal through the New Competition
- ◀ Create a new digital community for cricket
- ◀ Install non-traditional playing facilities in urban areas
- ◀ Continue to deliver South Asian Action Plans
- ◀ Launch a new participation product, linked to the New Competition

◀ **Engage children and young people**

- ◀ Double cricket participation in primary schools
- ◀ Deliver a compelling and coordinated recreational playing offer from age five upwards
- ◀ Develop our safeguarding to promote safe spaces for children and young people

◀ **Transform women's and girls' cricket**

- ◀ Grow the base through participation and facilities investment
- ◀ Launch centres of excellence and a new elite domestic structure
- ◀ Invest in girls' county age group cricket
- ◀ Deliver a girls' secondary school programme

◀ **Support our communities**

- ◀ Double the number of volunteers in the game
- ◀ Create a game-wide approach to Trust and Foundations through the cricket network
- ◀ Develop a new wave of officials and community coaches
- ◀ Increase participation in disability cricket

The Rugby Football Union Strategy 2021 Onwards

Through the strategy, the RFU aims to enrich lives, introduce more people to rugby union and develop the sport for future generations. The goal is to achieve this by strengthening and uniting rugby union in England and producing consistently winning England teams.

Eight key strategic priorities are identified with all investment decisions aligned to these. The strategy also outlines the RFU's core activities which form the backbone of its business operations and services to the game.

The priorities include four 'Game Objectives' and four 'Driving Objectives' as detailed below.

Game Objectives:

- ◀ Enjoyment – enable positive player experiences on and off the field
- ◀ Winning England – create the best possible high-performance system for England Rugby
- ◀ Welfare – enhance player welfare to protect and support the wellbeing of players
- ◀ Flourishing rugby communities – support clubs to sustain and grow themselves and to reflect society

Driving Objectives:

- ◀ Diversity & Inclusion – drive rugby union in England to reflect the diversity of society
- ◀ Understand – build a deep understanding of players, volunteers and fans to shape the future of the game
- ◀ Connect – connect with and grow the rugby community and create exceptional experiences
- ◀ Commercial and operational excellence – ensure a sustainable and efficient business model delivered by an inspired workforce

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England Hockey Strategy

England Hockey's Facilities Strategy can be found [here](#).

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

Mission: More, Better, Happier Players with access to appropriate and sustainable facilities

The 3 main objectives of the facilities strategy are:

- ◀ **PROTECT: To conserve the existing hockey provision**
 - There are currently over 800 pitches that are used by hockey clubs (club, school, universities) across the country. It is important to retain the current provision 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. England Hockey works to provide more support for clubs to obtain better agreements with facilities providers & education around owning an asset.
- ◀ **DEVELOP: To strategically build new hockey facilities where there is an identified need and ability to deliver and maintain. This might include consolidating hockey provision in a local area where appropriate.**

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

Rugby Football League Strategic Plan 2015 – 2021

The RFL's most recent strategy aims to establish rugby league as "a growing sport, available throughout the country, that is recognised as providing positive experience for all participants and spectators, in environments that are welcoming, inclusive, vibrant, safe and comfortable - encouraging people to return again and again, featuring:

- ◀ Financially viable and sustainable professional clubs creating stable employment opportunities, showcasing local, national and international playing talent, and leading the sport's development - and making a difference - in their own communities;
- ◀ Welcoming community clubs, putting players first, offering recreational enjoyment for children and adults alike in a safe and inclusive environment;
- ◀ A central organisation that stands out for excellence, innovation, mutual respect, integrity and inclusion that understands its role in servicing the wider sport;
- ◀ A sports that lives its values in all its decisions and actions.

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This vision is underpinned by 13 core principles, including:

- ◀ **An integrated whole sport.** Each constituent part of the sport will have a responsibility to ensure the good health of the entire game;
- ◀ **Return on investment.** Investment will be targeted to ensure the sustainability of member clubs, and growth in the number and quality of players thus seeking an effective return for the game;
- ◀ **Financial parameters.** Financial distributions will be undertaken to ensure the whole of the game will move forward together;
- ◀ **Geographic expansion.** Geographic expansion of the sport should be carried out in a proportionate and sustainable manner.

Rugby League World Cup 'Inspired by 2021' Legacy Programme

The Rugby League World Cup 2021 will develop a £10 million legacy programme with funds driven into local clubs and community projects. The government investment, delivered by Sport England, is part of RLWC 2021's ambitious plan to grow the sport and make it more visible, engaging and welcoming to current and potential participants.

The funding will be split into large transformational community projects, such as changing room improvements and new artificial grass pitches with the remaining funding used for smaller scale initiatives such as supplying new kit and equipment to promote club and community development. The investment will focus on the following four key areas:

- ◀ Creating welcoming environments
- ◀ Encouraging participation growth
- ◀ Building community engagement
- ◀ Cultivating further investment

Tennis in Britain - LTA Strategy

The LTA's vision for 2019 – 2023, Tennis Opened Up includes seven strategies relating to three objectives which are built around its mission 'to grow tennis by making it relevant, accessible, welcoming and enjoyable'.

Objectives

- ◀ Increase the number of fans on our database from [623,602] to [1,000,000] by 2023.
- ◀ More people playing more often;
 - Increase the number of adults playing tennis each year from [7.7% (4,018,600)] of the population to [8.5% (4,420,460)], and the frequency of adults playing tennis twice a month 2.5% 1,311,800 to 1.9% 1,500,000 by 2023.
 - The number of children playing tennis once a week from 550,000 to 700,000 (7.9% to 10% of the population) by 2023.
- ◀ Enable 5 new players to break into the top 100 by 2023 and inspire the tennis audience.

Strategies

1. Visibility -Broaden relevance and increase visibility of tennis all year round to build engagement and participation with fans and players.
2. Innovation - Innovate in the delivery of tennis to widen its appeal.
3. Investment - Support community facilities and schools to increase the opportunities to play
4. Accessibility - Make the customer journey to playing tennis easier and more accessible for anyone

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

5. Engagement - Engage and collaborate with everyone involved in delivering tennis in Britain, particularly coaches and volunteers to attract and maintain more people in the game.
6. Performance - Create a pathway for British champions that nurtures a diverse team of players, people and leaders.
7. Leadership - Lead tennis in Britain to the highest standard so it is a safe, welcoming, well-run sport.

Bowls England: Strategic Plan 2014-2017

Although the Plan is out of date, it remains the most up to date available. Bowls England will provide strong leadership and work with its stakeholders to support the development of the sport of bowls in England for this and future generations.

The overall vision of Bowls England is to:

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

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

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

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

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

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

APPENDIX 2: NON TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT SHEETS

Grass football pitch non-technical assessment sheet

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Football						
Please complete one form per pitch						
Site reference:			Site Name:			
6 figure grid reference			Pitch ID(s):			
Number of football pitches on site:			Pitch size:	(Adult 11v11, Youth 11v11, 9v9, 7v7 Mini, 5v5, 7v7)		
Availability			Are any other pitches marked out over this pitch?	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Weather at time of visit & date of visit			If yes, please indicate what pitches are overmarked? (i.e. one youth pitch is overmarked on an adult pitch) in Pitch Issues			
Pitch Issues:						
Assessment Criteria (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)						
Element (gathered via a non technical site assessment)	Rating			Guidance notes	Comments	
Playing surface						
Grass Cover	Good >80%		Adequate 60-80%		Poor <60%	Advice is to walk through the middle of the pitch
Does the pitch meet The FA minimum size?	Yes - as per the FA recommended size		Within FA recommended guidelines		No	See size chart below for recommended dimensions
Slope of pitch (gradient and cross fall)	Flat		Moderate		Severe	
Length of grass	Good		Too long		Too short	Good 30mm-60mm, Too long 51mm plus, Too short 29mm less
Evenness of pitch	Good		Adequate		Poor	
Problem Areas: Evidence of dog fouling/glass/litter/vehicle tracks	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots	
Problem Areas: Evidence of unofficial use/damage to the surface	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots	
Problem Areas: Evidence of poor drainage	No evidence of standing water or poor drainage		Some evidence of poor drainage		Yes, poor drainage	
Maintenance programme (information from maintenance schedule/grounds team/club survey)						Section total
Grass cutting	Yes, as required		Yes, but not frequent enough		No	
Seeded	Yes, as required		Not known		No	
Aerated (per year)	Three or more times		Once/ twice		No	
Sand dressed	Within the last 12 months		Within the last 2 years		No	
Fertilised	Within the last 12 months		Within the last 2 years		No	
Weed killed	Within the last 12 months		Within the last 2 years		No	
						Section total
NB If none of this information is provided you should assume that only the grass is being cut and the rest of the maintenance items should be marked with the lowest score option.						
PITCH SCORE			0.0%	RATING	Poor	

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Cricket pitch non-technical assessment sheet

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Cricket									
Please complete one form per pitch									
Site reference		Site Name							
6 figure grid reference		No of Pitches:							
Pitch ID		No of wickets:		Natural		Non turf			
Weather at time of visit:									
Availability									
<small>Community Use - used, Community Use - unused, No Community Use, Available but Unused</small>									
General comments/observations									
<small>*You will need a cricket ball and ruler to assess wicket quality, as indicated</small>									
<small>Assessment Criteria (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer).</small>									
Element	Rating				Guidance notes	Site comments (use the guidance notes to help complete)			
About the cricket outfield									
Grass coverage	Good	Acceptable	Poor		<80% falls below the ECB basic standard				
Length of grass	Good	Acceptable	Poor		Ideally 12mm - 25mm				
Evenness	Even		Uneven		Ball should run without deviation or ramp				
Evidence of Dog fouling/glass/stones/litter?	None	Yes		Immediate action required	May also wish to refer to user survey, if yes, refer to contractor/site manager				
Evidence of Unofficial use?	None	Yes		Immediate action required	e.g. informal, casual use, unbooked use, kids kickabout etc. May also wish to refer to user survey, if yes, refer to contractor/site manager				
Evidence of Damage to surface?	None	Yes		Immediate action required	e.g. from vermin/animals - rabbit, gulls and foxes etc may also wish to refer to user survey				
section total									
Artificial Wickets									
Is the wicket and surrounds married in	Yes		No		There should be no trip points				
Evenness of wicket	Even		Uneven		There should be no contours in surface levels				
Stump holes	Yes		No		Should be no wider than a standard cricket ball				
Moss or materials in the surface	Yes		No		There should be none				
Rips or surface lifting	Yes		No		If "yes" contact site manager				
Surface worn in high traffic areas - creases	Yes		No		If "yes" contact site manager				
Hardness - does the ball rebound when thrown straight down?	Yes		No						
section total									
Grass Wickets									
Presence of line markings	Yes		No						
Evidence of rolling	Yes		No		i.e. is wicket smooth and uniform				
Evidence of straight cut and height	Yes		No		3mm on match wicket/12mm rest of square				
Evidence of repair work on old wickets	Yes		No						
Grass coverage (square and wickets)	Yes		No		Scale: 80%+ = Yes, 80%- = No				
Hardness - does a cricket ball thrown straight down into the surface rebound/bounce?	Yes		No		Please note that <80% falls below the ECB basic standard				
section total									
Changing/ Pavilion									
Umpires provision	Yes		No						
Toilets	Yes		No						
Hot/cold water	Yes		No						
Heating	Yes		No						
Condition of building	Good	Acceptable	Requires attention						
section total									
Non Turf Cricket Practice Nets									
Is the wicket and surrounds married in (no trip points)	Yes		No						
Evenness of wicket (no contours in surface levels)	Even		Uneven						
Stump holes (no wider than a standard cricket ball)	Yes		No						
Moss or materials in the surface (should be none)	Yes		No						
No rips or surface lifting	Yes		No						
Surface worn in high traffic areas - crease	Yes		No						
Hardness - does the ball rebound when thrown straight down	Yes		No						
Is the steel frame/ posts upright?	Yes		No		Ideally assessed with a spirit level but can be achieved by eye.				
Are steel cross members detached?	Yes		No						
Are all posts and net fixings in place?	Yes		No						
Can a ball pass through any part of the netting?	Yes		No						
Is appropriate safety/ supervisory signage present?	Yes		No						
section total									
Maximum score	180	Scoring	Score	Percentage Score	Facility Present?	Potential Rating:			
		Outfield	0	0%	No	Poor			
		Artificial Wickets	0	0%	No				
		Grass Wickets	0	0%	No				
		Changing/Pavilion	0	0%	No				
		Non Turf Practice	0	0%	No				
		Overall score	0	0%					

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Grass rugby union pitch non-technical assessment sheet

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Rugby Union									
Please complete one form per pitch									
Site reference		Site Name							
6 figure grid reference		Pitch ID(s)							
Date of assessment		Pitch size	(Senior, Mini/Midi)						
Number of pitches on site		Are any other pitches marked out over this pitch?							
Availability		<i>If yes, please indicate what pitches are overmarked? (i.e. one mini/midi pitch is overmarked on a senior pitch) in Pitch Issues</i>							
<small>Community Use - used, Community Use - unused, No Community Use, Available but Unused</small>									
Weather at time of visit									
General comments/observations									
Assessment Criteria (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)									
Qualitative information (gathered on site)	Rating						Guidance notes	Comments	
Grass Coverage	Good		Adequate		Poor		>90% = good. <80% = poor		
Size of pitch	Acceptable (between recommended minimum and maximum sizes)		Flag for further investigation (below recommended minimum size)		Unacceptable (above maximum size)		Maximum size = width 70m, goal line to goal line 100m, in goal area 22m, run offs 5m where practical. Recommended minimum size = width 68m, goal line to goal line 94m, in goal area 6m, run offs 5m where practical.		
Length of grass	Too Long		Good		Too short		Too long = >75mm. Too short = <50mm		
Problem Areas: Evidence of glass/litter/vehicle tracks/dog fouling	None		Yes - some		Yes lots				
GOALPOSTS									
Are goalposts installed?	Yes		No						
Is there any obvious danger on posts?	Yes		No						
Are the posts stable in the ground?	Yes		No						
Is the crossbar fixed securely?	Yes		No						
Is there evidence of rust on the posts?	Yes		No						
ANCILLARY									
Is the pitch floodlit?	Yes		No						
Is there changing accommodation for the pitch?	Yes		No						
Is an appropriate level of car parking available?	Yes		No						
Pitch maintenance (information gathered via club survey/ pitch provider consultation) - refer to the guidance notes below									
Aerated (per year)	three or more times		twice		once		never		
Sand dressed (per year)	three or more times		twice		once		never		
Fertilised (per year)	three or more times		twice		once		never		
Weed killed (per year)	three or more times		twice		once		never		
Chain harrowed	every week		fortnightly		monthly		never		
								Pitch Maintenance Score	
Drainage	Natural (inadequate) SCORE D0		Natural (adequate) SCORE D1		Pipe drained SCORE D2		Pipe and slit drained SCORE D3		Unknown SCORE D0
								Natural (adequate) = 3 or less training/match cancellations per season Natural (inadequate) = 4 or more training match cancellations per season *Based on a pipe drained system at 5m centres that has been installed in the previous eight years **Based on a slit drained system at 1m centres completed in the previous five years.	

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Artificial grass pitches non-technical assessment (including third generation turf pitches)

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Artificial grass pitches									
Site reference			Site Name						
6 figure grid reference			Pitch ID						
Number of AGPs on site			Pitch size	Full (i.e., 100m x 60m)			Half (i.e., 60m x 40m)		
Availability	Community Use - used, Community Use - unused, No Community Use, Available but Unused								
Type of pitch	Long Pile 3G (65mm with shock pad)			Medium Pile 3G (55-60mm)			Short Pile 3G (40mm)		
	Sand Dressed			Sand Filled			Water based		
Assessment Criteria (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)									
Element	Rating					Guidance notes	Site comments		
Age of Surface	less than 2 years		2-5 years		5-10 years		over 10 years		
Evidence of moss/lichen (all surfaces)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Loose gravel (macadam surface)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Holes or rips in surface (macadam, art. grass or polymeric surfaces)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Grip underfoot	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Line markings - quality	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Problem Areas: Evidence of Glass/ stones/ litter	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Problem Areas: Evidence of inappropriate use	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Problem Areas: Evidence of damage to surface	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots		If no evidence, assume none.		
Access for disabled players. i.e.: ramps onto courts, width of gates	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Condition of posts/ nets/ goals	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Surrounding fencing	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Adequate safety margins (w here appropriate)	Yes - fully		No - but adequate		No - not adequate				
Is the AGP floodlit?	Yes				No				
Is the AGP left open at all times?	Yes				No				
Are there dug outs?	Yes				No				
Are there youth shelters/spectator seating around AGP?	Yes				No				
Is there changing accommodation for the AGP?	Yes				No				
Maximum score	93	Scoring:		Poor	<=50	Total Score		0	
				Standard	51-79	Potential Rating		Poor	
				Good	80+				

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Grass rugby league pitch non-technical assessment

Non Technical Quality Assessment - Rugby League						
Please complete one form per pitch						
Site reference			Site Name			
6 figure grid reference			Pitch ID(s)			
Number of rugby league pitches on			Pitch size	(Senior, Junior, Primary)		
Availability?			Are any other pitches marked out over this pitch?			
<small>Community Use - used, Community Use - reserved, No Community Use, Available but reserved</small>						
Weather at time of visit						
Pitch Issues:						
Assessment Criteria (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)						
Element	Rating			Guidance notes	Comments	Scores
Playing surface						
Grass Coverage	Good	Adequate	Poor	>90% Good <80% Poor		•
Size of pitch	Prefered size	Meet minimum size	Not adequate	See RFL Pitch Size Guidance: www.rflfacilitiestrust.co.uk		•
Slope of pitch (gradient and cross fall)	Good	Adequate	Poor			•
Length of grass	Good	Adequate	Poor	20mm - 60mm: www.rflfacilitiestrust.co.uk/		•
Evenness of pitch	Flat	Moderate	Severe			•
Problem Areas: Evidence of dog fouling	None	Yes - some	Yes - lots			•
Problem Areas: Evidence of glass/litter/tricycle tracks	None	Yes - some	Yes - lots			•
Typical weekly usage (match equivalent sessions)	6 or less	7 - 9	10 plus	Refer to club surveys @ other information gathered		•
Does the maintenance schedule meet RFL requirements?	Yes	In part	No	See RFL Annual Preparation and Maintenance of the Rugby League Pitch: www.rflfacilitiestrust.co.uk/		•
Pitch ancillary facilities						Section total
Are spectators safe?	Yes		No			•
Is the site secure at night?	Secure		Open			•
Is the pitch floodlit?	Yes		No			•
Is the pitch enclosed by perimeter fence?	Yes		No			•
Is there a training area separate to match pitch(es)?	Yes		No			•
Is there a covered stand?	Yes		No			•
Ancillary facilities						Section total
Is there a clubhouse or site?	Yes		No			•
Is there changing accommodation for the pitch?	Yes		No			•
Adequacy of changing accommodation (exterior)?	Good	Adequate	Poor			•
Adequacy of changing accommodation (interior)?	Good	Adequate	Poor			•
Is there an officials room?	Yes		No			•
Is there a dedicated medical room?	Yes		No			•
Are accessible facilities provided?	Yes		No			•
Is an appropriate level of car parking available?	Yes		No			•
						Section total
						0

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Bowling green non-technical assessment

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Bowling green						
KKPref						
Site name:						
Number of greens						
Flat/crown		Community Use?				
Assessment Criteria (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)						
Element	Rating			Comments		
About the greens						
Grass cover	Over 70%		40-69%		less than 40%	
Evenness of surface	Good		Adequate		Poor	
Signs of wear and tear	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots	
Condition of ditches/boarding	Good		Adequate		Poor	
Surface of surrounding hard areas	Good		Adequate		Poor	
Is the green and surrounding area fenced?	Yes			No		
Fencing around the green and ancillaries	Good		Adequate		Poor	
Problem areas: litter, glass, fouling, leaf fall on the green	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots	
Problem Areas: Evidence of inappropriate use on the green	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots	
Access for disabled players/spectators - ie: ramps onto greens, width of gates	Good		Adequate		Poor	
Ancillary facilities						
Changing Accomodation	Yes			No		
Toilets	Yes			No		
Car parking	Yes			No		
General comments about the site:						

FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Tennis court non-technical assessment

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Tennis/ Netball/ Courts										
KKPref										
Site name:										
Number of courts -		Tennis		Netball		Basketball		Five-a-side		
General Playground or specific sports court area?										
Court surface				Management				Community Use?		
	Artificial turf, Clay, Grass, Macadam, Polymeric, Shale				Club, LA - Parks, Parish Council, Public, School					
Assessment Criteria (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)										
Element	Rating						Comments			
About the courts										
Evidence of moss/lichen (all surfaces)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots					
Loose gravel (macadam surface)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots					
Holes or rips in surface (macadam, art. grass or polymeric surfaces)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots					
Grip underfoot	Good		Adequate		Poor					
Line markings - quality	Good		Adequate		Poor					
Surrounding fencing	Good		Adequate		Poor					
Size of courts	Yes - fully		No - but adequate		No - not adequate					
Adequate safety margins	Yes - fully		No - but adequate		No - not adequate					
Slope of courts	Flat		Slight		Gentle		Moderate		Severe	
Problem Areas: Evidence of Glass/ stones/ litter	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots					
Problem Areas: Evidence of inappropriate use	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots					
Access for disabled players - ie: ramps onto courts, width of gates	Good		Adequate		Poor					
Changing Accomodation										
Changing Accomodation	Yes		No							
About the equipment										
Posts and net	Good		Adequate		Poor					
Are the courts locked when not in use?	Yes		No							
Practice wall	Yes		No							