



# COLCHESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

## ASSESSMENT REPORT MARCH 2023

QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

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### ABBREVIATIONS

3G	Third Generation (artificial turf)
AGP	Artificial Grass Pitch
ANOG	Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance
BC	Bowls Club
CBC	Colchester City Council
CC	Cricket Club
ECB	England and Wales Cricket Board
EH	England Hockey
FA	Football Association
FC	Football Club
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
GMA	Grounds Maintenance Association
HC	Hockey Club
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh and Page
LTA	Lawn Tennis Association
MES	Match equivalent sessions
MOD	Ministry of Defence
NGB	National Governing Body
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NTP	Non turf pitch
PPOSS	Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy
PPS	Playing Pitch Strategy
PQS	Performance Quality Standard
RFU	Rugby Football Union
RUFC	Rugby Union Football Club
S106	Section 106 Agreement
SLT	Schools Learning Trust
TC	Tennis Club
TDC	Tendring District Council
TGR	Team Generation Rate
TCBGC	Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community
U	Under
WR	World Rugby

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### PART 1: INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

#### 1.1: Introduction

Knight, Kavanagh & Page Ltd (KKP) was jointly commissioned by Colchester City Council and Tendring District Council (The Councils) to undertake an assessment of all formal playing pitch and outdoor sport facilities across each individual authority area to assist it to strategically plan for the future.

This is the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy (PPOSS) Assessment Report for Colchester. It presents a supply and demand assessment of playing pitch and other outdoor sports in accordance with Sport England's PPOSS Guidance: An approach to developing and delivering a PPS (2013) and Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance (2014) (ANOG) used for non-pitch sports. Both guidance documents detail a stepped approach that, for pitch sports, is separated into five distinct stages, with similar stages set out in ANOG:

- ◀ Stage A: Preparation
  - ◀ Step 1: Clarify why the PPS 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: Strategy & Action Plan
  - ◀ Step 9: Develop conclusions & recommendations
  - ◀ Step 10: Develop an action & implementation plan
- ◀ Stage E: Implementation
  - ◀ Step 11: Apply and deliver the Strategy
  - ◀ Step 12: Keep the Strategy robust and up to date
  - ◀ Step 13: Adopt, monitor and review the PPS

Stages A to C are covered in this report, with Stage D covered in the subsequent strategy document. This Assessment and subsequent Strategy will run to 2033, in line with the emerging Local Plan subject to annual monitoring and review taking place. If no review has taken place in three years from the date of the baseline data being collated, then the PPOSS will no longer be considered up to date or robust.

#### 1.2: Stage A: Prepare and tailor the approach

The primary purpose of the PPOSS is to provide a strategic framework which ensures that the provision of outdoor playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities meets the local and community needs of both existing and future residents across Colchester. The Strategy has been produced in accordance with national planning guidance and will provide a robust and objective justification for future sporting provision.

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. Paragraph 98 discusses the importance of access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity that can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.

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### ***Why the PPOSS is being developed***

#### *Local context*

The Councils are joint sponsors of the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (TCBGC) development of between 7,000 and 9,000 homes. The community will need to include all the services and facilities required for a development of this size, such as employment spaces, education provision, health and community facilities, and sports, leisure and open space facilities. The Councils therefore require an up-to-date Sport, Recreation and Open Space evidence base, not only for the new community proposed at the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community but for the whole spatial areas of the individual authorities as well. This evidence is to inform the strategic spatial planning and the approach to the provision of sport, recreation and open space facilities in the authority areas, and the Garden Community in particular.

The Councils' studies are intended to be used as supporting documents for the two authorities Local Plan evidence base and to inform planning policy, particularly for the emerging Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community and subsequent planning applications.

Each PPOSS will cover the period up to 2033, in line with the emerging Local Plan periods. In relation to the needs of the Garden Community, some consideration of the phasing of the scheme to 2051 will also be considered.

The main objectives of the strategies (inclusive of the Sport, Recreation and Open Space Study) are to:

- ◀ Identify current supply and demand issues for sport, recreation and open space facilities in the Councils' areas as a whole, based on an audit and assessment of current facilities' quality, quantity and accessibility.
- ◀ Identify the particular requirements for sport, recreation and open space in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility generated by the proposed Tendring and Colchester Borders Garden Community.
- ◀ Enable the Councils to plan appropriately for the protection and/or enhancement of existing sport, recreation and open space facilities and to identify any sites that may provide surplus provision, could support new provision or facilities that could merit refurbishment within future Local Plan priorities.
- ◀ Enable the Councils to make strategic proposals for local authority-controlled facilities, such as investment in new and enhanced leisure centres or open spaces or rationalisation, including cross-boundary co-ordination of local authority provision, if appropriate.
- ◀ To identify the potential for a strategic approach to the role of the University of Essex in meeting community needs, primarily those of the proposed TCBGC, in addition to recommendations for the University and the Garden Community individually.
- ◀ To identify the potential for a more strategic role for Colchester Garrison in meeting community needs, primarily within Colchester City, but also within the proposed Garden Community and the two authorities as a whole.
- ◀ To identify the potential for a strategic approach to the role of schools/colleges in meeting community needs with a joint authority approach (notably but not exclusively within the TCBGC area) in addition to recommendations for individual sites.
- ◀ To identify whether existing infrastructure (built facilities, playing pitches and open spaces) is fit for purpose to deliver local priorities, corporate priorities and wider health and wellbeing outcomes in an efficient way, now and in the future over the lifetime of the emerging Local Plans.

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- ◀ Help direct expenditure of any future Section 106 monies or other planning contributions (including CIL should this become relevant) and effective for sport, leisure and open space facilities within each local authority area and have regard to each authority's respective Infrastructure Delivery Plans and the ECC Developers Guide to Contributions 2019.
- ◀ As an output, provide a robust, transparent, and effective means of justifying requirements so that they can be successfully defended for the proposed TGBGC Masterplan DPD or at future reviews of the emerging Local Plans. And to make strategic decisions on investment, ensuring that any planning gain monies are focused on the relevant local authority areas in which they are collected.
- ◀ Identify how sport, physical activity, and recreation, including within open space, can contribute to each of the Council's corporate agendas, including the responsibility for public health, to deliver healthier lifestyles and achieve positive health outcomes.
- ◀ Identify possible external capital or revenue funding opportunities for sport, physical activity, and recreation facilities, including open space provision.
- ◀ Identify opportunities for efficiency savings at Council-owned facilities and options for alternative governance via charities, trusts, or community-run organisations, where appropriate.
- ◀ Identify a mechanism for appropriate monitoring and review to insure an up to date and robust strategy.

### *National context*

Concern at national government level over the loss of playing fields prompted the development of localised playing pitch assessments and strategies which identify current and future requirements for playing fields. Developing a strategic approach to the analysis of playing pitch supply and demand is necessary to:

- ◀ Protect playing pitches against development pressures in, and around, urban areas.
- ◀ Identify pitch (natural grass and artificial) supply and demand issues in relation to predicated population changes.
- ◀ Address 'demand' pressures created as a result of specific sports development pressures e.g. growth of mini soccer and wider use of artificial grass pitches.
- ◀ Address budget pressures and public-sector cuts.

The Councils PPOSSs will provide an evidence base for planning decisions and funding bids and will ensure that this evidence is sound, robust and capable of being scrutinised through examination whilst meeting the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It will also determine priority improvements to existing sites in the City.

One of the core planning principles of the 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 deals specifically with the topic of healthy communities; Paragraph 96 discusses 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". A PPS will provide the evidence required to help protect playing fields to ensure sufficient land is available to meet existing and projected future pitch requirements.

Paragraphs 101,102 and 103 promote the identification of important green spaces by local communities and the protection of these facilities. Such spaces may include playing fields. As these designations operate in a similar way to Green Belt designations, caution needs to be applied to ensure there are unintended consequences that prevent development of ancillary facilities on playing fields.

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### *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, and to the required quality standard to meet Sport England guidance.

Further to this, a Steering Group is and will continue to be responsible for the direction of the PPS from a strategic perspective and for supporting, checking and challenging the work of the project team. The Steering Group is made up of representatives from Colchester City Council (CBC), Tendring District Council (TDC), Sport England and National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs), Active Essex and the University of Essex.

It will be important for the Steering Group to continue once the PPOSS has been finalised and adopted 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 PPOSS.
- ◀ Ensure implementation of the PPOSS's recommendations and action plan.
- ◀ Monitor and evaluate the outcomes of the PPOSS.
- ◀ Ensure that the PPS is kept up to date and refreshed.

### *Scope*

The PPOSS encompasses all relevant facilities regardless of ownership and management. The following are included within the scope:

- ◀ Grass pitches for football, cricket, rugby union, rugby league, American football
- ◀ Artificial grass pitches for football, rugby union, American football and hockey.
- ◀ Outdoor bowling greens
- ◀ Golf courses
- ◀ Athletics including formal running clubs and events
- ◀ Outdoor tennis, netball and basketball courts plus floodlit MUGAs
- ◀ Cycle track facilities (such as BMX tracks, pump tracks, and closed-circuit tracks)

For the non-pitch sports, (i.e., tennis, bowls, and netball) included within the scope of this study, the supply and demand principles of Sport England Guidance: Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guide for Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities (ANOG) are followed to ensure the process is compliant with the NPPF. Please note that although this is less prescriptive than the PPS Guidance, the same approach is applied to provide a full supply and demand assessment for each sport.

### *The Study area*

The study area comprises the whole of the Colchester City Council administrative area which stretches from the boundary of West Mersea up to Fordham. The 2015 PPS utilised four analysis areas for a localised assessment of the supply and demand balance of facilities, and these have been retained for this study. These are detailed overleaf.

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Table 1.1: Analysis area breakdown by wards

Analysis area	Ward
North	Dedham and Langham, Fordham and Stour, West Bergholt and Eight ash green, Great Tey
West	Stanway, Copford and West Stanway, Marks Tey
Central/East	Berechurch, castle, Christ Church, Old Heath, Highwoods, Lexden, Mile end, Prettygate, Shrub end, St Andrews, St Annes, St Johns, Wivenhoe Cross, Wivenhoe Quay, New Town and East Donyland
South	Tiptree, Birch and Winstree, Pyefleet, West Mersea

Figure 1.1: Colchester study area



Cross boundary issues have also been 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.

### 1.3: 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 Colchester 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.

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### ***Gather supply information and views – an audit of playing pitches***

Sport England's PPS 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'.<sup>1</sup>

- ◀ ***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.

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

As far as possible the assessment report aims to capture all of the outdoor sports facilities within Colchester; however, there may be instances, for example, on school sites or private sites where access was not possible and has led to omissions within the report. Where pitches have not been recorded within the report, including those which are disused or lapsed, they remain as pitches and for planning purposes continue to be so. Furthermore, exclusions of a pitch does not mean that it is not required from a supply and demand point of view.

### *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 NGBs 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.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.sportengland.org](http://www.sportengland.org)>Facilities and Planning> Planning Applications

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- ◀ **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.

### *Quality*

The capacity of provision 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.

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 NGBs), users and providers were also consulted on the quality and in some instances the quality rating was adjusted to reflect this.

### ***Gather demand information and views***

Presenting an accurate picture of current demand for 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 Colchester tends to fall within the following categories:

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

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, unmet, latent, imported and exported demand for provision is also identified within each section. Unmet demand is known to currently exist but is unable to access sports facilities; latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from the current population should they have access to more or better quality provision. Exported and imported demand refers to those sports users who are playing outside of their local authority of choice.

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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 meetings with secondary schools and colleges and an online survey being sent to primary schools.

### *Future demand/population growth*

The current resident population in Colchester is 197,200 (2020 MYE). By 2033 (the period to which this assessment projects population based future demand, in line with the Local Plan) Colchester's population is projected to decrease to 217,837<sup>2</sup> representing an increase of 20,637 (or equivalent to a percentage increase of 10.4% according to ONS data).

The PPOSS Strategy & Action Plan (Stage D) will also contain several housing growth scenarios to test what additional demand will be generated throughout the Local Plan period and in particular the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community.

### **Future demand**

Alongside current demand, it is important for the PPOSS to assess whether the future demand for playing pitches can be met. Using 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 in each analysis area. This figure is then applied to the team generation rates and is presented on a sport by sport basis. Other information sources that were used to help identify future demand, especially for non-pitch sports (where team generation rates are not applicable) include:

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

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<sup>2</sup> [Source: ONS 2018-based projections 2018-2043.](#)

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### 1.4: Stage C: Assess the supply and demand information and views

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

#### ***Understand the situation at individual sites***

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

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

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

As a guide, the FA, RFU and the ECB have set a standard number of matches that each grass pitch type should be able to accommodate without adversely affecting its quality.

*Table 1.2: Capacity of playing pitches*

Sport	Pitch type	No. of match equivalent sessions		
		Good	Standard	Poor
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 (D0)	2 per week	1.5 per week	0.5 per week
	Natural Adequate (D1)	3 per week	2 per week	1.5 per week
	Pipe Drained (D2)	3.25 per week	2.5 per week	1.75 per week
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	3.5 per week	3 per week	2 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
Hockey AGPs	One AGP	4 matches per day	4 matches per day	0 matches per day

For tennis, the capacity of courts is determined by membership levels rather than through matches. The LTA suggests that a floodlit hard court can accommodate a membership of up to 60 members, whereas a non-floodlit hard court can accommodate a membership of up to 40 members. This varies for other court types (e.g., grass).

For all remaining non-pitch sports (i.e., bowls, netball, golf etc) there are no nationally recognised capacity recommendations set out by NGBs. Instead, potential capacity is evaluated on a site by site basis following consultation and site assessments.

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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 on an area by area basis via further interrogation of temporal demand. Although this may have been identified, it does not necessarily mean that there is surplus provision. For example, spare capacity may not be available when it is needed or the site may be retained as 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 Colchester. This report seeks to identify and present the key findings and issues prior to development of the Strategy and Action Plan for Colchester.

### ***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 report that follows on from this document and therefore does not form part of the Assessment Report.

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### PART 2: FOOTBALL PITCHES

#### 2.1: Introduction

The organisation primarily responsible for the development of football in Colchester is Essex FA. It is also responsible for the administration, in terms of discipline, rules and regulations, cup competitions and representative matches, development of clubs and facilities, volunteers, referees, coaching courses and delivering national football schemes.

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

#### ***Local Football Facility Plans (LFFPs)***

To support in delivery of both the current and superseding FA National Game Strategy (NGS), the FA commissioned a nationwide consultancy project. A Local Football Facility Plan (LFFP) has now been produced for every local authority across England. Each plan is 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 DCMS) to inform and direct an estimated one billion pounds of investment through the Football Foundation into football facilities over the next ten years.

Each LFFP builds upon PPS findings (where present and current) regarding the formal and affiliated game, to also include strategic priorities for investment across small sided football (recreational and informal including indoors). LFFP's also incorporate consultation with groups outside of formal football, as well as underrepresented communities. This includes those which may be key partners with regards to football for behavioural change and groups which may be key drivers of FA NGS priorities around participation in the likes of women and girls' football, disability football and futsal.

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.

It is important to recognise that an 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.

The Colchester LFFP<sup>3</sup> was completed in 2018 and identifies 36 potential projects for investment which are outlined in this section and the 3G section of the report. The subsequent Strategy will go on to recommend any changes/update to these project lists.

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<sup>3</sup><https://localplans.footballfoundation.org.uk/local-authorities-index/colchester/colchester-executive-summary/>

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## Consultation

There is a total of 88 clubs identified as playing in Colchester. The larger clubs in the City were offered an opportunity to engage in face-to-face consultations to allow them to provide feedback in greater detail on issues relating to supply and demand. The remaining clubs were issued an online survey which was distributed by KKP and Essex County FA. The following clubs were consulted with face to face:

- ◀ Bergholt Heath FC
- ◀ Brooklands FC
- ◀ Feering Falcons YFC
- ◀ Layer Colts FC
- ◀ Rowhedge FC
- ◀ Stanway Villa YFC
- ◀ Tiptree Jobserve FC
- ◀ Wivenhoe Tempest YFC
- ◀ Wivenhoe Town YFC

Through both face-to-face consultation, survey responses and telephone interviews, a 74% team response rate has been achieved having spoken to 55% of clubs.

## 2.2: Supply

The audit identifies a total of 196 grass football pitches in Colchester across 75 sites. Of the pitches, 139 are available, at some level, for community use across 41 sites. All unavailable pitches are located at education sites other than one M.o.D site and four of the five pitches at Colchester United's training ground at Florence Park and first team stadium pitch as the Jobserve Community Stadium. Table 2.14 provides a summary of all pitches across the City. In the case of Florence Park, the site has a stipulation that one of its pitches was to be community accessible in order to allow the development of the site to take place.

As presented in the table below, the Central/East Analysis Area contains the most football pitches in Colchester with 116 identified (equating to 59% of overall provision). In contrast, the West Analysis Area contains the least provision with 16 pitches identified (8% of overall provision).

Table 2.1: Summary of all grass football pitches

Analysis area	Number of pitches					Total
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	
Central/East	36	16	15	19	30	<b>116</b>
North	7	3	7	3	8	<b>28</b>
South	12	5	4	7	8	<b>36</b>
West	4	3	3	1	5	<b>16</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>196</b>

Of all pitches, 59 (30% of all available provision) are adult size which is, in part, due to youth 11v11 teams playing on adult pitches. This is not ideal for youth players at U13-U16 and is not in line with the FA Youth Review.

# COLCHESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 2.2: Summary of grass football pitches available to the community

Analysis area	Number of pitches					Total
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	
Central/ East	30	15	13	13	16	87
North	6	3	3	3	2	17
South	8	5	4	5	5	27
West	4	3	1	0	0	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>139</b>

Of available pitches, 26 are of a youth 11v11 size representing 11% of the available supply, which is low in relation to the proportion of youth teams (82 teams – 20% of all teams) which should be playing matches on this size pitch. This issue often results in teams fast tracking youth sides to play on adult pitches given the relatively recent introduction of youth 11v11 pitches within football in the UK.

In accordance with the FA Youth Review, U17 and U18 teams can play on adult pitches. The FA's recommended pitch size for adult football is 100x64 metres. Please refer to the table below for more detail.

Table 2.3: FA recommended grass/3G pitch sizes

Age group	Playing format	Recommended pitch dimensions (metres excluding run offs)	Recommended pitch dimensions (metres including run offs)
Mini-Soccer U7/U8	5v5	37x27	43x33
Mini-Soccer U9/U10	7v7	55x37	61x43
Youth U11/U12	9v9	73x46	79x52
Youth U13/U14	11v11	82x50	88x56
Youth U15/U16	11v11	91x55	97x61
Youth U17/U18	11v11	100x64	106x70
Over 18/Adult	11v11	100x64	106x70

## Disused provision

Playing fields which have previously accommodated formal pitch provision are categorised as disused. A disused site is a playing field which is not being used at all by any users and is not available for community hire either.

In the case of Colchester Fingeringhoe Recreation Ground featuring one adult and one youth 11v11 pitch, both of which are now disused. Oxley Parker School Playing Fields also formerly provided playing pitches and has been un-used since 1998. The land has been protected in the local plan for open space and was denied for development in 2022 due to impact to the loss of open space.

## Future provision

Bergholt Heath FC confirms during consultation that the mini 7v7 pitch at Poors Land is to be converted to a youth 9v9 pitch instead. The Club access the Colchester City Council land on a rolling 12 month peppercorn rent agreement and has decided to convert the pitch as to accommodate for the growth of two of its teams that will require youth 9v9 pitches as of the 2022/23 season. Finally, Northern Gateway Sports Park will have several pitches providing on already existing playing field to the rear of the site. Drainage solutions are thought to be needed to deal with poor ground conditions.

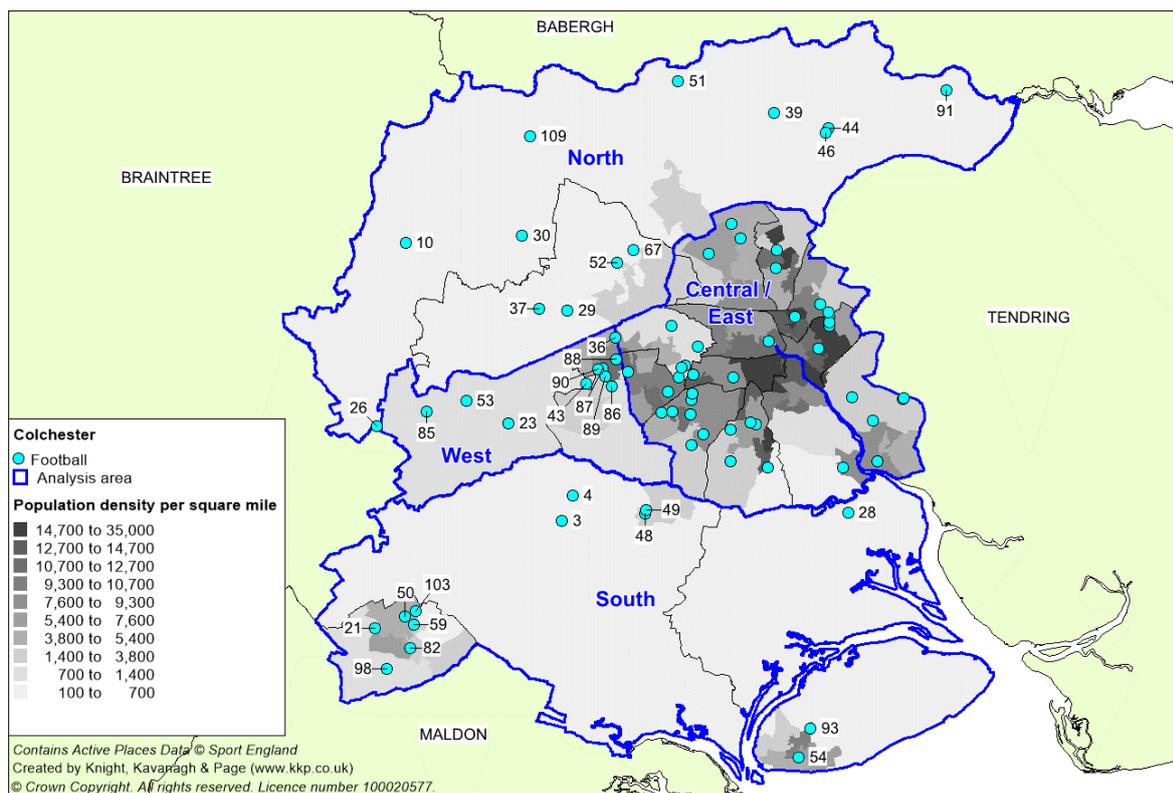
# COLCHESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Mile End Sports Ground is also outlined to have an increase in provision following the Chesterwell residential development. The site is set to have an additional two adult football pitches installed. The Chesterwell development shall also result in Trinity Secondary School having a range of sports provision installed including grass football pitches. The provision is scheduled to be installed in September 2023 and shall be open to community use.

Finally, Northern Gateway Sports Park is outlined to have three football pitches installed to the site to be scaled for adult and youth 9v9 matches.

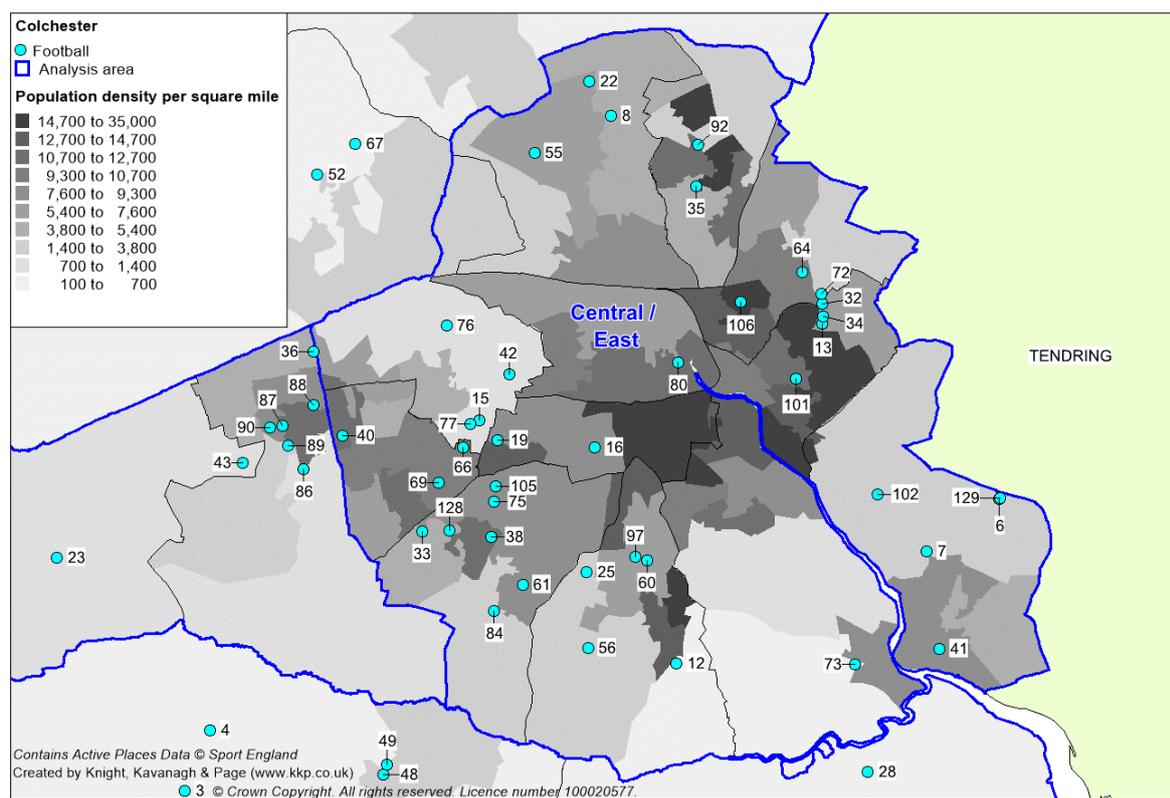
Figure 2.1 and Figure 2.2 overleaf identifies all football pitches servicing Colchester. For a key to the map, see Table 2.13.

Figure 2.1: Football pitch locations



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Figure 2.2: Central/East analysis area football pitch locations



## Pitch quality

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

- ◀ Good
- ◀ Standard
- ◀ Poor

The percentage parameters used for the non-technical assessments were as follows: Good (>80%), Standard (50-80%), Poor (<50%).

Pitch quality primarily influences the carrying capacity of a site; often pitches lack the drainage and maintenance necessary to sustain levels of use. Pitches that receive little to no ongoing repair or post-season remedial work are likely to be assessed as poor, therefore limiting the number of games they are able to accommodate each week without it having a detrimental effect on quality.

Conversely, well maintained pitches that are tended to regularly are likely to be of a higher standard and capable of taking a number of matches without a significant reduction in surface quality.

The table below summarises the quality of pitches that are available for community use. In total, 35 pitches are assessed as good quality, 69 as standard and 35 as poor. The 34 good quality pitches are located across ten sites, those being Broad Lane Sports Ground, Colchester Academy, Florence Park, Mile End Sports Ground, Spring Lane Playing Field, Stanway Rovers Football Club, Stanway Village Playing Fields, the University of Essex Sports Centre, Warriors Rest and Wivenhoe Town FC.

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Table 2.4: Pitch quality assessments (community use pitches)

Analysis area	Adult pitches			Youth pitches			Mini pitches		
	Good	Standard	Poor	Good	Standard	Poor	Good	Standard	Poor
Central/ East	10	17	3	6	18	4	12	16	1
North	0	2	4	0	1	5	0	1	4
South	2	4	2	1	5	3	1	5	4
West	2	0	2	1	0	3	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>9</b>

Poor quality non-technical audit scores are a result of issues relating to natural drainage problems, and basic maintenance regimes.

Of the 58 pitches located at unavailable education sites, just over half (63%) are deemed to be poor quality. This is due to the sites providing basic maintenance regimes (aligned to limited budgets) which broadly consist of general grass cutting and line marking as appropriate throughout the curricular year. When accounting for curricular use, extracurricular use and community demand, obvious signs of wear and tear become apparent.

Poor quality pitches available to the community are located at sites listed below. Some of these sites (identified in Table 2.13) also contain pitches which are standard quality.

- ◀ Corporal Budd VC Gymnasium
- ◀ Elm Farm
- ◀ Fordham Heath Playing Field
- ◀ Fordham Recreation Ground
- ◀ King George V Playing Field (Wivenhoe)
- ◀ Kingswode Hoe School
- ◀ Langham Recreation Ground
- ◀ Layer De La Haye Recreation Ground
- ◀ Marks Tey Playing Field
- ◀ Mile End Sports Ground
- ◀ Poors Land
- ◀ Stanway Primary School
- ◀ Stanway School
- ◀ The Duchy Field
- ◀ The Glebe (West Mersea)
- ◀ Wormingford Playing Field

Consultation with Stanway Villa YFC highlights that pitch quality at Stanway Village Playing Fields has improved noticeably following a maintenance grant from the Football Foundation in 2021 worth £6,000 spread over six years. The Club is now able to afford aerating, seeding, fertilising and weed killing as to enhance playing quality. Playing provision is now considered good quality.

Wivenhoe Town FC has one good quality adult pitch at its stadia site. The playing provision is seeded, vertidraind and weed killed frequently as to support the Step 6 club's ambition to further progress in the football pyramid. The Club report it overmarks its adult pitch for 9v9 and 7v7 fixtures to support its youth set up as Wivenhoe and District Sports Facilities Trust limits its access to Broad Lane Sports Ground which is adjacent to the stadia site. This results in the stadia adult pitch being overplayed and affects quality.

Wivenhoe Tempest FC access Broad Lane Sports Ground for its home fixtures for which it has 75 years remaining on a lease signed with Wivenhoe and District Sports Facilities Trust in 1996. The site received £75,000 of investment from the Football Foundation spread over six years. The good quality pitches are accessed by both Wivenhoe Tempest FC and Wivenhoe Town FC, something the latter feels it should receive a greater pitch allocation as to reduce overplay at its home site. Consultation with the University of Essex raised the possibility of installing a 3G pitch at Broad Lane Sports Ground through a joint ownership agreement with itself and a partner club.

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Bergholt Heath FC access Poors Land for its home fixtures which is assessed as being poor quality. The Club formerly accessed the pitch at Orpen Village Hall but has been unable to do so since Covid. Its U15s team will have to access a different site as of the 2022/23 season, and the Club hopes this will be Orpen Village Hall if it can be granted access.

Layer Colts FC access the several good quality pitches at the University of Essex Sports Centre. However, it also states the need to access a second site as of the 2022/23 season if future growth ambitions of additional girls' teams are to be achieved. Consultation also identifies the Club's ambition to be a partner club for the proposed 3G pitch at Paxman Academy.

Stanway Rovers FC has a 99-year lease with Colchester City Council for its home site. Consultation highlights the Club is improving its fencing around the adult pitch as of 2022. It also states its adult pitch has improved in quality following the installation of slit drainage in 2021. If promoted, the Step 5 club would have to upgrade its dugouts and 25-year-old metal halide floodlights, something that is already an ambition. Long term the Club has a goal of converting its adult pitch into a 3G surface, something it has presented to the Football Foundation and Essex FA.

Tiptree Jobserve FC access Warriors Rest for its home fixtures, which features good quality playing provision as well as a domed small sided 3G pitch used by Colchester United for its Category 2 Academy. The site received £10,000 of investment from the Football Foundation for pitch improvements as of 2021 spread across the following six years. The funds shall go towards seeding, aerating and fertilising provision.

Finally, Stilwaters FC play at Shrub End Sports Ground and state that due to provision being open access to the general public, recreational demand causes the goal mouths to be heavily worn. The Club hope that one pitch can be perimeter fenced as to reduce recreational demand and preserve quality.

### *The FA's Pitch Improvement Strategy*

The FA has a general pitch improvement strategy which has been developed in partnership with the Grounds Management Association (GMA) to develop 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. The programme is designed to help clubs on sites that they themselves manage and maintain but can also be used to advise council-maintained sites.

In addition, the FA's Strategy also aims to focus on developing improved maintenance with local authorities that can be utilised at local authority-maintained sites.

Further to the above, the Football Foundation and the FA have 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. Local authorities are currently ineligible applicants through this fund; however, clubs, leagues and or charitable organisations using local authority sites can apply provided they have security of tenure and/or a proforma is in place.

### *Grass Pitch Improvement Programme (PIP)*

With quality of grass pitches becoming one of the biggest influences on participation in football, the FA has made it a priority to work towards improving quality of grass pitches across the country.

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This has resulted in the creation of the Football Foundation Grass Pitch Improvement Programme. As part of this, grass pitches identified as having quality issues undergo a pitch inspection from a member of the Grounds Management Association (GMA, formerly Institute of Groundsmanship).

### *PitchPower Assessment Tool*

The football funding partners (Premier League, The FA, Sport England, and Department for Culture, Media and Sport) are increasing efforts to improve the quality of grass pitches in England with the launch of the PitchPower app. Launched in 2020 alongside the Football Foundation Pitch Preparation Fund,

The app is a new digital self-assessment tool to allow reports and recommendations to be made more quickly and easily once submitted for review by GMA regional pitch advisors.

The tool across mobile app and desktop is open to access by all providers, for example clubs, schools and local authorities. Following a PitchPower Assessment Report, organisations can work towards the recommended dedicated maintenance regime identified to improve the quality of their pitches.

The PitchPower assessments use the new five step Performance Quality Standard rating system developed by the Grounds Management Association (GMA), with the Football Foundation and Sport England agreeing alignment with the capacity guidance within the existing PPS guidance. Alignment was agreed as follows:

*Table 2.5: Equivalent PPS quality rating for pitch Performance Quality Standard ratings.*

<b>PQS Rating</b>	<b>PPS Quality Rating</b>
Poor	Poor
Basic	Standard
Good	Good
Advanced	
High	

The following sites have received an existing PitchPower report, the equivalent PPOSS quality ratings for which have been accepted and applied within the PPOSS audit and analysis.

- ◀ Broad Lane Sports Ground
- ◀ Colchester Academy
- ◀ Lorkin Daniel Playing Field
- ◀ Mile End Sports Ground
- ◀ Stanway Village Playing Fields
- ◀ Stanway Rovers FC
- ◀ Spring Lane Playing Field
- ◀ Warriors Rest

### *Football Foundation Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund<sup>4</sup>*

Following a Grass Pitch Assessment Report, clubs can work towards the recommended dedicated maintenance regime identified to improve the quality of their pitches. Clubs can also utilise the report as an evidence base to acquire potential funding streams to obtain the relevant maintenance equipment.

Once a Grass Pitch Assessment Report has been produced for the site, clubs are then eligible to apply for funding through the Football Foundation through the Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund (GPMF), a fund offering six-year tapered grants to help clubs enhance or sustain the quality of their grass pitches. The fund is a key part of the Football Foundation's Grass Pitch Improvement Programme - an ambition to deliver 20,000 quality grass pitches by 2030.

<sup>4</sup> <https://footballfoundation.org.uk/grant/grass-pitch-maintenance-fund>

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If a site is categorised as 'poor' or 'basic' then clubs can apply for funding to enhance pitch quality, whilst clubs with good or standard quality pitches can also apply for a lower level of funding to sustain quality.

All applicants must have the required security of tenure and have received a PitchPower Pitch Assessment Report, with the fund currently open to football clubs, leagues, National League System Clubs at Steps 1-6 and charities (with an annual turnover of under £500,000). Local authorities are not currently eligible applicants, however clubs, leagues and charitable organisations using local authority sites can apply provided they have security of tenure.

Although local authorities are not presently eligible for the Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund, the Football Foundation is currently exploring other options and ways in which it can support local authorities to improve Council managed provision. It is presently inviting expressions of interest from local authorities across the Country to be part of a pilot programme for investment into pitches currently owned and managed in-house by local authorities.

In the case of Colchester, eight sites have recently received Pitch Power assessments, those being the eight sites outlined earlier.

The LFFP for Colchester identifies five sites for targeted pitch improvements. Prioritisation of these sites was based on a rationale of selecting sites with large numbers of pitches which are in poor condition; thus optimising impact on capacity. The five selected sites were:

- ◀ Broad Lane Sports Ground
- ◀ Shrub End Sports Ground
- ◀ King George Playing Field (Lexden)
- ◀ Mile End Sports Ground
- ◀ The Gilbert School (Leisure World Highwoods)

As outlined earlier in the report, work towards improving the quality of provision at Broad Lane Sports Ground has successfully been delivered and the site now provides good quality pitches of varying formats.

Shrub End Sports Ground accommodates seven adult football pitches, all of which, are of standard quality, as well as a full size 3G pitch. The rationale is to enhance the quality of playing provision as to support junior, girls, mens and women's demand as current demand for the site equates to 21 teams, something that is expected to further increase. The site is considered of strategic importance for the City and is prioritised for investment.

King George Playing Field (Lexden) features six standard quality pitches accessed by 13 pitches including Stanway Villa YFC. The site has been outlined for pitch improvements once again to support junior, girls, mens and women's demand.

Mile End Sports Ground has five pitches of varying formats from adult to mini 7v7. The site is accessed by 12 teams from ten different clubs, meaning it holds particular significance for the City. The rationale is to improve the poor quality playing provision at the site as to allow all pitches to be comparable to the one good quality adult pitch on site.

Finally, the Gilbert School (Leisure World Highwoods) features six pitches that are all standard quality. The site is accessed by 18 teams within Colchester Villa FC's remit which state the site is not maintained by the Council frequently enough thus hindering its quality.

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The forthcoming PPOSS Strategy & Action Plan will determine if the list of priority sites in the LFFP requires amendment and whether there is a case to include new sites or remove sites based on assessed demand.

## **Ancillary facilities**

Similar to football pitches, the quality of ancillary facilities in Colchester has been assessed via a combination of site visits and user consultation.

The ancillary facility rating is primarily influenced by 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.

Table 2.6 presents a quality summary of provision at sites which provide dedicated changing rooms and pavilions.

*Table 2.6: Summary of ancillary facility quality*

Site ID	Site name	Management	Ancillary facility quality
4	Birch Park	Private	Poor
6	Broad Lane Sports Ground	Sports Club	Standard
13	Colchester Academy	School	Standard
15	Colchester County High School For Girls	School	Good
16	Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium	M.o.D	Good
25	Corporal Budd VC Gymnasium	M.o.D	Good
26	Elm Farm	Michael Browning Trust	Poor
29	Fordham Heath Playing Field	Parish Council	Standard
32	Gas Rec Playing Field	Council	Standard
39	King George Playing Field (Boxted)	Parish Council	Standard
40	King George Playing Field (Lexden)	Council	Standard
42	Kingswode Hoe School	School	Standard
46	Langham Recreation Ground	Council	Good
49	Laver De La Haye Recreation Ground	Council	Standard
50	Leisure World Tiptree	Council	Good
52	Lorkin Daniell Playing Field	Council	Good
53	Marks Tey Playing Fields	Council	Standard
55	Mile End Sports Ground	Council	Standard
66	Philip Morant School	School	Good
73	Rowhedge Recreation Ground	Council	Poor
75	Shrub End Sports Ground	Council	Good
76	Spring Lane Playing Field	Council	Poor
77	St Benedicts Catholic College	School	Good
87	Stanway Primary School	School	Standard
88	Stanway Rovers Football Club	Sports Club	Good
89	Stanway School	School	Good
90	Stanway Village Playing Fields	Sports Club	Standard
91	The Duchy Field	Council	Poor

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Site ID	Site name	Management	Ancillary facility quality
92	The Gilberd School (Leisure World Highwoods)	School	Standard
93	The Glebe (West Mersea)	Town Council	Standard
97	The Thomas Lord Audley School	School	Good
102	University of Essex Sports Centre	University	Standard
103	Warriors Rest	Sports Club	Good
105	West End Sports Ground		Standard
109	Wormingford Playing Field	Parish Council	Good
129	Wivenhoe Town FC	Sports Club	Good

Sites which are listed as poor quality are all dated and have clear evidence of wear and tear throughout. Each requires modernisation to ensure it remains fit for usage in the future.

In the case of Fordham Recreation Ground, King George V Playing Field (Wivenhoe) and Poors Land, each site has been excluded from Table 2.5 as they do not have any form of ancillary provision.

The LFFP for Colchester identifies two sites which require refurbishment or replacement to suitably accommodate high levels of affiliated football demand, these being Broad Lane Sports Ground and Gilberd School (Leisure World Highwoods). The former site features a blue container used for teas and coffee's as well as four poor quality changing rooms with no showers that are largely un-used. Wivenhoe Tempest FC state it views Wivenhoe Town's ancillary provision as its main clubhouse due to the limited facilities provided at Broad Lane Sports Ground. It also raises parking as an issue as there is no-where to access for overspill. Gilberd School accommodates changing rooms that are limited in their ability to adequately cater for Colchester Villa FC.

In addition to the two sites covered within the LFFP, consultations with clubs across the City raised the following key issues regarding ancillary provision.

Wivenhoe Town FC has good quality ancillary provision that has several developments outlined. Having enhanced the kitchen in 2019 and re-decorated the clubhouse over Covid, the Club is now in the process of renovating the women's toilets. Following this it will enhance the male toilets having already renovated the disabled toilet. Ambitions are also to install decking and outdoor seating outside the clubhouse near the adult pitch. Furthermore, the boiler and fuse board are both in need of replacement.

Bergholt Heath FC play at Poors Land and do so without the access to any ancillary provision. The Club formerly accessed Orpen Village Hall but since Covid has been unable to do so. A lack of a clubhouse and changing rooms at Poors Land was the main frustration raised through consultation with the Club.

Consultation with the University of Essex highlights that £35,000 of investment is going towards renovating the showers and boiler on site in the changing rooms at its sports ground.

Stanway Rovers FC built its clubhouse featuring two changing rooms, referee changing and a separate female changing space entirely using retained profits from the Club. It stresses the need to upgrade its 25-year-old metal halide floodlights to LED, something it is scheduled to undertake in 2023.

Rowhedge FC has two changing rooms with referee changing at its home site Rowhedge Recreation Ground. The Club would like to rebuild the changing rooms, however, it would require significant external investment to do so.

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Stanway Villa YFC raised frustrations that one of its floodlights funded by the Co-Operative Bank is facing vertically following damage caused by storm earlier in 2022, meaning it no longer illuminates the pitch.

The site also features an additional grass space with concrete beneath the grass making it unusable for sport purposes. The Club suggests converting this into additional parking as to better utilise the space.

Marks Tey FC state the ancillary provision at Marks Tey Playing Fields is in need of enhancement as visiting teams frequently complain about the quality and quantity of changing rooms on site. The site currently has two small changing rooms and one public toilet. The Club highlight how following the closure of the Red Lion Pub in 2020 it can no longer provide hospitality and the need for a new changing block with segregated changing rooms and showers is required as the existing building features graffiti, broken windows, no flooring, showers or proper seating.

### ***Essex FA aims and objectives***

In conjunction with the LFFP, Essex FA has outlined released a 'Moving Forward 2024' strategy looking to united grassroots environment which delivers football opportunity for all. The local context section on page four of the report provides a detailed outline of the Moving Forward 2024 strategy.

### ***Security of tenure***

Most teams in Colchester are assigned pitches by the league in which they compete in. The tenure of these sites is secure as they shall remain accessible for use by the general public for the lifespan of the PPOSS. An example of this is found at schools and academies which although may allow community use, are able to terminate community access at any time, unless a written community use agreement is in place. As an example, The Thomas Lord Audley School is a site which is used for affiliated football but as there is no long-term agreement in place with the site user Rowhedge FC, it could in theory, be asked to vacate the site at short notice.

Of education sites, seven are used for competitive football. In total, affiliated football use at education sites equates to 99 teams, meaning provision at education sites hold a particular importance for accommodating demand across Colchester. In addition to this, many schools do not allow community access to their respective pitches at all, these are listed below.

- ◀ Birch C of E School
- ◀ Broomgrove County Infant and Junior School
- ◀ Camulos Academy
- ◀ Chappel C of E Primary School
- ◀ Cherry Tree Academy
- ◀ Colchester Royal Grammar School Sports Ground
- ◀ Copford C of E Primary School
- ◀ Gosbecks Primary School
- ◀ Hazelmer Junior School
- ◀ Highwood Community Primary School
- ◀ Holmwood House Preparatory School
- ◀ Holy Trinity C of E Primary School
- ◀ Icen Academy
- ◀ Lakelands Primary School
- ◀ Langham Oaks School
- ◀ Layer De La Haye Primary School

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- ◀ Littlegarth School
- ◀ Mersea Island School
- ◀ Milldene Primary School
- ◀ Monkwick Junior School
- ◀ Montgomery Junior School
- ◀ Parsons Heath C of E Primary School
- ◀ Paxman Academy
- ◀ Prettygate Junior School
- ◀ Roach Vale Primary School
- ◀ St James C of E Primary School
- ◀ St Lukes C of E Primary School
- ◀ St Michaels Primary and Nursery School
- ◀ St Andrews C of E Primary School
- ◀ Stanway Fiveways Primary School
- ◀ Tiptree Heath Primary School
- ◀ Unity Academy
- ◀ Willow Brook Primary School

In Colchester, Stanway School is finalising a 10-year formal use agreement with the first team of Stanway Pegasus FC for access to its 3G pitch. The Club compete in the National Feeder League and if promoted would move up to Step 6, meaning reaching ground grading is a requirement.

Feering Falcons FC access Elm Farm for fixtures, something it had to contest for some time with Colchester City Council to gain access, however, the Department of Environment ultimately enabled the provision to be created. The Club received a 25-year lease for the site in 2002 with Michael Browning trust. The Club hopes to either gain freehold ownership or renew its agreement with five years remaining on the initial lease.

Layer Colts FC which currently access the University of Essex Sports Centre for all its home fixtures state that moving forwards the club's goal is to gain access to a second site with an accompanying lease in order to achieve future growth ambitions.

Brooklands FC access Colchester Academy for its home fixtures, having previously played at King George V Playing Field (Lexden) and Shrub End. The Club is interested in utilising Old Heath Recreation Ground into playing provision once again as the site is now an open field following CBC no longer maintaining the site, for the benefit of competitive football. The Club state it would undertake maintenance responsibility if granted access and a lease (or service level agreement) to the site in return.

### ***Football pyramid demand***

The football pyramid 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 six steps and a regional feeder league, there are 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.

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Clubs playing within the National League System (NLS) must adhere to ground grading 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 grading 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 6 clubs. Please refer to the FA website<sup>5</sup> for the full specifications for each.

In Colchester, there are three club which compete in the NLS, those being Stanway Rovers FC (Step 5), Coggeshall United FC (Step 6) and Wivenhoe Town FC (Step 6). In addition, Dedham Old Boys FC, Gas Recreation FC, Stanway Pegasus FC and Wivenhoe Town FC resemble the four clubs competing within regional feeder league. Finally, Colchester United FC resemble the highest performing Club within the City which at the time of writing is currently competing within the English Football League Second Division (tier four of the English football pyramid).

Table 2.7: Non-league football teams in Colchester:

Team	League	Level
Stanway Rovers FC	Essex Senior League <i>Premier Division</i>	Step 5
Coggeshall United FC	Thurlow Nunn League <i>First Division South</i>	Step 6
Wivenhoe Town FC	Thurlow Nunn League <i>First Division South</i>	Step 6
Dedham Old Boys FC	Essex and Suffolk Border League <i>Premier Division</i>	Regional Feeder League
Gas Recreation FC	Essex and Suffolk Border League <i>Premier Division</i>	Regional Feeder League
Stanway Pegasus FC	Essex and Suffolk Border League <i>Premier Division</i>	Regional Feeder League
West Bergholt FC	Essex and Suffolk Border League <i>Premier Division</i>	Regional Feeder League

The general principle for clubs in the football pyramid is that they must achieve the appropriate ground grade by March 31<sup>st</sup> of their first season after promotion, which therefore allows a short grace period for facilities to be brought up to standard.

It is important to note that from a ground grading perspective, the jump from a regional feeder league to Step 6 is significant and that as a minimum, sites require a floodlit pitch with hardstanding areas for fans, turnstiles for fan entry and therefore all the clubs currently at this level in Colchester would require a serious overhaul of their existing sites to meet the relevant criteria.

In the case of Stanway Rovers, if promoted it would need to upgrade the dug outs, floodlights and perimeter fence at Stanway School. The Club state that within the next 12 months both the perimeter fence and floodlights are scheduled to be upgraded. The site is also accessed by Stanway Pegasus FC meaning the latter can reach ground grading if promoted, despite the Club stating during consultations that there will be the need to install new standing and seated stands, a portable container and turnstiles at if promoted.

Wivenhoe Town FC confirm it has previously played at Step 5 meaning it has no issues regarding ground grading. West Bergholt FC access Lorkin Daniel Playing Field and made no reference to needing to undertake any changes to its site in order to reach ground grading.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.thefa.com/get-involved/player/ground-grading>

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## 2.3: Demand

Through the audit and assessment, 408 teams from 88 clubs are identified as playing in Colchester. This consists of 147 adult men's, seven adult women's, 154 youth boys', 22 youth girls' and 78 mini mixed teams.

The Central and East Analysis Area provides for the highest number of teams, with 276. The Analysis Area with the fewest number of teams is West, with 27 teams identified as operating within this area of Colchester.

Table 2.8: Summary of competitive teams currently playing in Colchester

Analysis area	Number of teams					Total
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	
Central/ East	110	79	40	30	15	<b>274</b>
North	12	11	7	5	8	<b>43</b>
South	16	16	10	15	5	<b>62</b>
West	16	12	0	1	0	<b>29</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>408</b>

Adult football is the most prominent format of play, whilst mini 5v5 is the least common.

There are also eight teams across four clubs exporting demand outside of the City that have been discounted from table 2.8.

### **Women's and girls' demand**

There are 29 dedicated women/girls' teams across nine clubs playing in Colchester, representing just 7% of the total number of teams. These are provided at the following clubs:

- ✦ Bergholt Heath Girls FC
- ✦ Colchester Town Girls FC
- ✦ Essex Girls Regional Talent Club FC
- ✦ Healthy4Life FC
- ✦ Oyster FC
- ✦ Stanway Pegasus FC
- ✦ Stanway Rovers FC
- ✦ Tiptree Jobserve FC
- ✦ University of Essex

The FA currently has a drive to increase women's and girls' participation by 50%. As such, it is imperative that sufficient facilities become suitable for female access, particularly in relation to toilets and appropriate changing facilities.

Following the success of England Lionesses at Euro 2022, the legacy plan of the event is set to be significant for women's and girls' football across the country. Essex County FA will be working to use this event as a catalyst for an increase in localised participation in Colchester.

### **Exported demand/imported**

Exported demand refers to teams that are currently accessing pitches for home fixtures outside of the study area, despite being registered in Colchester. Likewise, imported demand is demand from neighbouring authorities accessing pitches in Colchester to play competitive matches.

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In total, there are five clubs and eight teams accessing provision outside of Colchester for matchday purposes, those being Fifteen Degrees, Foxash Walking Football Club, Healthy4Life, Tiptree Heath and Wivenhoe United FC. The sites accessed by these clubs are Colne Engaine FC, Foxash Social Club, Clacton Leisure Centre, Tolleshunt Knights Playing Field and Elmstead Primary School. This demand is exported due to clubs accessing provision located near the border with Colchester.

### **Latent demand**

Latent demand refers to potential demand; clubs that would like to field more teams but currently do not do so. This can be for a variety of reasons including a lack of pitches, appropriate facilities, and qualified coaches. Clubs that report latent demand relating to facilities and the reasons provided for this latent demand can be seen below.

*Table 2.9: Latent demand summary*

Club	Need for more match pitches	Need for more/better training facilities	Need for better/more appropriate changing provision
Abbey Fields FC		X	X
Belle Vue Social Club		X	
Bergholt Heath FC	X		X
Boxted Lodgers FC		X	X
Brooklands FC		X	
Colchester MVF FC		X	
Colchester Villa FC	X	X	X
Eight Ash Green YFC	X		X
Feering Falcons FC		X	
Fifteen degrees FC		X	
Hamilton FC		X	X
Harwich Walking FC	X		X
Layer Colts FC	X	X	
Marks Tey FC	X	X	X
Roman Colts FC		X	
Rowhedge FC		X	
St Edmunds FC		X	X
Stanway Pegasus FC	X	X	X
Stanway Rovers FC	X		
Stanway Villa YFC	X	X	
Stillwaters FC		X	
West Bergholt FC		X	X
Wivenhoe Tempest FC		X	X
Wivenhoe Town FC	X	X	
Wivenhoe United FC	X	X	X
Wormingford Wanderers FC		X	

As can be seen by Table 2.9, the greatest issue identified is the lack of training facilities located within Colchester, with 22 clubs stressing this as a major problem. Several clubs also made reference to the lack of pitches and poor ancillary provision impacting upon the possibility of expanding.

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### **Unmet demand**

Unmet demand is existing demand that is not getting access to pitches. It is usually expressed, for example, when a team is already training but is unable to access a match pitch, or when a league has a waiting list due to a lack of pitch provision, which in turn is hindering the growth of the league. No unmet demand was expressed by responsive clubs.

### **Future demand**

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

#### *Participation increases*

There are 16 clubs which report aspirations to increase the number of teams they provide. In total, these potential demand increases would lead to the creation of 37 teams (if aspirations are realised).

*Table 2.10: Potential team increases identified by clubs*

<b>Club</b>	<b>Analysis Area</b>	<b>Future demand</b>	<b>Pitch size</b>	<b>Match equivalent sessions<sup>6</sup></b>
Bergholt Heath Girls FC	North	2 x U6 girls	Mini 5v5	1
Brooklands FC	Central/East	1 x U7 mixed	Mini 5v5	0.5
		1 x U11 boys	Youth 9v9	1
		1 x U11 girls		
Colchester MVF FC	South	1 x Adult	Adult	0.5
Feering Falcons FC	North	2 x U6 mixed	Mini 5v5	1
Hamilton FC	Central/East	1 x Adult mens	Adult	0.5
Layer Colts FC	Central/East	2 x U6 mixed	Mini 5v5	1
		1 x U16 boys	Youth 11v11	0.5
Marks Tey FC	West	1 x Adult	Adult	0.5
		1 x U14 boys	Youth 11v11	0.5
		1 x U11 boys	Youth 9v9	0.5
Roman Colts FC	Central/East	1 x Adult mens	Adult	0.5
St Edmunds YFC	Central/East	1 x U7 mixed	Mini 5v5	0.5
		1 x U9 mixed	Mini 7v7	0.5
Stanway Pegasus FC	Central/East	1 x U7 mixed	Mini 5v5	1
		1 x U8 mixed		
		1 x U10 boys	Mini 7v7	0.5
		1 x U11 boys 1 x U12 girls	Youth 9v9	1
		1 x U13 girls 1 x U15 girls 1 x U16 girls	Youth 11v11	1.5
Stillwaters FC	Central/East	1 x Adult	Adult	0.5
Tiptree Jobserve FC	South	1 x Veterans	Adult	0.5
Torquespeed FC	South	1 x U14 boys	Youth 11v11	0.5
		U11 x boys 1 x U11 girls	Youth 9v9	1

<sup>6</sup> 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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Club	Analysis Area	Future demand	Pitch size	Match equivalent sessions <sup>6</sup>
		1 x U7 mixed	Mini 5v5	0.5
West Bergholt FC	North	1 x Adult	Adult	0.5
		1 x U14 boys	Youth 11v11	0.5
		1 x U11 boys	Youth 9v9	0.5
Wivenhoe Town FC	Central/East	1 x U9 boys	Mini 7v7	0.5
Wivenhoe United FC	Central/East	1 x U9 mixed	Mini 7v7	0.5

It is worth highlighting that future demand expressed by Suffolk and Essex Border Walking Football League equates to eight additional male adult and six female teams, however, as such demand takes place on 3G pitches this has been discounted from Table 2.11. The Club solely access the 3G at Powerleague (Colchester) in the Central/East Analysis Area.

Future demand aspirations have been aggregated by analysis area and pitch format and are detailed in the table below.

Table 2.11: Potential increases by analysis area

Analysis area	Future demand (match equivalent sessions)					
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Totals
Central/East	1.5	2	2	2	3	<b>10.5</b>
North	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	2	<b>3.5</b>
South	1	0.5	1	-	0.5	<b>3</b>
West	0.5	0.5	0.5	-	-	<b>1.5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>18.5</b>

### Population increases

Team generation rates (TGRs) are used to provide an indication of how many people it may take to generate a team (by gender and age group), in order to help estimate the change in demand for pitch sports that may arise from any population change in the study area. ONS population growth is applied to the TGRs to identify a predicted number of teams that will be generated. As such, TGRs are used below as the basis for calculating the number of teams likely to be generated in the future based on population growth up to 2033 (in line with Colchester Local Plan timeline). It however shall not account for the scale or distribution of housing growth in the borough proposed in the Local Plan, such as the Garden Community development, and that this shall be subject to scenarios in the in the strategy report.

Table 2.12: Team generation rates (2033)

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams <sup>7</sup>	Team Generation Rate (TGR)	Future population within age group	Predicted future number of teams (2033)	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population
Adult Mens (18-45)	39,760	152	1:262	44,769	171	19
Adult Womens (18-45)	37,921	7	1:5417	41,825	7	0
Youth Boys (12-17)	6,576	103	1:64	7,456	116	13

<sup>7</sup> Age group team numbers differ from Table 2.7 as forecasts are based on age rather than playing format. U17 and U18 teams affiliate to their respective County FA as juniors, however, are generally considered to play on and require adult pitches and are considered by age boundaries to be in the adult age group

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Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams <sup>7</sup>	Team Generation Rate (TGR)	Future population within age group	Predicted future number of teams (2033)	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population
Youth Girls (12-17)	6,173	14	1:441	7,098	16	2
Youth Boys (10-11)	2,514	50	1:50	2,478	49	0
Youth Girls (10-11)	2,286	6	1:381	2,329	6	0
Mini Mixed (8-9)	4,937	57	1:87	4,761	55	0
Mini Mixed (6-7)	4,917	23	1:214	4,758	22	0

As seen above, based on ONS projections, it is forecasted that there will be an increase in football demand equivalent to 19 adult men's teams, 13 youth boys' teams and two youth girls' teams. When broken down by analysis area (to produce a more localised view on where growth will be established) this growth specifically equates to 16 adult mens teams and 12 youth boys' teams. This growth is largely anticipated to be in the Central and East analysis areas which solely contributes to the growth of 12 adult and eight youth boys' teams.

Notwithstanding the above, it must be noted that this predicted level of growth is exclusively based on future population forecasts and does not account for societal factors or changes in the way people may wish to play sport.

Similarly, they cannot account for specific targeted development work within certain areas or focus towards certain groups, such as NGB initiatives or coaching within schools. For example, there is a focus on developing female participation within Colchester and nationally which, as mentioned previously, is likely to lead to more women's and girls' teams in the future and therefore increase demand for pitches.

Outside of women's and girls' increases, given the large amounts of future demand identified through population forecasts, it is considered unlikely that aspirations from clubs will happen exclusively of population growth. Instead, it is thought that the ambitions will be absorbed within the increases.

### *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.

In Colchester, Wildcat centres are run by Colchester United FC with Layer Colts FC also looking to start delivering wildcats sessions by the start of the new season.

In light of The FA's aspirations to increase female participation in football by 50% (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.

With the summer of 2022 seeing both growth in the Wildcats programme and the Women's 2022 Euro's, it can be anticipated that growth of two youth girls teams can be included within the expected future demand. This shall be aggregated to the Central/ East Analysis Area as it provides the largest number of teams.

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## *Future demand summary*

Population forecasts anticipate the creation of 16 adult mens teams and 12 junior boys' teams with two youth girls teams outlined through organic growth following the Women's 2022 Euro's. On the balance of this, the supply and demand analysis at the end of this section of the report shall include future demand identified through team generation rates and organic growth from women's youth teams.

The growth in teams outlined through club aspirations shall be explored as its own strategy in the forthcoming strategy report. This shall equate to 37 additional teams through the ambitions of 16 clubs.

The PPOSS Strategy & Action Plan will contain a housing growth scenario that will estimate the additional demand for football arising from housing development.

## **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 affect 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.

The following ratings were used in Colchester:

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

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

<b>Potential capacity</b>	Play is below the level the site could sustain
<b>At capacity</b>	Play matches the level the site can sustain
<b>Overused</b>	Play exceeds the level the site can sustain

## **Education sites**

To account for curricular/extra-curricular use of education pitches it is likely that the carrying capacity at such sites will need to be adjusted. 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.

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.

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In Colchester, one match equivalent session of demand has been attributed to each pitch based at school sites to account for curricular demand.

This is based on consultation and the expectation that all pitches are in use, as well as experience of how school sites use pitches from other strategies both locally and nationally. In instances where a school site is already overplayed or the inclusion of one match equivalent session from curricular demand would create overplay it has been discounted.

### ***Informal use***

Most football pitches in the area are located within 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. Informal use is not accounted for in the capacity analysis on the basis that it cannot be quantified on a site by site basis. However, it can be expected at popular sites such as Rowhedge Recreation Ground, that there will be a higher level of demand on each pitch (from informal use) over and above that identified.

### ***Peak time***

It is important to understand what the peak time for football pitch access is, to accurately understand the supply and demand balance for football pitches. Peak time access translates to when the high demand is for pitch access during a week. In Colchester, the peak time for adult football is Saturday afternoon and for all other formats of football it is Sunday mornings.

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Table 2.13: Football pitch capacity analysis

Site ID	Site	Clubs accessing site	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch size <sup>8</sup>	No. of pitches	Quality rating	Current play (match sessions)	Pitch capacity <sup>9</sup> (match sessions)	Overused, at capacity or spare capacity	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
4	Birch Park	Abbey Fields FC Colchester Athletic FC Reed Hall Sentinels FC	South	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Adult	2	Standard	1.5	4	2.5	0	Un-used 9v9 pitch is showing actual spare capacity of 1 MES. None of the remaining provision is showing overplay.
							Youth 11v11	2		1.5	4	2.5	0	
							Youth 9v9	1		0	2	2	1	
							Mini 7v7	1		1	4	3	0	
6	Broad Lane Sports Ground	Wivenhoe Tempest FC Wivenhoe Town FC	Central/East	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Adult	3	Good	6	9	3	0	Mini 5v5 pitches are showing actual spare capacity of 1.5 MES. Provision is accessed by both Wivenhoe Tempest FC and Wivenhoe Town FC, the latter of which have a desire to increasingly access the site. Provision is outlined for the potential of a full sized 3G pitch.
							Youth 9v9	2		2.5	8	5.5	0	
							Mini 7v7	2		2.5	12	9.5	0	
							Mini 5v5	2		0.5	12	11.5	1.5	
13	Colchester Academy	Brooklands FC	Central/East	Yes	School	Unsecure	Adult	3	Standard	2.5	3	0.5	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure. Overplay of 1.5 MES is identified on youth 11 pitch.
							Youth 11v11	1		2	1	1.5	0	
							Youth 9v9	1	Good	0.5	4	0.5	0	
							Mini 7v7	1		1	6	5	0	
							Mini 5v5	1		0	6	6	0	
15	Colchester County High School For Girls	-	Central/East	Yes	School	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	2	Standard	2	8	6	0	No actual spare capacity.
16	Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium	-	Central/East	Yes	M.o.D	Unsecure	Adult	2	Standard	0	4	2	0	Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
21	Colchester United (Florence Park Training Ground)	N/A	South	No	Professional Sports Club	Unsecure	Adult	1	Good	1	3	-	-	Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
25	Corporal Budd VC Gymnasium	-	Central/East	Yes	M.o.D	Unsecure	Adult	2	Poor	2	2	-	0	Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
26	Elm Farm	Feering Falcons FC	North	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth 11v11	2	Poor	2.5	2	0.5	0	Overplay of 0.5 MES is present on the youth 11v11 pitches.
							Mini 7v7	1		1	2	1	0	
							Mini 5v5	1		1	2	1	0	
29	Fordham Heath Playing Field	Eight Ash Green FC	North	Yes		Secure	Youth 11v11	1	Poor	1	1	-	0	Site is played to capacity.
30	Fordham Recreation Ground	-	North	Yes		Secure	Youth 9v9	1	Poor	0	1	1	0	Un-used pitch. Actual spare capacity is discounted due to poor pitch quality.
32	Gas Rec Playing Field	Gas Recreation FC	Central/East	Yes		Secure	Adult	1	Standard	1.5	2	0.5	0	Actual spare capacity of 0.5 MES is present.
							Youth 9v9	1		0.5	2	0.5	0.5	

<sup>8</sup> Pitch sizes in brackets denotes overmarked pitches

<sup>9</sup> 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	Clubs accessing site	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch size <sup>8</sup>	No. of pitches	Quality rating	Current play (match sessions)	Pitch capacity <sup>9</sup> (match sessions)	Overused, at capacity or spare capacity	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments					
39	King George Playing Field (Boxted)	Boxted Lodgers FC Colchester Town Girls FC	North	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	1	Standard	3	2	1	0	Overplay of 1 MES is identified on adult pitch. Un-used mini 7v7 pitch is showing actual spare capacity of 1 MES.					
							Youth 9v9	1		2	2	-	0						
							Mini 7v7	1		0	4	4	1						
40	King George Playing Field (Lexden)	Prettygate FC St Edmunds FC Stanway Villa FC	Central/East	Yes		Secure	Adult	1	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	0.5	Adult pitch is showing actual spare capacity of 0.5 MES.					
							Youth 9v9	2		2	4	2	0						
							Mini 7v7	2		3	8	5	0						
							Mini 5v5	1		1	4	3	0						
41	King George V Playing Field (Wivenhoe)	Wivenhoe United FC	Central/East	Yes		Secure	Youth 11v11	1	Poor	0.5	1	0.5	0	Actual spare capacity is discounted due to poor pitch quality.					
42	Kingswode Hoe School	-	Central/East	Yes	School	Unsecure	Youth 11v11	1	Poor	0	1	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.					
46	Langham Recreation Ground	Langham Lodgers FC	North	Yes		Secure	Adult	1	Poor	0.5	1	0.5	0	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.					
49	Layer De La Haye Recreation Ground	-	South	Yes		Secure	Mini 7v7	1	Poor	0	2	2	0	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.					
							Mini 5v5	1		0	2	2	0						
50	Leisure World Tiptree	Colchester MVF Colchester Villa FC Thurstable School FC Tiptree Jobserve FC Tolleshunt Knight Eagles FC Top Bins FC Torquespeed FC-Witham Phoenix FC	South	Yes		Secure	Adult	2	Standard	3.5	4	0.5	0	Actual spare capacity is present on youth 11 and mini 5v5 pitches. Site also hosts small sided 3G provision that is accessed by seven teams					
							Youth 11v11	2		1	4	3	1						
							Mini 7v7	2		3.5	8	4.5	0						
							Mini 5v5	2		1	8	7	1						
52	Lorkin Daniel Playing Field	West Bergholt FC	North	Yes		Secure	Adult	1	Standard	1	2	1	0	No actual spare capacity identified.					
53	Marks Tey Playing Fields	Coggeshall United FC Marks Tey FC	West	Yes		Secure	Adult	2	Poor	1.5	2	0.5	0	Actual spare capacity is discounted due to poor pitch quality.					
55	Mile End Sports Ground	Arlesford Colne Rangers FC Belle Vue Rangers FC CO4 Ultras Colchester Crusaders FC Newtown Rovers FC North Essex Athletic FC Pitchbury FC Roman Colts FC Romania Athletic FC Stone Island FC	Central/East	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	1	Good	5	4	1	0	Two adult pitches show overplay of 1 MES. Actual spare capacity is discounted due to poor pitch quality.					
								1							Poor				
							Youth 11v11	1								0	2	2	0
							Youth 9v9	1								0.5	1	0.5	0
							Mini 7v7	1								0.5	2	0.5	0
66	Philip Morant School	Hamilton FC Roman Rovers FC	Central/East	Yes	School	Unsecure	Youth 11v11	1	Standard	2.5	2	0.5	0	Overplay of 0.5 MES is present.					
67	Poors Land	Bergholt Heath Girls FC	North	Yes		Secure	Adult	1	Poor	0.5	1	0.5	0	Mini 5v5 pitch is overplayed by 1 MES. Actual spare capacity is discounted due to poor pitch quality.					
							Mini 7v7	1		2	2	-	0						
							Mini 5v5	1		3	2	1	0						

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Site ID	Site	Clubs accessing site	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch size <sup>8</sup>	No. of pitches	Quality rating	Current play (match sessions)	Pitch capacity <sup>9</sup> (match sessions)	Overused, at capacity or spare capacity	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
73	Rowhedge Recreation Ground	Rowhedge FC	Central/East	Yes		Secure	Youth 11v11	1	Standard	0.5	1	0.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity is present on youth 11v11 and mini 5v5 pitches.
							Youth 9v9	1		1.5	2	0.5	0	
							Mini 7v7	1		1.5	4	2.5	0	
							Mini 5v5	4		0.5	16	15.5	3.5	
75	Shrub End Sports Ground	Colchester V! Form College CUSA Essex Girls Regional Talent Club Iceni Wanderers Layer Colts FC Old Saints United Madrid Wanderers FC Parkside Rangers FC St Edmunds Stanway Pegasus FC Stanway Rovers FC Stillwaters FC Tey Old Fellas FC	Central/East	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	7	Standard	13	14	1	0	No actual spare capacity identified.
76	Spring Lane Playing Field	Stanway Rovers FC	Central/East	Yes		Secure	Adult	1	Standard	3.5	2	1.5	0	Adult pitch is overplayed by 1.5 MES. Discrepancy in quality ratings is evidenced by the findings of a pitch power assessment undertaken in 2021.
							Youth 9v9	1	Standard	4.5	2	2.5	0	
							Mini 7v7	1	Good	4	10	6	0	
								1	Standard					
							Mini 5v5	1	Good	0.5	10	9.5	1.5	
1	Standard													
77	St Benedicts Catholic College	-	Central/East	Yes	School	Unsecure	Youth 11v11	4	Standard	0	8	8	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
82	St Lukes C of E Primary School	Torque speed FC	South	Yes	School	Unsecure	Youth 9v9	1	Poor	0.5	1	0.5	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
87	Stanway Primary School	-	West	Yes	School	Unsecure	Youth 11v11	2	Poor	1	2	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
88	Stanway Rovers Football Club	Ability Using Sports FC Stanway Rovers FC	West	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Adult	1	Good	3.5	3	0.5	0	Overplay of 0.5 MES is identified.
89	Stanway School	Stanway Pegasus FC Stanway Rovers FC	West	Yes	School	Unsecure	Youth 9v9	1	Poor	1	1	-	0	Provision is played at capacity.
90	Stanway Village Playing Fields	Stanway Villa FC	West	Yes		Secure	Adult	1	Good	2.5	3	0.5	0	Overplay of 0.5 MES is identified.
							Youth 11v11	1		4.5	4	0.5	0	
91	The Duchy Field	Dedham Old Boys FC	North	Yes		Secure	Adult	1	Poor	1	1	-	0	Provision is played at capacity.
92	The Gilbert School (Leisure World Highwoods)	Colchester Villa FC	Central/East	Yes	School	Unsecure	Adult	2	Standard	5	4	1	0	Adult provision is overplayed by 1 MES. Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
							Youth 9v9	2		3.5	4	0.5	0	
							Mini 5v5	2		0.5	8	7.5	0	
93	The Glebe (West Mersea)	Mersea Island FC Oyster FC	South	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Adult	2	Poor	2	2	-	0	No actual spare capacity or overplay is identified.
							Youth 11v11	1		1	1	-	0	
							Youth 9v9	1		0.5	1	0.5	0	
							Mini 7v7	1		1.5	2	0.5	0	

**COLCHESTER CITY COUNCIL  
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Site ID	Site	Clubs accessing site	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch size <sup>8</sup>	No. of pitches	Quality rating	Current play (match sessions)	Pitch capacity <sup>9</sup> (match sessions)	Overused, at capacity or spare capacity	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
							Mini 5v5	1		0	2	2	0	
97	The Thomas Lord Audley School	Rowhedge FC	Central/East	Yes	School	Unsecure	Youth 11v11	4	Standard	4.5	8	3.5	0	No actual spare capacity or overplay is identified.
102	University of Essex Sports Centre	Layer Colts FC University of Essex FC	Central/East	Yes	School	Unsecure	Adult	5	Good	15	15	-	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
							Youth 11v11	1		3.5	4	0.5	0	
							Youth 9v9	2		1	8	7	0	
							Mini 7v7	2		1.5	12	10.5	0	
							Mini 5v5	2		2.5	12	9.5	0	
103	Warriors Rest	Colchester United FC Tiptree Jobserve FC	South	Yes		Secure	Adult	1	Good	3.5	3	0.5	0	Adult pitch is overplayed by 0.5 MES.
							Youth 9v9	1		1.5	4	2.5	0	
							Mini 5v5	1		1	6	5	0	
105	West End Sports Ground	-	Central/East	Yes		Secure	Mini 7v7	2	Standard	0	8	8	2	Actual spare capacity of 2 MES is present.
109	Wormingford Playing Field	Great Horkesley FC Wormingford Wanderers FC	North	Yes		Secure	Adult	1	Poor	2	1	1	0	Actual spare capacity is discounted due to poor pitch quality.
							Youth 9v9	1		0.5	1	0.5	0	
129	Wivenhoe Town FC	Wivenhoe Town FC	Central/East	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Adult	1	Good	4	3	1	0	Overplay of 1 MES is present.
<b>No community use</b>														
3	Birch C of E Primary School	N/A	South	No	School	Unsecure	Mini 7v7	1	Poor	1	2	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
7	Broomgrove County Infant & Junior School	N/A	Central/East	No	School	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	2	Poor	1	4	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
8	Camulos Academy	N/A	Central/East	No	School	Unsecure	Mini 7v7	1	Poor	1	2	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
							Mini 5v5	1		1	2	-	-	
10	Chappel C of E Primary School	N/A	North	No	School	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Poor	1	2	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
12	Cherry Tree Academy	N/A	Central/East	No	School	Unsecure	Mini 7v7	1	Poor	1	2	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
19	Colchester Royal Grammar School Sports Ground	N/A	Central/East	No	School	Unsecure	Adult	1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
							Youth 11v11	2		1	2	-	-	
							Mini 5v5	1		1	2	-	-	
21	Colchester United (Florence Park Training Ground)	N/A	South	No	Professional Sports Club	Unsecure	Adult	4	Good	1	12	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
22	Colchester United (Jobserve Community Stadium)	N/A	Central/East	No	Professional Sports Club	Unsecure	Adult	1	Good	1	3	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
23	Copford C of E Primary School	N/A	West	No	School	Unsecure	Min 5v5	1	Poor	1	2	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
33	Gosbecks Primary School	N/A	Central/East	No	School	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Poor	1	2	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
34	Hazelmere Junior School	N/A	Central/East	No	School	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Poor	1	2	-	-	Unavailable for community use.

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Site ID	Site	Clubs accessing site	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch size <sup>8</sup>	No. of pitches	Quality rating	Current play (match sessions)	Pitch capacity <sup>9</sup> (match sessions)	Overused, at capacity or spare capacity	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
35	Highwood Community Primary School	N/A	Central/East	No	School	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	2	Poor	1	4	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
36	Holmwood House Preparatory School	N/A	West	No	School	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	2	Standard	1	8	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
							Youth 9v9	2		1	4	-	-	
37	Holy Trinity C of E Primary School	N/A	North	No	School	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Poor	1	2	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
38	Iceni Academy	N/A	Central/East	No	School	Unsecure	Adult	1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
43	Lakelands Primary School	N/A	West	No	School	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Poor	1	2	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
44	Langham Oaks School	N/A	North	No	School	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Poor	1	2	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
48	Layer De La Haye Primary School	N/A	South	No	School	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Poor	1	2	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
51	Littlegarth School	N/A	North	No	School	Unsecure	Adult	1	Standard	1	2	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
							Youth 9v9	4		1	8	-	-	
							Mini 5v5	3		1	8	-	-	
54	Mersea Island School	N/A	South	No	School	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Poor	1	2	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
56	Military Corrective Training Centre	N/A	Central/East	No	M.o.D	Unsecure	Adult	1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
59	Milldene Primary School	N/A	South	No	School	Unsecure	Mini 7v7	1	Poor	1	2	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
60	Monkwick Junior School	N/A	Central/East	No	School	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Poor	1	2	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
61	Montgomery Junior School	N/A	Central/East	No	School	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Poor	1	2	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
64	Parsons Heath C of E Primary School	N/A	Central/East	No	School	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Poor	1	2	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
69	Prettygate Junior School	N/A	Central/East	No	School	Unsecure	Adult	1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
72	Roach Vale Primary School	N/A	Central/East	No	School	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Poor	1	2	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
80	St James C of E Primary School	N/A	Central/East	No	School	Unsecure	Mini 7v7	1	Poor	1	2	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
82	St Lukes C of E Primary School	N/A	South	No	School	Unsecure	Youth 9v9	1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
84	St Michaels Primary and Nursery School	N/A	Central/East	No	School	Unsecure	Youth 9v9	1	Standard	1	2	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
							Mini 7v7	1		1	2	-	-	
							Mini 5v5	1		1	2	-	-	
85	St. Andrews C of E Primary School	N/A	West	No	School	Unsecure	Mini 7v7	1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
86	Stanway Fiveways Primary School	N/A	West	No	School	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
98	Tiptree Heath Primary School	N/A	South	No	School	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
101	Unity Academy	N/A	Central/East	No	School	Unsecure	Mini 7v7	1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Unavailable for community use.

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Site ID	Site	Clubs accessing site	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch size <sup>8</sup>	No. of pitches	Quality rating	Current play (match sessions)	Pitch capacity <sup>9</sup> (match sessions)	Overused, at capacity or spare capacity	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
106	Willow Brook Primary School	N/A	Central/East	No	School	Unsecure	Mini 7v7	1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
							Mini 5v5	1		1	1	-	-	
128	Paxman Academy	N/A	Central/East	No	School	Unsecure	Youth 9v9	1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Unavailable for community use.

# COLCHESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORTS ASSESSMENT REPORT

## Spare capacity

To determine 'actual spare capacity', each site with 'potential capacity identified in Table 2.14 has been reviewed. A pitch is only said to have 'actual spare capacity' if it is available for community use and available at the peak time for that format of the game. Any pitch not meeting this criterion has consequently been discounted.

Pitches that are of a poor quality are not deemed to have actual spare capacity due to their already low carrying capacity. Any identified spare capacity should be retained in order to relieve the pitches of use, which in turn, can aid the improvement of pitch quality.

Unless tenure is considered secure through the operator, school sites that are currently available for community use but unused are also not considered to have actual spare capacity as the full availability of these pitches cannot be relied upon in the long term.

The table below identifies actual spare capacity by site and pitch type across Colchester. It totals 14 match equivalent sessions per week and is identified across 19 pitches at nine sites. This represents comparatively minimal levels.

Table 2.14: Summary of actual spare capacity

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Capacity rating (sessions)
4	Birch Park	South	Youth 9v9	1	1
6	Broad Lane Sports Ground	Central/East	Mini 5v5	2	1.5
32	Gas Rec Playing Field	Central/East	Youth 9v9	1	0.5
39	King George Playing Field (Boxted)	North	Mini 7v7	1	1
40	King George V Playing Field	Central/East	Adult	1	0.5
50	Leisure World Tiptree	South	Youth 11v11	2	1
			Mini 5v5	2	1
73	Rowhedge Recreation Ground	Central/East	Youth 11v11	1	0.5
			Mini 5v5	4	3.5
76	Spring Lane Playing Field	Central/East	Mini 5v5	2	1.5
105	West End Sports Ground	Central/East	Mini 7v7	2	2

Actual spare capacity has been aggregated by area and by pitch type below.

Table 2.15: Summary of actual spare capacity

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions per week)				
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5
Central/East	0.5	0.5	0.5	2	6.5
North	-	-	-	1	-
South	-	1	1	-	1
West	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7.5</b>

In addition to the above, it is worthy of note that 22.5 match equivalent sessions of potential spare capacity per week at community use sites has been discounted due to either sites having unsecure tenure or poor pitch quality.

# COLCHESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORTS ASSESSMENT REPORT

## Overplay

Overplay occurs when there is more play accommodated on a site than it can sustain (which can often be due to reduced quality). Once pitches become overplayed, their ability to accommodate match fixtures deteriorates due to issues relating to wear and tear and a difficulty in recovering after match play.

In total, 17 pitches across 12 sites are identified as being overplayed. Total overplay equates to 15 match equivalent sessions per week. There is no overplay identified on mini 7v7 pitches.

Table 2.16: Summary of overplay

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Capacity rating (sessions)
13	Colchester Academy	Central/East	Youth 11v11	1	1.5
26	Elm Farm	North	Adult	2	0.5
39	King George Playing Field (Boxted)	North	Adult	1	3
55	Mile End Sports Ground	Central/East	Adult	2	1
66	Philip Morant School	Central/East	Youth 11v11	2	0.5
67	Poors Land	North	Mini 5v5	1	1
76	Spring Lane Playing Field	Central/East	Adult	1	1.5
			Youth 9v9	1	2.5
88	Stanway Rovers Football Club	West	Adult	1	0.5
90	Stanway Village Playing Fields	West	Youth 11v11	1	0.5
92	The Gilberd School (Leisure World Highwoods)	Central/East	Adult	2	1
103	Warriors Rest	South	Adult	1	0.5
129	Wivenhoe Town FC	Central/East	Adult	1	1

Table 2.17: Summary of overplay by analysis area

Analysis area	Overplay (match equivalent sessions per week)				
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5
Central/East	4.5	2	2.5	-	-
North	3.5				1
South	0.5			-	-
West	0.5	0.5	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>2.5</b>		<b>1</b>

# COLCHESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORTS ASSESSMENT REPORT

## 2.5: Supply and demand analysis

Having considered supply and demand, the tables below identify the current demand and future demand balance (i.e. spare capacity taking away overplay) in each of the analysis areas for each pitch type, based on match equivalent sessions.

Total future demand in Colchester is calculated from population growth using team generation rates and organic growth of two girls teams in the Central/East Analysis Area. As a reminder, this growth equates to 16 adult, 12 youth boys' teams and two youth girls teams. Future demand from club ambitions of 37 teams from 16 clubs has been discounted for now but will be included in the forthcoming strategy report as a scenario.

The table below highlights the position of adult pitch provision in Colchester.

### Adult pitch analysis

Table 2.18: Supply and demand balance of adult pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity <sup>10</sup>	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Central/East	0.5	4.5	4	12	16
North		3.5	3.5	1	4.5
South	-	0.5	0.5	2	2.5
West	-	0.5	0.5	1	1.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>24.5</b>

On a Citywide basis, there is a current an insufficient capacity of adult provision to accommodate for both existing and future demand. Furthermore, all four analysis areas are showing current overplay, with the Central/East Analysis Area being the most overplayed. Future demand worsens this shortfall to show overplay of 24.5 match equivalent sessions per week.

### Youth 11v11 pitch analysis

Table 2.19: Supply and demand balance of youth 11v11 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity <sup>11</sup>	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Central/East	0.5	2	1.5	8.5	10
North	-	-	-	1	1
South	1	-	1	2	1
West	-	0.5	0.5	1	1.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>13.5</b>

The current picture is that there is an overall shortfall of one match equivalent session per week of youth 11v11 pitches in Colchester. This minimal shortfall is exacerbated to 13.5 match equivalent sessions per week once future demand from population growth and one junior girls' team is accounted for. However, the South Analysis Area shows current actual spare capacity but this also becomes a shortfall in the future.

<sup>10</sup> In match equivalent sessions

<sup>11</sup> In match equivalent sessions

# COLCHESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORTS ASSESSMENT REPORT

## Youth 9v9 pitch analysis

Table 2.20: Supply and demand balance of youth 9v9 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity <sup>12</sup>	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Central/East	0.5	2.5	2	0.5	2.5
North	-	-	-	-	-
South	1	-	1	-	1
West	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>1.5</b>

Overall, there is insufficient supply of youth 9v9 pitches in Colchester to accommodate current demand. Future demand of one youth girls team from organic growth worsens this shortfall to 1.5 MES.

## Mini 7v7 pitch analysis

Table 2.21: Supply and demand balance of mini 7v7 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity <sup>13</sup>	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Central/East	2	-	2	-	2
North	1	-	1	-	1
South	-	-	-	-	-
West	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3</b>

The table above shows that there is a sufficient supply of mini 7v7 pitches in Colchester to accommodate current and future levels of demand. There is actual spare capacity of three match equivalent sessions per week for both current and future demand.

## Mini 5v5 pitch analysis

Table 2.22: Supply and demand balance of mini 5v5 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity <sup>14</sup>	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Central/East	6.5	-	6.5	-	6.5
North		1	1	-	1
South	1	-	1	-	1
West	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6.5</b>

The table above shows that there is insufficient supply on mini 5v5 pitches in Colchester to accommodate current levels of demand. With no future demand from population growth, there is no change to this picture moving forwards.

<sup>12</sup> In match equivalent sessions

<sup>13</sup> In match equivalent sessions

<sup>14</sup> In match equivalent sessions

# COLCHESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORTS ASSESSMENT REPORT

## 2.6: Conclusion

Having considered supply and demand position of each format of football pitch it is evident that the overall position is broadly an insufficient supply of provision in the City.

Currently, Colchester is showing one session of overplay when looking at provision from a City wide basis. However, this is only caused by actual spare capacity on mini 5v5 and mini 7v7 pitches cancelling out the identified shortfalls on adult, youth 11v11 and youth 9v9 pitches. When accounting for future demand no new shortfalls emerge but existing overplay on adult, youth 11v11 and youth 9v9 pitches are exacerbated. Actual spare capacity mini 7v7 and mini 5v5 pitches remain. Latent demand for access to additional pitches has also been expressed by 11 clubs, meaning the need for additional provision is present.

*Table 2.23: Summary of supply and demand in Colchester*

Pitch format	Actual spare capacity <sup>15</sup>	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Adult	0.5	9	8.5	16	24.5
Youth 11v11	1.5	2.5	1	12.5	13.5
Youth 9v9	1.5	2.5	1	0.5	1.5
Mini 7v7	3	-	3	-	3
Mini 5v5	7.5	1	6.5	-	6.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>

<sup>15</sup> In match equivalent sessions

# COLCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORTS ASSESSMENT REPORT

### **Football – grass pitch summary**

- ◀ There is currently an insufficient supply of adult, youth 11v11 and youth 9v9 pitches.
- ◀ There is currently a sufficient capacity of mini 7v7 and mini 5v5 pitches.

### **Grass football pitch supply:**

- ◀ The audit identifies a total of 196 grass football pitches across 75 sites. Of these, 139 are available, at some level, for community use across 41 sites. All unavailable pitches are located at education sites with the exception to one M.o.D site and Colchester United's training ground at Florence Park and its first team pitch the Jobserve Community Stadium.

### **Grass football pitch quality:**

- ◀ Of the 139 pitches which offer community use, 35 pitches are assessed as good quality, 69 as standard quality and 35 as poor quality. The identified good quality pitches are located at ten sites, those being Broad Lane Sports Ground, Colchester Academy, the one community accessible pitch at Florence Park, Mile End Sports Ground, Spring Lane Playing Field, Stanway Rovers FC, Stanway Village Playing Fields, the University of Essex Sports Centre, Warriors Rest and Wivenhoe Town FC.

### **Affiliated football demand:**

- ◀ Through the audit and assessment, 408 teams from 88 clubs are identified as playing in Colchester. This consists of 147 adult men's, seven adult women's, 154 youth boys', 22 youth girls' and 78 mini mixed teams.
- ◀ Future demand equates to the growth of 16 adult and 12 youth boys teams based on team generation rates, as well as two youth girls teams from organic growth following the Women's 2022 Euro's. Club growth ambitions of 37 teams have been discounted.
- ◀ The PPOSS Strategy & Action Plan will contain a housing growth scenario that will estimate the additional demand for football arising from housing development.

### **Supply vs demand analysis conclusions:**

- ◀ There is broadly a sufficient supply of provision in Colchester to accommodate demand on mini 7v7 and mini 5v5 pitch types.
- ◀ There are existing shortfalls on adult, youth 11v11 and youth 9v9 pitches.
- ◀ Future demand exacerbates shortfalls on adult, youth 11v11 and youth 9v9 pitches to give an overall picture of 29 MES of overplay for the City.
- ◀ There is spare capacity for mini 7v7 and mini 5v5 pitches both now and in the future.

**PART 3: THIRD GENERATION TURF (3G) PITCHES**

**3.1: Introduction**

Third generation (3G) artificial grass pitches utilise longer fibres with a combination of rubber and sand infill to offer heightened performance. They are predominately used for football matches but most commonly for football training. They can also be used for rugby matches dependent upon being constructed to World Rugby Regulation 22.

Competitive football can take place on 3G artificial grass pitches that have been FIFA or International Matchball Standard tested and approved by the FA for inclusion on the FA Pitch Register<sup>16</sup>. As such, a growing number of 3G artificial grass pitches are now used for competitive match play, provided that the performance standard meets FIFA Quality (previously FIFA One Star), as well as for training purposes. Football training does, however, take place on hockey suitable artificial grass pitches (please refer to Part 6: Artificial grass pitches for greater explanation on pitch specifications) but is not the preferred option.

World Rugby produced the ‘Performance Specification for artificial grass pitches for rugby’<sup>17</sup>, more commonly known as ‘Regulation 22’ that provides the necessary technical detail to produce pitch systems that are appropriate for rugby union. The artificial surface standards identified in Regulation 22 allows matches to be played on surfaces that meet the standard, meaning full contact activity, including tackling, rucking, mauling and lineouts, can take place.

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 artificial grass pitch used for any form of competitive rugby or contact training must comply with this specification and must be tested every two years to retain compliance.

England Hockey’s Artificial Grass Playing Surface Policy (updated June 2018)<sup>18</sup> advises that third generation artificial grass 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 artificial grass pitches are available.

*Table 3.1: 3G type and sport suitability*

Surface	Category	Comments
Rubber crumb	Long Pile 3G (60mm with shock pad)	Rugby surface – must comply with World Rugby regulation 22 and/or RFL Community Standard, requires a minimum of 60mm pile.
Rubber crumb	Medium Pile 3G (55-60mm)	Preferred football surface. Suitable for non-contact rugby union/league practice or play.
Rubber crumb	Short Pile 3G (40mm)	Acceptable surface for some competitive football, able to be used for low level curricular hockey.

It should be noted that the FA generally refers to 3G pitches as 3G football turf pitches, though this term is not adopted in this PPOSS as 3G pitches can be and are used for other sports including rugby union, rugby league, lacrosse and American football, amongst others.

<sup>16</sup> [Football Foundation | 3G Pitch Register](#)

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.world.rugby/handbook/regulations/reg-22/>

<sup>18</sup> [Deliver - Developing Your Project | England Hockey](#)

# COLCHESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORTS ASSESSMENT REPORT

## 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 100 x 60 metres (inclusive of run offs) are considered to be full size due to the amount of demand they can accommodate.

On the above basis, there are seven full size 3G pitches provided in Colchester. There are also 13 small sided pitches of varying scales located within the area, most of which are located at education and commercially operated sites. A breakdown of the supply is below.

Table 3.2: 3G pitch supply summary:

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Community use?	Pitch size	Surface type	Number of pitches	Floodlit?
<b>Full size</b>							
50	Leisure World Tiptree	South	Yes	110m x 73	Short Pile 3G (40mm)	1	Yes
62	Northern Gateway Sports Park	Central/ East	Yes	130m x 80m	Long Pile 3G (60mm with shock pad)	1	Yes
				120m x 80m	Medium Pile 3G (55mm-60mm)	1	
66	Philip Morant School	Central/ East	Yes	106m x 70m	Medium Pile 3G (55mm-60mm)	1	Yes
75	Shrub End Sports Ground	Central/ East	Yes	104m x 70m	Short Pile 3G (40mm)	1	Yes
89	Stanway School	West	Yes	106m x 70m	Medium Pile 3G (55mm-60mm)	1	Yes
128	Paxman Academy	Central/ East	No	105m x 70m	Medium Pile 3G (55mm-60mm)	1	No
<b>Small sided</b>							
22	Colchester United (Jobserve Community Stadium)	Central /East	Yes	41m x 22m	Short Pile 3G (40mm)	2	Yes
43	Lakelands Primary School	West	Yes	60m x 40m	Short Pile 3G (40mm)	1	No
68	Power League (Colchester)	Central/ East	Yes	45m x 33m	Short Pile 3G (40mm)	2	Yes
				40m x 30m		1	
				30m x 20m		4	
86	Stanway Fiveways Primary School	West	No	36m x 19m	Medium Pile 3G (55mm-60mm)	1	Yes
95	The Sixth Form College Colchester	Central/ East	No	35m x 25m	Short Pile 3G (40mm)	1	Yes
103	Warriors Rest	South	Yes	57m x 39m	Short Pile 3G (40mm)	1	Yes

Of the existing 3G pitches across Colchester, 18 are available for community use (six full size and 12 small sided). The instances of 3G pitches without current access is the Paxman Academy as the site has only recently been installed and is yet to be serviced by floodlights,

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as well as Stanway Fiveways Primary School and the Sixth Form College Colchester which service curricular demand only. Finally, the pitch at Lakelands Primary School is open to community use but is not serviced by floodlights.

## Management

The management and availability of sites is summarised in the table below.

Table 3.3: 3G pitch operator and opening times breakdown:

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Community use?	Pitch size	Operator
50	Leisure World Tiptree	South	Yes	Full size	Council
62	Northern Gateway Sports Park	Central/ East	Yes	2 x Full sized	Council
66	Philip Morant School	Central/ East	Yes	Full size	School
75	Shrub End Sports Ground	Central/ East	Yes	Full size	Sports Club
89	Stanway School	West	Yes	Full size	School
128	Paxman Academy	Central/ East	No	Full size	School
22	Colchester United (Jobserve Community Stadium)	Central/ East	Yes	41m x 22m	Sports Club
43	Lakelands Primary School	West	Yes	60m x 40m	SchoolHire
68	Power League (Colchester)	Central/ East	Yes	45m x 33m	Commercial
				40m x 30m	
				30m x 20m	
86	Stanway Fiveways Primary School	West	No	36m x 19m	School
95	The Sixth Form College Colchester	Central/ East	No	35m x 25m	School
103	Warriors Rest	South	Yes	57m x 39m	Sports Club

## Future provision

### Colchester LFFP

The Colchester LFFP identifies two full size 3G pitches and one small sided 3G pitch for the City. It identifies Broad Lane Sports Ground, Shrub End Sports Ground and The Glebe (West Mersea) as the three potential sites for the installation of new 3G provision.

A key target within the LFFP is for the Council and football partners to collectively work towards the development of a 3G stadia pitch (akin to the plans outlined in the football section of this report by Essex FA) to promote a platform for performance level football to thrive locally.

Given that the LFFP is a live document informed by an up-to-date PPOSS, it may need to be re-assessed following the findings and recommendations of this study.

## COLCHESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORTS ASSESSMENT REPORT

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The validity of these projects will be assessed in the PPOSS Strategy & Action Plan with recommendations around portfolio inclusions or expulsions.

### *Broad Lane Sports Ground*

The site features nine grass pitches, all of which, are of a good quality and are accessed by Wivenhoe Tempest FC and Wivenhoe Town FC. The University of Essex is keen to be involved in developing/managing a potential 3G pitch at the site given its location from the University.

### *Shrub End Sports Ground*

Shrub End Sports Ground features seven standard quality grass adult pitches and a full size 3G pitch. The rationale for the installation of a second 3G pitch is that the existing pitch is played to capacity.

### *The Glebe (West Mersea)*

The site accommodates six football pitches of varying formats as well as two senior rugby pitches in winter, whilst in summer the site provides two cricket squares. It is under the ownership and management of Mersea Island Sports Association (MISA) which has been granted S106 funds following a recent housing development neighbouring the site. The investment of these funds is to re-design the existing ancillary provision to better cater for rugby demand.

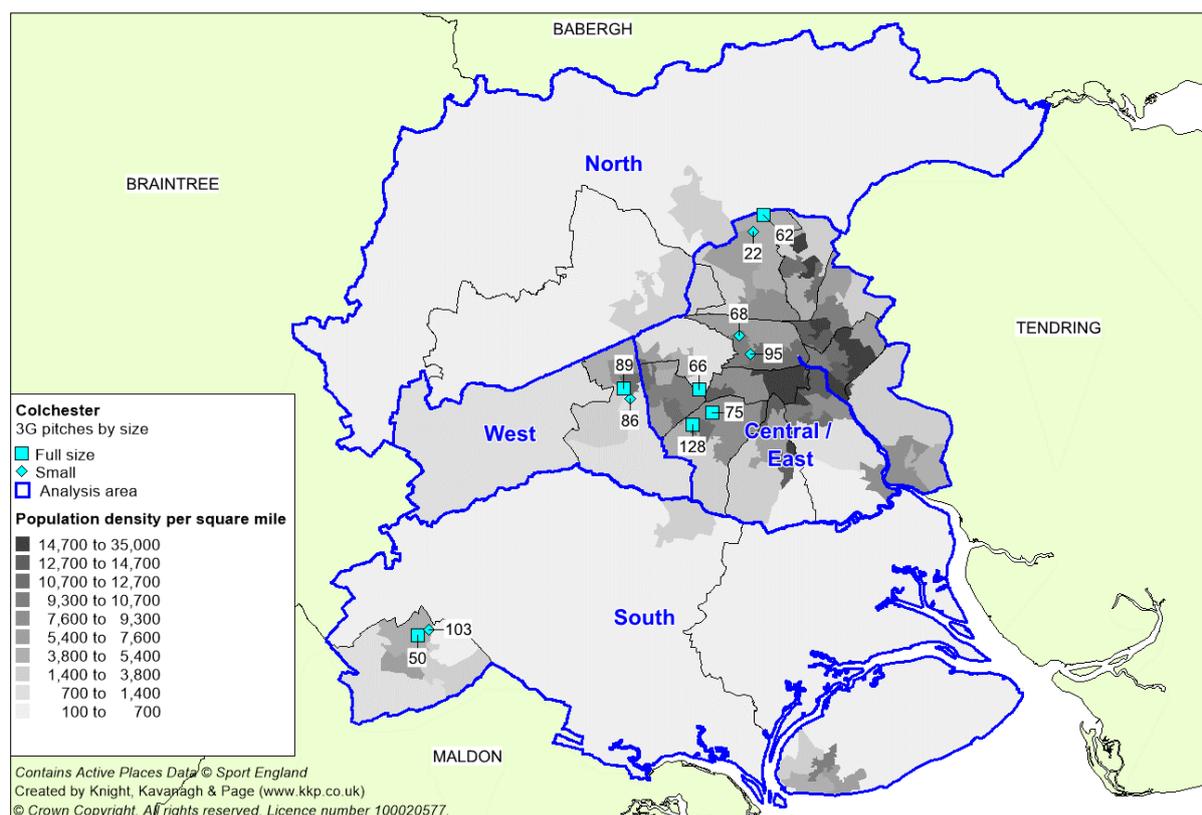
In addition to the sites outlined above, the AGP at Colchester Leisure World is in discussions of being converted to a 3G pitch, with funding for the project still to be sourced. Finally, Stanway Rovers FC has long term ambitions of converting its adult pitch into a 3G surface.

Given that the LFFP is a live document informed by an up-to-date PPOSS, it may need to be re-assessed following the findings and recommendations of this study.

Figure 3.1 identifies all 3G pitches servicing Colchester. For a key to the map, see Table 3.2.

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Figure 3.1: Location of 3G pitches servicing Colchester



## FA Pitch Register

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: <http://3g.thefa.me.uk/>.

## World Rugby (WR) compliant pitches

To enable 3G pitches to host competitive rugby union matches, WR has developed the Rugby Turf Performance Specification.

This is to ensure that the surfaces 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.

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 and contact training must comply with this specification and must be tested every two years to retain compliance.

Table 3.4: 3G accreditation position of full size pitches

Site ID	Site	Accreditation type	Accreditation expiry
50	Leisure World Tiptree	FA approved	31/05/24
62	Northern Gateway Sports Park	1 x WR22 Compliant	2022
		-	-
66	Philip Morant School	FIFA approved	31/05/25

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Site ID	Site	Accreditation type	Accreditation expiry
75	Shrub End Sports Ground	FA approved	31/05/23
89	Stanway School	FIFA approved	31/05/23
128	Paxman Academy	-	-

As it stands, there is one WR compliant 3G pitch provided in Colchester, located at the Northern Gateway Sports Park. This is primarily used by Colchester Rugby Club as its main playing surface. From a football perspective, four pitches are either FA or FIFA approved meaning they can be used for competitive play.

Two pitches at The Northern Gateway Sports Park and one at Paxman Academy are currently not accredited for competitive football play.

## **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.

Taking the above into account, the quality of third generation artificial grass pitches across Colchester have been assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments as determined by the FA) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◀ Good
- ◀ Standard
- ◀ Poor

The 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.

The pitches available at The Northern Gateway Sports Park, Lakelands Primary School, Philip Morant, Paxman Academy and Stanway Fiveways Primary School are the only provision deemed of good quality, with all five sites providing either new, or recently refurbished surfaces.

Provision at Leisure World Tiptree, Powerleague (Colchester), Shrub End Sports Ground, Stanway School and Warriors Rest are all standard quality.

Finally, the small sided provision at Colchester United's (Jobserve Community Stadium) and the Sixth Form College Colchester both represent poor quality provision with both sites not having replaced its surfaces since 2008 for the former and 2007 for the latter.

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Table 3.5: Age and quality of 3G pitches in Colchester

Site ID	Site	Pitch type	Year installed or resurfaced	Quality
22	Colchester United (Jobserve Community Stadium)	41m x 22m	2008	Poor
43	Lakelands Primary School	60m x 40m	2022	Good
50	Leisure World Tiptree	Full size	2004 / 2017	Standard
62	Northern Gateway Sports Park	Full size	2020	Good
		Full size		
66	Phillip Morant School	Full size	2018	Good
68	Power League (Colchester)	45m x 33m	2015	Standard
		40m x 30m		
		30m x 20m		
75	Shrub End Sports Ground	Full size	2006 / 2015	Standard
86	Stanway Fiveways Primary School	36m x 19m	2018	Good
89	Stanway School	Full size	2016	Standard
95	The Sixth Form College Colchester	35m x 25m	2007	Poor
103	Warriors Rest	36m x 18m	2016	Standard
128	Paxman Academy	100m x 66m	2022	Good

## Ancillary facilities

The ancillary facility provided at Leisure World Tiptree is of standard quality with the site also catering for indoor swimming as well as an outdoor 3G pitch.

Northern Gateway Sports Park has a brand new good quality clubhouse featuring eight changing rooms, all of which, are of an RFU specification or above. The site also has two function rooms and a large car park for members to utilise.

Philip Morant has changing facilities accessible to football users of the site as well as an ample amount of parking.

Accompanying Shrub End Sports Ground is a good quality community hall and study area managed by Colchester United FC. The site is bookable through the football club and can be used for functions or meetings for the general public.

Stanway School has five good quality changing rooms with a functioning boiler that is accessed by Stanway Pegasus FC which frequently access the site.

Warriors Rest is accompanied by three portacabin changing rooms, two of which, are usable. Tiptree Jobserve FC also has access to an on-site good quality bowling green clubhouse servicing Tiptree Jobserve BC. Powerleague (Colchester) provides changing rooms as well as a bar serving teas and coffees to people accessing the site.

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## 3.3: Demand

The following table summarises the availability of all 3G pitches in Colchester which are available for community use. In addition, it records the availability of provision within the peak period. Sport England's Facilities Planning Model (FPM) applies an overall peak period for AGPs of 34 hours a week (Monday to Thursday 17:00-21:00; Friday 17:00-19:00; Saturday and Sunday 09:00-17:00). This equates to a peak time midweek available usage of 18 hours and a peak time weekend usage of 16 hours.

Table 3.6: Availability and capacity of full-size provision summary (full size pitches)

Site ID	Site	Management	Opening hours	Total hours available in peak period
50	Leisure World Tiptree	Council	Facility opens to the general public from 17:30-22:30 on week days and 09:00-17:00 on weekends.	16 hours midweek 16 hours weekend
62	Northern Gateway Sports Park	Council	Facility opens to the general public from 17:00 to 22:00 midweek and 08:00 to 20:00 on weekends.	18 hours midweek 16 hours weekend
66	Philip Morant School	School	Facility opens to the general public from 17:00 to 21:30 midweek. 08:30 – 17:30 Saturdays and 10:00 – 16:00 Sundays.	18 hours midweek 16 hours weekend
75	Shrub End Sports Ground	Sports Club	Facility opens to the general public from 09:00 to 21:00 midweek and from 09:00 to 19:00 on weekends.	18 hours midweek 16 hours weekend
89	Stanway School	School	Facility opens to the public from 16:30 to 21:00 midweek, 10:00 to 16:00 on Saturdays and 10:00 till 14:00 on Sundays.	18 hours midweek 14 hours weekend
128	Paxman Academy	School	<i>No community use</i>	0

The small sided pitches at Power League (Colchester) are fully available within the peak period.

Stanway Pegasus FC accesses several grounds for home fixtures including the 3G provision at Powerleague (Colchester). The Club state it has reached a ten year agreement at Stanway School for ten hours of full 3G pitch access spread across Tuesday evenings and Saturday afternoons. The regional feeder league club hope that after the ten year partnership with Stanway School it shall be in a strong enough position to gain its own site capable of reaching ground grading.

Usage of the WR22 compliant 3G pitch at Northern Gateway Sports Park is reserved to Colchester RFC on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings from 18:00 to 21:00 which is legally agreed within the club's tenure of its site. As such the pitch services little towards accommodating football demand.

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## **Football**

The FA considers high quality 3G pitches as an essential tool in promoting coach and player development. The pitches can support intensive use and as such are great assets for football use. Primarily, such facilities have been installed for social use and training, however, they are increasingly used for competition, which The FA wholly supports.

### *Training demand*

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

Of the 44 responsive football clubs, 21 report that they require additional training facilities and specifically mention demand for 3G pitches, which equates to 182 teams combined. Some teams currently access indoor sports halls, whilst others use the sand dressed AGP at the University of Essex Sports Centre to enable all participants an ability to train. In some instances, clubs are forced to cancel training sessions purely due to the lack of facilities available within the area. Clubs that express a need for more 3G pitches are listed in the table below.

*Table 3.7: Latent demand for 3G pitches*

<b>Club</b>	<b>Number of teams</b>	<b>Analysis Area</b>	<b>Need for more/better training facilities</b>
Abbey Fields FC	1	South	✓
Belle Vue Social Club	1	Central/East	✓
Boxted Lodgers FC	5	North	✓
Brooklands FC	12	Central/East	✓
Colchester MVF FC	1	South	✓
Colchester Villa FC	25	Central/East	✓
Feering Falcons FC	10	North	✓
Hamilton FC	5	Central/East	✓
Layer Colts FC	19	Central/East	✓
Marks Tey FC	1	West	✓
Roman Colts FC	1	Central/East	✓
Rowhedge FC	18	Central/East	✓
St Edmunds FC	2	Central/East	✓
Stanway Pegasus FC	15	Central/East	✓
Stanway Villa YFC	25	West	✓
Stillwaters FC	1	Central/East	✓
West Bergholt FC	2	North	✓
Wivenhoe Tempest FC	19	Central/East	✓
Wivenhoe Town FC	12	Central/East	✓
Wivenhoe United FC	3	Central/East	✓
Wormingford Wanderers FC	4	North	✓
<b>Total number of teams</b>	182 teams		

Throughout the consultation process the point most stressed by football clubs across Colchester is either the need for grass pitch enhancements or increasing the number of 3G pitches available within the City.

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Furthermore, Fifteen Degrees FC which has one team, exports demand outside of Colchester to travel to Colne Engaine FC (Braintree) for home fixtures also raised the desire for additional 3G pitch access.

### Football supply and demand analysis

The FA's long-term ambition is to provide every affiliated team in England the opportunity to train once per week on a floodlit 3G surface, together with priority access for every England football accreditation club through a partnership agreement. In order to calculate the number of football teams a 3G pitch can service for training, peak time access is considered to be from 18:00 until 22:00 Tuesday-Thursday resulting in an overall peak period of 12 hours per week. Mondays and Fridays are not included within this calculation as it is considered that most teams do not want to train in such close proximity to a weekend match (although these times slots are often popular as a recreational offer).

To ensure the current supply and any future supply is of a good enough standard to accommodate demand, providers are encouraged to put sinking funds in place to ensure long-term sustainability. This will allow for re-surfacing to take place when required and will ensure that FA certification remains in place.

Full size 3G pitches are divided into thirds or quarters for training purposes meaning they can accommodate either three or four teams per hour and either 36 or 48 teams per week (during the peak training period). Based on an average of these numbers, it is estimated that 38 teams can be accommodated on one full size 3G pitch for training.

Given the above, with 408 teams currently affiliating to Colchester, there is a theoretical need for 10.75 full size 3G pitch equivalents (rounded up from 10.74) to accommodate all affiliated training demand.

As there are currently five full size pitches open to community use across the City, there is a theoretical need for an additional 5.75 full size pitches to accommodate football training demand. It is noted that one of the 3G pitches at the Northern Gateway Sports Park accommodates a majority rugby union programming operation and has therefore been discounted from the current supply for table 3.8 as it does not exist to service football demand.

The table below considers the number of full size 3G pitches required if every team was to remain training within the analysis area in which they play. As can be seen, there are existing shortfalls of provision in three of the four analysis areas, with the West Analysis Area accommodating enough supply to match the existing demand. None of the four analysis areas provide an oversupply of provision.

*Table 3.8: Current demand for 3G pitches in Colchester (based on 38 teams per pitch)*

Analysis area	Current number of teams	Full size 3G requirement <sup>19</sup>	Current number of 3G pitches	Theoretical shortfall
Central/East	274	7.25	3	4.25
North	43	1	0	1
South	62	1.5	1	0.5
West	29	1	1	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>408</b>	<b>10.75</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5.75</b>

<sup>19</sup> Figure rounded up to the nearest 0.25.

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It is also worth noting that despite a theoretical shortfall of two pitches in North Analysis Area, two of the three sites proposed for new full size 3G pitches are located within the Central/East Analysis Area, meaning if such developments at Broad Lane Sports Ground and Shrub End Sports Ground were to go ahead, this could contribute towards addressing the identified shortfall within this area.

The table below examines what the need for 3G pitches is based on future demand identified in the football section of this report (Part 2: Football Pitches). Future demand is based on population increases (TGRs) which are identified in the football section of this report.

*Table 3.9: Future demand for 3G pitches in Colchester (based on 38 teams per pitch)*

Analysis area	Future number of teams <sup>20</sup>	Full size 3G requirement <sup>21</sup>	Current number of 3G pitches	Theoretical shortfall
Central/East	297	7.75	3	4.75
North	45	1	0	1
South	66	1.75	1	0.75
West	31	1	1	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>439</b>	<b>11.5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6.5</b>

Based on the above, the overall shortfall increases to five full size, floodlit 3G pitches, this is based on future demand through team generation rates equating to 28 teams. Increases of facility need can be attributed to the Central/East Analysis Area.

### *Football 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, floodlit and available for community use during the peak period, and the location does not have an impact on other pitch sports.

The forthcoming Strategy & Action Plan will explore scenarios for the 3G pitch requirement for competitive match play and will include a focus on accommodating both mini and youth football.

### **3.4: Conclusion**

In conclusion, there is an insufficient supply of full size 3G pitches to meet current and anticipated future football training demand based on the FA training model, in Colchester. As such, it is determined that an increase in provision is required, with the most explicit need identified in the Central/East Analysis Area.

<sup>20</sup> Future demand based on participation increases and TGRs as per the football section of the report.

<sup>21</sup> Figure rounded up to the nearest 0.25.

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### 3G summary

#### **Supply:**

- There are seven full size 3G pitches within Colchester, six of which are open to community use. In addition to this there are 13 small sided 3G pitches, of which 11 are open to community use with Stanway Fiveways Primary School and the Sixth Form College Colchester servicing curricular demand only. The one pitch at Paxman Academy is not open to community use having only been installed in 2022 and not being accompanied by floodlights.
- Full size 3G pitches provided at Leisure World Tiptree, Northern Gateway Sports Park, Phillip Morant School, Shrub End Sports and the Ground Stanway School are open to community use. The 3G pitch located at Paxman Academy is non community accessible.
- Pitches located at Leisure World Tiptree and Shrub End Sports Ground are both on the FA register for football match play and can therefore be used to accommodate competitive matches. In the case of the pitches at Phillip Morant School and Stanway School, both are FIFA approved making the provision an even higher quality surface. The pitches provided at Shrub End Sports Ground and Stanway School are scheduled to expire as of June 2023.
- There is one World Rugby compliant 3G pitch in Colchester located at the Northern Gateway Sports Park, with Colchester RFC being partnered to the site which access it frequently for training and match play purposes.

#### **Quality:**

- The pitches located at The Northern Gateway Sports Park, Lakelands Primary School, Phillip Morant, Paxman Academy and Stanway Fiveways Primary School are deemed of a good quality; with the Leisure World Tiptree, Powerleague (Colchester), Shrub End Sports Ground, Stanway School and Warriors Rest all resembling the standard quality provision across the City. Finally, the pitches found at Colchester United's (Jobserve Community Stadium) and the Sixth Form College Colchester resemble the only poor quality provision within Colchester.
- The ancillary provision provided at Northern Gateway Sports Park Shrub End Sports Ground and Stanway School is all of a good quality. The remaining sites provide ancillary provision of a varying quality.

#### **Supply vs demand analysis:**

- With 408 football teams currently affiliated to Colchester, there is a need for 10.75 full size pitch equivalents to service current levels of demand. Future demand increases this requirement to 11.5 pitches.
- With five full size pitches within Colchester servicing football demand, there is the need for a further 5.75 of such pitch equivalents to be built. This figure excludes one of the full-size pitch at Northern Gateway Sports Park that exists to service Rugby demand.
- When studying demand by analysis area, shortfalls are apparent in three of the four PPOSS analysis areas, with the biggest area of need being Central/East Analysis Area which has a current shortfall of 4.25 and future shortfall of 4.75 full size 3G pitches.
- Sites outlined in the LFFP for the installation of new full size provision would successfully resolve the existing shortfalls in the Central/East Analysis Area.

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## PART 4: RUGBY UNION PITCHES

### 4.1: Introduction

The Rugby Football Union (RFU) is the national governing body for rugby union. It is split into six areas across the Country with a workforce team that covers development, coaching, governance and competitions, of which Colchester falls into the South East region.

The rugby union playing season operates from September to May, with senior men's fixtures being held on Saturday afternoons whilst ladies, juniors and mini fixtures are held on Sundays.

#### **Consultation**

There are two rugby union clubs based in Colchester. Both clubs were responsive to consultation attempts, giving a response rate of 100%. Consultation was undertaken via both face to face and virtual meetings.

*Table 4.1: Summary of consultation*

Club name	Responded?
Colchester RFC	Yes
Mersea Island RFC	Yes

### 4.2: Supply

There is a total of 43 rugby union pitches identified within Colchester across 14 sites. Of these, 18 are available for community use across six sites. This figure consists of 11 senior pitches, 7 junior pitch and zero mini pitches. Unavailable pitches are located at education sites, M.O.D sites and the former home of Colchester RFC Millroad Recreation Ground.

*Table 4.2: Total supply of rugby union pitches by analysis area*

Analysis area	Number of pitches	% of provision
Central/East	33	76%
North	3	7%
South	2	5%
West	5	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>100%</b>

Most provision is within the Central/East Analysis Area, where a total of 33 pitches are identified (this includes pitches which are unavailable for community use). Comparatively, the South Analysis Area features two rugby pitches.

A site-by-site breakdown of identified provision can be found in the table overleaf.

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Table 4.3: Supply of rugby union pitches

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Community accessible?	No. of senior pitches	No. of junior pitches	No. of mini pitches
13	Colchester Academy	Central/ East	No	1	-	-
19	Colchester Royal Grammar School Sports Ground	Central/ East	No	1	2	-
25	Corporal Budd VC Gymnasium	Central/ East	No	2	-	-
36	Holmwood House Preparatory School	West	Yes	-	4	-
51	Littlegarth School	North	No	1	2	-
57	Millroad Recreation Ground	Central/ East	No	5	4	4
62	Northern Gateway Sports Park	Central/ East	Yes	4	3	-
66	Philip Morant School	Central/ East	Yes	2	-	-
77	St Benedicts Catholic College	Central/ East	No	1	-	-
79	St Helena School	Central/ East	No	-	1	-
89	Stanway School	West	Yes	1	-	-
93	The Glebe (West Mersea)	South	Yes	2	-	-
97	The Thomas Lord Audley School	Central/ East	No	1	-	-
102	University of Essex sports Centre	Central/ East	Yes	2	-	-

Traditionally, mini and junior rugby takes place on over marked senior pitches. This is something that takes place for junior teams across Colchester as junior teams from Mersea Island RFC access senior pitches for both training and competitive matches. The RFU stresses that junior and mini teams accessing senior provision should not be advocated and should be avoided, if possible, to minimise overplay and enable a truer pitch demand capacity to be drawn.

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

Table 4.4: Pitch dimensions

Age	Pitch type	Maximum pitch dimensions (metres) <sup>22</sup>
U7	Mini	20 x 12
U8	Mini	45 x 22
U9	Mini	60 x 30
U10	Mini	60 x 35
U11	Mini	60 x 43
U12	Mini	60 x 43

<sup>22</sup> Recommended run off area for all pitch types requires five-metres each way and a minimum in-goal length of six metres.

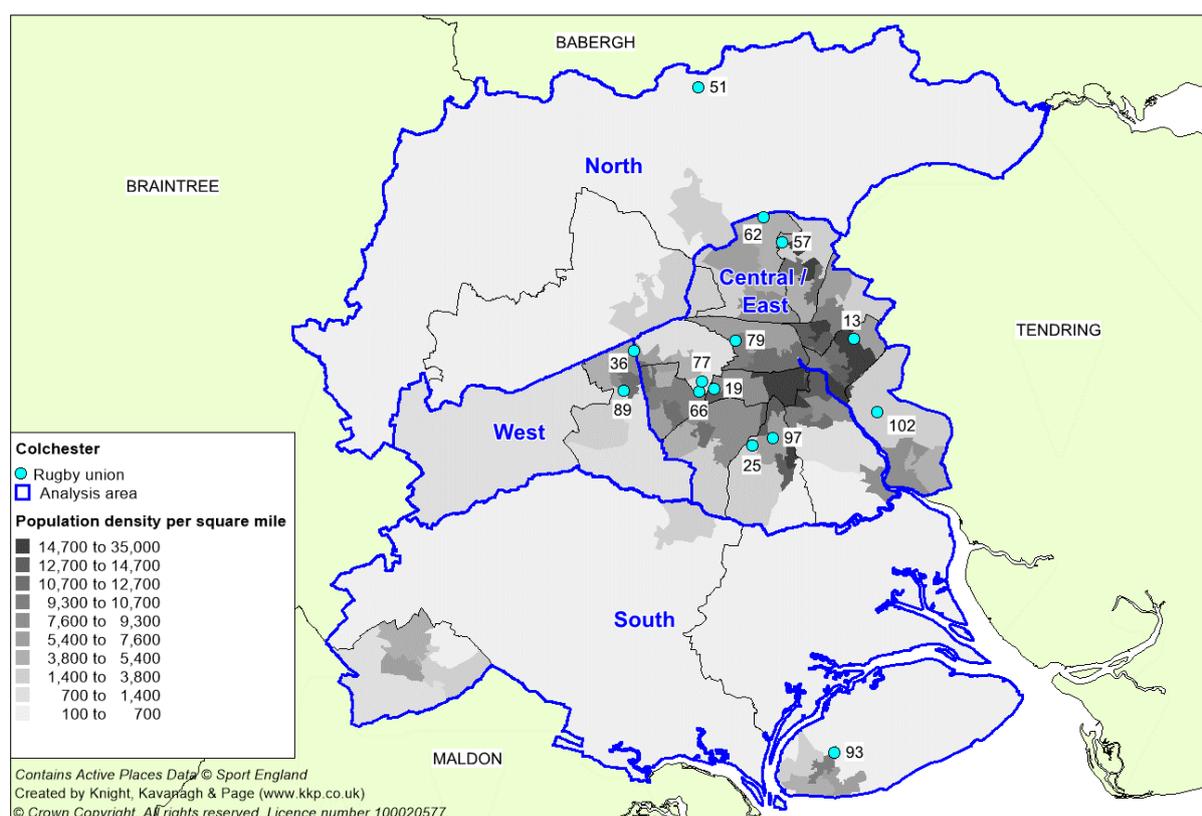
# COLCHESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORTS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Age	Pitch type	Maximum pitch dimensions (metres) <sup>22</sup>
U13	Junior	90 x 60 (60 x 43 for girls)
U14 +	Senior	100 x 70 <sup>23</sup>

## Changes to supply

Millroad Recreation Ground, former home to Colchester RFC accommodates five senior, four junior and four mini pitches. Following the Club's relocation to Northern Gateway Sports Park in 2021, the site has now been outlined for housing development.

Figure 4.1: Rugby union pitches (community use only)



## Security of tenure

Security of tenure refers to the rights of occupation on playing field and infrastructure. Clubs and stakeholders generally fall into the bracket of owner-occupier, tenant or licensee.

The table below identifies the current tenure position of each rugby union club based on information collated during the consultation. The broad position is that all clubs have secure tenure positions, and this will remain the case over the lifespan of the PPOSS.

<sup>23</sup> 94 x 68m are the minimum dimensions defined for an international pitch.

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Table 4.5: Rugby union clubs security of tenure

Club	Tenure arrangement	Secure?
Colchester RFC	57 year lease with Colchester City Council signed in 2021. Lease covers all grass pitches, its 3G pitch weekly usage, the clubhouse and an allocation of parking.	Yes
Mersea Island RFC	Club has a 25-year lease agreement with Colchester City Council for the non-floodlit pitch signed in 2016. The remaining pitches and clubhouse is under the ownership of West Mersea Island TC and managed by Mersea Island Sports Association which is working to gain a long term lease for the site.	Yes

## Pitch quality

The quality of rugby pitches has been assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments as determined by RFU) 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. A breakdown of actions required based on the ratings can be seen below:

Table 4.6: Definition of maintenance categories

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

Table 4.7: Definition of drainage categories

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

Table 4.8: Quality ratings based on maintenance and drainage scores

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

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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 4.9 below outlines the quality breakdown of all pitches across Colchester, whilst table 4.10 breaks the quality down for pitches open to community use.

*Table 4.9: Quality breakdown of all playing provision*

Pitch Scale	Good Quality	Standard Quality	Poor Quality	Total
Senior	6	9	8	<b>23</b>
Junior	3	6	7	<b>16</b>
Mini	-	-	4	<b>4</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>43</b>

*Table 4.10: Quality breakdown of community accessible playing provision*

Pitch Scale	Good Quality	Standard Quality	Poor Quality	Total
Senior	6	4	1	<b>11</b>
Junior	3	4	-	<b>7</b>
Mini	-	-	-	<b>-</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>18</b>

Based on the above criteria, there are nine good quality, 15 standard and 19 poor quality pitches. When broken down by provision open to community use, there are 11 senior pitches, six of which are good quality, four are deemed standard and one as poor; as well as seven junior pitches of which three are of a good quality and four assessed as standard.

The remaining eight sites feature a mix of both standard and poor-quality pitches. Provision found at Colchester Royal Grammar School Sports Ground, Corporal Budd VC Gymnasium, St Benedicts Catholic College and The Thomas Audley School total five senior and two junior pitches, all of which, is standard quality. The remaining provision found at Colchester Academy, Littlegarth School, Millroad Recreation Ground and St Helena School is poor quality. All these pitches receive limited maintenance generally consisting of regular grass cutting. There is on occasional ad-hoc programmes undertaken such as weed killing and fertilisation, but this is not undertaken with consistency to ascertain an M1 maintenance rating. The exception to this occurs at Millroad Recreation Ground where the pitches are no longer maintained.

From a community club perspective, Colchester RFC is serviced by good quality provision, whilst Mersea Island RFC has standard quality playing provision across both its pitches at The Glebe (West Mersea).

Following an RFU pitch assessment at the beginning of 2022 to the two senior pitches at The Glebe (West Mersea) it was deemed that the quantity of weeds on both pitches was the major factor resulting in the initial poor quality rating, furthermore the grass length should be raised to 40mm-50mm as it is currently cut to 20mm to align with football provision also on site. Following this inspection, the Club has since invested in maintenance improvements to the two senior pitches. Work to improve the quality of playing provision began in February 2022 and involved slitting, verti-draining, weed spraying, fertilising and overseeding both pitches. As such its provision has since improved and is now standard quality. The RFU confirms the grass is now building better towards perennial rye, which it considers a far better quality grass for Rugby pitches.

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Having relocated to Northern Gateway Sports Park in 2021, Colchester RFC refer to the junior grass pitches being installed later than the other provision therefore unavailable throughout the 2021/22 season, resulting in the Club using the senior and WR22 3G pitches for junior demand. However, the junior pitches will be available as of the 2022/23 season.

The Club also state it was somewhat disappointed in the quality of playing provision at the Northern Gateway Sports Park. The pitches feature full pipe drainage across all four senior pitches, yet drainage can still be an issue.

Finally, accompanying the grass pitches at Northern Gateway Sports Park are two good quality 3G pitches, one of which, is of a World Rugby 22 compliant. This is used heavily by Colchester RFC for both training and match play purposes.

Please refer to Table 4.11 overleaf for a breakdown of pitch quality.

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Table 4.11: Site quality ratings at rugby union sites

Site ID	Site name	Club using the site	Analysis area	Number of grass pitches	Floodlit?	Pitch type	Non-technical assessment score	Quality rating
36	Holmwood House Preparatory School	-	Central/East	4	No	4 Junior	M1/D1	Standard
62	Northern Gateway Sports Park	Colchester RUFC	Central/East	7	Yes 2 Senior	4 Senior 3 Junior	M2/D2	Good
66	Philip Morant School		Central/East	2	No	2 Senior	M1/D1	Standard
89	Stanway School		West	1	No	1 Senior	M1/D0	Poor
93	The Glebe (West Mersea)	Mersea Island RUFC	South	2	Yes 1 Senior plus additional floodlit area	2 Senior	M2/D0	Standard
102	University of Essex sports Centre		Central/East	2	No	2 Senior	M1/D1	Good
<b>No community use</b>								
13	Colchester Academy	-	Central/East	1	No	1 Senior	M1/D0	Poor
19	Colchester Royal Grammar School Sports Ground	-	Central/East	3	No	1 Senior 2 Junior	M1/D1	Standard
25	Corporal Budd VC Gymnasium	-	Central/East	2	No	2 Senior	M1/D1	Standard
51	Littlegarth School	-	North	3	No	1 Senior 2 Junior	M1/D0	Poor
57	Millroad Recreation Ground	-	Central/East	13	Yes 2 Senior	5 Senior 4 Junior 4 Mini	M0/D1	Poor
77	St Benedicts Catholic College	-	Central/East	1	No	1 Senior	M1/D1	Standard
79	St Helena School	-	Central/East	1	No	1 Junior	M1/D0	Poor
97	The Thomas Lord Audley School	-	Central/East	1	No	1 Senior	M1/D1	Standard

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### **Ancillary facilities**

The term ancillary facility relates to built facility infrastructure at sites. Typically, this includes (but is not limited too) clubhouses, changing rooms, showers, carparking and toilet facilities. The table below summarises the position of each rugby club and highlights current issues and long-term requirements.

*Table 4.12: Ancillary provision feedback*

<b>Club</b>	<b>Ancillary position</b>
Colchester RFC	<p>Colchester RFC has a brand-new two storey clubhouse that opened in 2021, featuring eight changing rooms six of which are RFU spec with the remaining two of an even larger scale. All changing rooms are of a good quality with internal showers and toilets, a working boiler and underfloor heating. The building hosts two function rooms of differing scales both of which are open to the general public for hire.</p> <p>The Club state the acoustics of the entire building is very poor as all sound severely echoes around each room, an issue they are working towards addressing.</p>
Mersea Island RFC	<p>Mersea Island RFC currently has two RFU spec changing rooms that were installed in 2014 and is accessed solely by the Club. The Club would like to convert the wooden fenced building to timber fencing at the cost of £7,000, due to football members damaging the wood by using the wall for recreational purposes.</p> <p>Alongside this sits a separate building, the Mersea Island Sports Association (MISA) clubhouse, which holds four poor quality changing rooms, a bar and social space as to cater for Mersea Island RFC, Mersea Island CC, Mersea Island FC and Mersea Island Oysters FC.</p> <p>Following a new housing development bordering the non-floodlit senior pitch, MISA has been allocated £168,652 of section 106 funding. Project A for this investment is to go towards 'the provision of a multiuse community facility with changing rooms at the Glebe Sports Ground.'</p> <p>Following this investment, MISA has been working with West Mersea Town Council to acquire a long-term lease for the building as to enable enhancements. Proposed developments to the ancillary provision are to re-design the interior layout as to double the size of the social space at the loss of two changing rooms. The two lost changing rooms would be replaced for by building on the car park and the Mersea Island Horticultural Society clubhouse.</p>

### **4.3: Demand**

Demand for rugby pitches in Colchester tends to fall within the categories of organised competitive play and organised training.

#### **Competitive play**

There are two rugby union clubs in Colchester which in total generate demand equating to 31 teams. As a breakdown, this consists of seven senior men's, one senior women's, two colt's team, nine junior boys, one junior girls' and 11 mini teams.

Both clubs within Colchester contribute towards the identified junior demand, with Colchester RFC having one colt's team, five junior boys' teams, one junior girls' team and six mixed teams. Comparatively, Mersea Island RFC have one colt's team, four junior boys, and five mixed teams. A table summarising club demand is overleaf.

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Table 4.13: Demand summary

Club	Senior men's	Senior women's	Colt boys (U17/U18)	Colt girls (U17/U18)	Junior boys (U16-U13)	Junior girls (U16-U13)	Minis (U12-U6)
Colchester RFC	5	1	1	-	5	1	6
Mersea Island Park RFC	2	-	1	-	4	-	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>

## Training demand

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 floodlighting.

Full details of each of the clubs training schedules are detailed in the table below. The match equivalent sessions for training relates to the demand which takes place on grass pitches only, unless otherwise stated.

With regard to pitch allocation for training purposes, sessions are often held on an additional floodlit grass space rather than on the pitches provided, as to reduce demand on the available provision. This occurs at Mersea Island RFC which has a separate floodlit area dedicated for training purposes.

Mersea Island RFC hold its training sessions across both of its floodlit pitches, as well as its additional floodlit training space. Comparatively, Colchester RFC accesses the WR 3G pitch as well as its senior pitches for training demand. A detailed breakdown of club training is found in the table below.

Table 4.14: Training demand summary

Club	Midweek training requirements	Match equivalent sessions (MES)
Colchester RFC	Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday training sessions running from 18:00 to 21:00. Mini and junior sessions are also held on Sundays from 09:00 to 13:00 on the senior grass pitches.	<b>4.5 MES Total</b> 4.5 MES per week across all four senior pitches through junior demand <i>4.5 MES per week on the 3G pitch through senior demand (discounted)</i>
Mersea Island RFC	Senior and Colts training is held on Thursday evenings for two hours on the floodlit pitch. Tuesday evenings U13, U14, U15 and U16 teams train for an hour and a half as well as on Sundays from 10:00-12:00. U10, U11 and U12 teams train on Sunday mornings across both pitches, and finally all mini teams train on Sundays on the additional floodlit training space from 10:00-11:00am.	<b>7.5 MES Total</b> 3 MES from senior and colt demand 4.5 MES from junior and mini demand <i>1 MES per week from mini demand discounted due to accessing additional floodlit training space</i>

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### ***World Rugby (WR) compliant pitches***

To enable 3G pitches to accommodate competitive rugby union matches, WR has developed the Rugby Turf Performance Specification. This is to ensure that the surfaces 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.

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. The compliancy standard is known as to as WR Regulation 22.

Across Colchester there is one existing WR 3G pitch located at the Northern Gateway Sports Park. The provision is one of two 3G pitches on the site however it is only the pitch nearest to the clubhouse with a WR certification. The pitch is under the ownership and management of Colchester City Council and is open to community use from 09:00 to 22:00 every day of the week.

### ***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, however, the use of 3Gs for the fulfilment of competition fixtures does take place regularly in some areas if suitable provision is available, particularly on sites where Rugby 365 pitches have been provided. Further detail on use of 3G pitches can be found in Part 3: Third Generation Artificial Pitches.

In the case of Colchester RFC, the Club access the WR compliant 3G pitch provided at Northern Gateway Sports Park for winter training and fixture purposes. The Club hold training sessions on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings from 18:00 to 21:00 each night. Comparatively, Mersea Island RFC occasionally access the AGP at the University of Essex Sports Centre for training purposes.

### ***Touch rugby<sup>24</sup>***

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 O2 touch rugby sessions.

Touch rugby sessions are 90 minutes long and combine music, fitness and rugby skills. Sessions are mixed in terms of gender, ability and age and is based on touch rugby being a social activity. Within Colchester, touch rugby sessions are delivered at Mersea Island RFC on Monday evenings with sessions catered to mixed gender U13 and below members from 17:00 to 18:00 and mixed gender U14 and above sessions running from 19:00 to 20:00 the same night.

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<sup>24</sup> <https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/playing/ways-to-play/the-touch-union>

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### ***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 55s are an opportunity for participants to become physically active and for others to re-engage with rugby at a less strenuous pace. Colchester Rugby Club deliver walking rugby sessions on Wednesdays afternoons at 14:00 to 15:00 for a small donation.

### ***Exported/imported demand***

Exported demand refers to existing demand which is transferred outside of the study area; whilst imported demand refers to any demand from neighbouring local authorities that accesses facilities in Colchester due to a lack of available facilities in other local authorities where such team or club is based.

Neither Colchester RFC or Mersea Island import or export demand outside of the City.

### ***Unmet/latent demand***

Unmet demand is existing demand at clubs which is not able to access sufficient supply of pitches for match play or training. It is usually expressed, for example, where a team is already training but is unable to access a match pitch or where a league or club operates a waiting list. Consultation did not highlight any potential unmet demand.

Latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from the current population should they have access to more or better provision. There is no evidence to suggest that there is any latent demand for rugby union in Colchester.

### ***Future demand***

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

#### *Participation increases*

Mersea Island RFC would like to gain an U16 and a U9 mini mixed team as to provide a full complement from U6 through to senior mens. In comparison, Colchester RFC did not highlight any ambitions to further increase in teams due to a lack of coaches. However, the RFU feel that organic growth in girls demand is likely to take place following the Women's Rugby World Cup 2022 (New Zealand) and 2025 (England), therefore demand of one youth girls' team has been attributed to the Club.

#### *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 (2033).

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Table 4.15: Team generation rates (2033)

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams	Team Generation Rate	Future population within age group	Predicted future number of teams	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population
Senior Men's (19-45)	38,619	8	1:4827	43,272	9	1
Senior Women's (19-45)	36,857	1	1:36857	40,412	1	0
Junior Boys (13-18)	6,485	9	1:721	7,679	10	1
Junior Girls (13-18)	6,114	1	1:6114	7,318	1	0
Mini rugby mixed (7-12)	14,572	12	1:1214	14,362	11	0

Based on future projections, there is forecasted growth of one senior mens team and one junior boys' team. However, when broken down by analysis area, there is not enough growth recognised in any of the four analysis areas meaning both teams are discounted.

It is important to note that population growth is exclusively applied to current team numbers and does not account for specific targeted development work within certain areas or focused towards certain groups, such as coaching activity within schools linking to local clubs or specific RFU targets.

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 pressures on participation in the traditional forms of the game at this time and by offering alternative match times and formats then clubs may be able to retain a larger number of players.

### *Future demand summary*

Future demand will be based club aspirations which equates to one junior boys' team, one youth girls' team and a mini mixed team. This is on the basis population forecasts do not specify any specific growth when applied by analysis area.

The Strategy & Action Plan Report will contain a housing growth scenario that will estimate the additional demand for rugby union arising from housing development.

### **4.4: Capacity analysis**

The capacity for pitches to regularly accommodate competitive play, training and other activity over a season is most often determined by quality. As a minimum, the quality and therefore the capacity of a pitch 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 age grade specific pitches are provided).

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- ◀ U13 teams generally play on a 90 x 60m pitch and play 13 vs 13.
- ◀ From U14 upwards, teams generally play 15 v15 and use a full pitch.
- ◀ Mini teams (U6-U12) play on half of a senior pitch i.e. two teams per senior pitch or a dedicated mini pitch. See RFU Age Grade Rugby Guidance for more details.
- ◀ 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 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 4.16: Pitch capacity (matches per week) based on quality assessments*

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

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.

### ***The peak period***

In order to fully establish actual spare capacity, the peak period needs to be established for all types of rugby. For senior teams, it is Saturday PM, as all senior men’s teams play at this time, with senior women’s teams playing on Sunday afternoons. Peak time for mini and junior rugby is Sunday AM.

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Table 4.17: Capacity table for rugby union pitches

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Security of tenure	Number of pitches	Pitch type	Non-tech score	Quality rating	Floodlit?	Match equivalent sessions (per week)	Training equivalent sessions (per week)	Pitch Capacity (sessions per week)	Capacity rating	Comments
36	Holmwood House Preparatory School	Central/ East	Yes	Unsecure	4	4 x Junior	M1/D1	Standard	No	-	4	8	4	The school has four junior pitches that are available for community use but are un-used. Match equivalent sessions therefore account for school use only. Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
62	Northern Gateway Sports Park	Central/ East	Yes	Secure	7	1 x Senior	M2/D2	Good	Yes	1.5	1	3.25	0.75	Senior pitches are accessed by all 19 teams within the Club as junior pitches were not fit for play throughout the 2021/22 season. 3 MES of actual spare capacity exists on the 3 junior pitches. 4.5 MES per week of training demand and 1.5 MES from match play demand is discounted due to accessing the 3G pitch.
						Yes			1.5	1	3.25	0.75		
						No			1.75	1	3.25	0.5		
						No			1.75	1.5	3.25	-		
						No			0	0	9.75	9.75		
66	Philip Morant School	Central/ East	Yes	Unsecure	2	2x Senior	M1/D1	Standard	No	0	2	4	2	The school has two senior pitches that are available for community use but are un-used. Match equivalent sessions therefore account for school use only. Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
89	Stanway School	West	Yes	Unsecure	1	1 x Senior	M1/D0	Poor	No	-	1	1.5	-	The school has one senior pitch that is available for community use but is un-used. Match equivalent sessions therefore account for school use only. Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
93	The Glebe (West Mersea)	South	Yes	Secure	2	1 x Senior	M1/D0	Standard	Yes	2.25	6	2	6.25	Pitches are overlaid by a total of 9 MES, caused largely by 6 MES of training demand taking place on the floodlit senior pitch. Match play demand from 12 teams (3 senior, 4 junior, 5 mini) totals 5 MES.
						No			2.75	1.5	2	2.25		
102	University of Essex sports Centre	Central/ East	Yes	Unsecure	2	2 x Senior	M1/D1	Good	No	-	2	4	2	Site is not accessed by Mersea Island RFC or Colchester RFC. Match equivalent sessions come from university team's demand. Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
<b>No community use</b>														
13	Colchester Academy	Central/ East	No	Unsecure	1	1 x Senior	M1/D0	Poor	No	-	1	1.5	-	The school has one senior pitch that is not available for community use. Match equivalent sessions therefore account for school use only. Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
19	Colchester Royal Grammar School Sports Ground	Central/ East	No	Unsecure	3	1 x Senior	M1/D1	Standard	No	-	1	1.5	-	The school has one senior pitch that is not available for community use. Match equivalent sessions therefore account for school use only. Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
						2 x Junior				-	2	3		

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Security of tenure	Number of pitches	Pitch type	Non-tech score	Quality rating	Floodlit?	Match equivalent sessions (per week)	Training equivalent sessions (per week)	Pitch Capacity (sessions per week)	Capacity rating	Comments
25	Corporal Budd VC Gymnasium	Central/ East	No	Unsecure	2	2 x Senior	M1/D1	Standard	No	-	2	3	-	The school has two senior pitches that are not available for community use. Match equivalent sessions therefore account for school use only. Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
51	Littlegarth School	North	No	Unsecure	3	1 x Senior	M1/D0	Poor	No	-	1	1.5	-	The school has one senior and two junior pitches that are not available for community use. Match equivalent sessions therefore account for school use only. Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
						2 x Junior				-	2	3		
57	Millroad Recreation Ground	Central/ East	No	Secure	13	5 x Senior	M0/D1	Poor	Yes 2 Senior	0	0	7.5	-	Former site of Colchester RFC, the 13 pitches are now unmaintained and un-used. Actual spare capacity is discounted due to poor quality.
						4 x Junior				0	0	6		
						4 x Mini				0	0	6		
77	St Benedicts Catholic College	Central/ East	No	Unsecure	1	1 x Senior	M1/D1	Standard	No	-	1	3	-	The school has one senior pitch that is not available for community use. Match equivalent sessions therefore account for school use only. Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
79	St Helena School	Central/ East	No	Unsecure	1	1 x Junior	M1/D0	Poor	No	-	1	1.5	-	The school has one junior pitch that is not available for community use. Match equivalent sessions therefore account for school use only. Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
97	The Thomas Lord Audley School	Central/ East	No	Unsecure	1	1 x Senior	M1/D1	Standard	No	-	1	3	-	The school has one senior pitch that is not available for community use. Match equivalent sessions therefore account for school use only. Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.

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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.

Generally, pitches located at education and/or unsecure sites which are available for community use but are currently unused, are not considered to have actual spare capacity as security of use cannot be formally evidenced as guaranteed.

Table 4.18 outlines the actual spare capacity on four senior pitches (for Saturday peak time play) and of three match sessions on junior pitches. All spare capacity is located at the Northern Gateway Sports Park. Note spare capacity is based on peak time demand access and not overall pitch capacity.

*Table 4.18: Actual spare capacity for Saturday and Sunday rugby*

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	User	Spare capacity – Saturdays (MES)	Spare capacity – Sundays (MES)
62	Northern Gateway Sports Park	Central/East	Colchester RFC	2	3
<b>Total</b>				<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>

## **Overplay**

One site in the City is identified as being overplayed, that being The Glebe (West Mersea) which is showing overplay of nine match equivalent sessions per week across the two senior pitches.

*Table 4.19: Summary of overplay*

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	User	Overplay (MES)
93	The Glebe (West Mersea)	South	Mersea Island RFC	8.5
<b>Total</b>				<b>8.5</b>

In the case of Mersea Island RFC, the identified overplay is caused firstly by the standard-quality playing provision and the floodlit pitch being over-utilised for training purposes which equates to six match equivalent sessions of demand per week on one pitch. The Strategy will further explore the impact of continuing pitch improvements and greater utilising the on-site additional floodlit training space.

## **4.5: Supply and demand analysis**

Having considered supply and demand, the tables below identify the overall spare capacity in each of the analysis areas for senior rugby union pitches based on match equivalent sessions per week.

Future demand is based on club and RFU aspirations. This equates to a junior boys' team and one mixed mini team from Mersea Island RFC and one junior girls' team for Colchester RFC.

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Table 4:20: Summary of supply and demand balance on senior rugby union pitches (senior rugby – Saturday afternoons)

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity <sup>25</sup>	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Central/ East	2	-	2	-	2
North	-	-	-	-	-
South	-	8.5	8.5	-	8.5
West	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6.5</b>

The table above shows that there is an insufficient supply of provision to accommodate existing demand, and with no future demand identified there is no change to the future picture. All shortfalls derive from midweek training pressure at Mersea Island RFC.

The table below looks at the supply and demand balance on senior rugby union pitches for Sunday rugby (when typically, junior boys/girls, colts and senior ladies play). Future demand is based on one junior boys' team and one mini team (Mersea Island RFC) and one junior girls' team (Colchester RFC).

Table 4:21: Summary of supply and demand balance on senior rugby union pitches (Sunday demand)

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity <sup>26</sup>	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Central/ East	3	-	3	0.5	2.5
North	-	-	-	-	-
South	-	8.5	8.5	0.75	9.25
West	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>1.25</b>	<b>6.75</b>

The above shows that growth can be accommodated at Colchester RFC with additional demand aspirations being able to be accommodated on the existing 3G pitches or on either the senior or dedicated junior pitches. Future demand expressed at Mersea Island RFC exacerbates current shortfalls.

## 4.6: Conclusion

Based on the supply and demand analysis, it is evident that there is insufficient supply of senior pitches in Colchester to accommodate for both current and anticipated future levels of demand.

It is simple to look at the supply vs demand position on a club by club basis. Colchester RFC has sufficient provision to accommodate all its existing demand any over and above its currently stated future demand position. In contrast, Mersea Island, based at The Glebe (West Mersea) is highly overplayed due to concentrated demand on a limited supply of playing field. Quality issues at the site have also reduced its capacity to accommodate existing levels of demand.

<sup>25</sup> In match equivalent sessions

<sup>26</sup> In match equivalent sessions

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### **Rugby union summary**

- ◀ There is currently insufficient level of senior rugby union provision in Colchester to accommodate current and future demand. This is attributed to Mersea Island RFC.
- ◀ All existing capacity on senior pitches (2 MES) and on junior pitches (3 MES) is attributed to Colchester RFC.

### **Pitch supply:**

- ◀ There is a total of 43 rugby union pitches across 14 sites identified in Colchester. Of these, 18 are available for community use across six sites.
- ◀ There is one WR compliant 3G pitch located at Northern Gateway Sports Centre within Colchester. The site is managed by Colchester City Council and is accessed heavily by Colchester RFC which is located on site.

### **Pitch quality:**

- ◀ In terms of quality, of community use pitches, there are 9 good quality, eight standard quality and one poor quality pitches.
- ◀ The two standard quality pitches at The Glebe (West Mersea) are in the process of pitch improvements, meaning the quality of provision has recently improved to standard.

### **Ancillary provision quality:**

- ◀ Of the two clubs located within Colchester, both Colchester RFC and Mersea Island RFC express intentions to develop the existing ancillary provision.
- ◀ Mersea Island RFC has a desire to upgrade its existing changing facilities as to provide a better social space for functions. The building in question is under the management of Mersea Island Sports Association which is working to acquire a lease for the site as to utilise S106 money that has been granted to the Club.
- ◀ Comparatively, Colchester RFC needs to address an issue where the acoustics of the building causes all sounds to severely echo.

### **Demand:**

- ◀ There are two rugby union clubs in Colchester which, in total, generate demand equating to 31 teams. This includes seven senior men's teams, one senior women's team, two colts' team, nine junior boys' teams, one junior girls' team and 11 mini teams.
- ◀ Mersea Island RFC plan on developing an additional junior boys' team and a mini mixed team, whilst future demand of one junior girls' team at Colchester RFC has been added due to expected growth following the Rugby Women's World Cup 2022.

### **Supply and demand analysis:**

- ◀ There is an overall insufficient supply of provision to cater for both current and future demand.

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### PART 5: ARTIFICIAL GRASS PITCHES (HOCKEY)

#### 5.1: Introduction

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 3G pitches, 40mm pitches may be suitable at introductory level, such as school curriculum low level hockey. England Hockey's (EH) Artificial Grass Playing Surface Policy details suitability of surface type for varying levels of hockey, as seen below.

Table 5.1: 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	<b>Essential</b> International Hockey - Training and matches	<b>Desirable</b> 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	<b>Essential</b> Domestic National Premier competition Higher levels of player pathway: Academy Centres and Upwards	<b>Desirable</b> All adult and junior League Hockey Intermediate or advanced School Hockey EH competitions for clubs and schools (excluding domestic national league)
England Hockey Category 3	Sand based surfaces within the FIH National Parameter	<b>Essential</b> All adult and junior club training and league Hockey EH competitions for clubs and schools Intermediate or advanced schools hockey	
England Hockey Category 4	All 3G surfaces	<b>Essential</b> None	<b>Desirable</b> Lower level hockey (Introductory level) when no category 1-3 surface is available.

In addition to the above pitch types, EH report that it is currently trialling a different multi-sport surface in order to better accommodate lower levels of hockey demand on a pitch that is also suitable for other sports such as netball and tennis. The surface type, known as Gen 2<sup>27</sup>, is a versatile surface that will ensure that the sports do not need to compromise on the playing experience; it will be a sand dressed synthetic turf with a compatible shock pad. The concept is designed to provide facilities, including schools, with a dynamic surface which reduces the amount of space required and enables the provision to be utilised to its full potential.

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 and three metres at the ends.

<sup>27</sup> [Deliver - Developing Your Project | England Hockey](#)

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EH's 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.

It is generally considered that a hockey pitch can accommodate four matches on one day (peak time) provided the pitch has floodlighting. Training is generally midweek and also requires access to a pitch with floodlights.

## **Club consultation**

There are two hockey clubs in Colchester; Colchester Hockey Club and Colne Hockey Club, the former of which received a face to face consultation whilst the latter was unresponsive to the efforts made to consult with.

*Table 5.2: Summary of consultation*

Club name	Responded?
Colchester Hockey Club	Yes
Colne Hockey Club	No

## **5.2: Supply**

There are three full size hockey suitable artificial grass pitches in Colchester located across as many sites. Two of the three pitches are floodlit and open to community use, with Colchester Leisure World no longer accessible to the general public.

*Table 5.3: Summary of full-size hockey suitable AGPs*

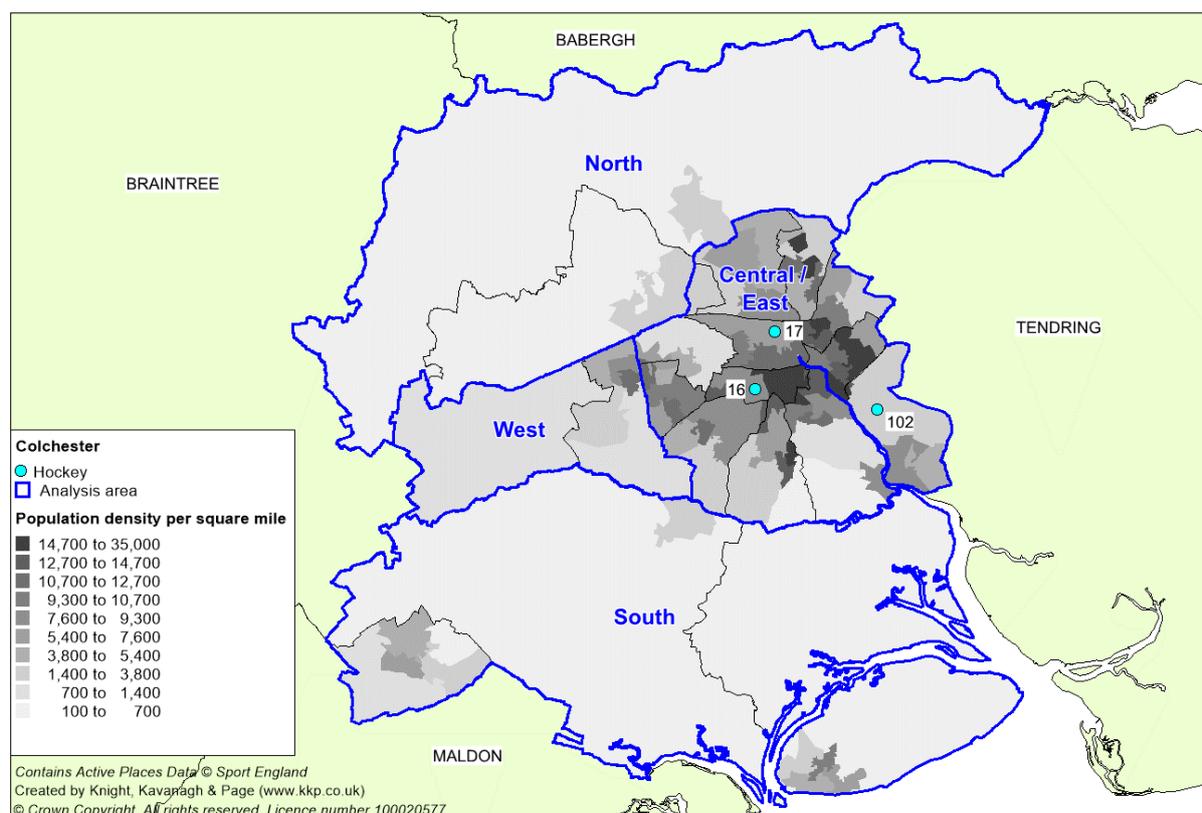
Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Quantity of provision	Size (metres)	Floodlit?
16	Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium	Central/ East	Yes	One pitch	97m x 61m	Yes
17	Colchester Leisure World	Central/ East	No	One pitch	102m x 63m	Yes
102	University of Essex Sports Centre	Central/ East	Yes	One pitch	102m x 63m	Yes

There are no small-sided pitches identified across the entirety of Colchester.

A map of hockey provision is provided in Figure 5.1

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Figure 5.1: Location of full size AGPs



## Management and availability

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

The table below identifies the full availability of AGP provision which is available for community use.

Table 5.4: Management and availability

Site ID	Site name	Management	Availability	Total hours available in peak period
16	Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium	M.o.D	08:00-21:00 Midweek 10:00 – 18:00 Saturdays 09:00 – 13:00 Sundays	34
17	Colchester Leisure World	Council	AGP has been discontinued	0
102	University of Essex Sports Centre	University	08:00-22:00 Monday to Sunday	34

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## Security of tenure

Colchester HC access Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium on a yearly license agreement with Merville Barracks. The site is under M.o.D ownership and the Club form part of the military's community engagement. The Club does not have security of tenure but is on good terms with Merville Barracks having been located there since 2010.

Colne HC accesses the University of Essex Sports Centre for its one fixture each Saturday. Tenure agreements between the two parties are unknown, however the University failed to reference any long term arrangement being in place, meaning it is likely the Club do not have security of tenure.

## Quality

Taking the above into account, the quality of hockey suitable artificial grass pitches have been assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments as determined by EH) 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 (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. The table below summarises the quality of artificial grass pitches in Colchester.

Table 5.5: Summary of quality

Site ID	Site name	Surface type	User	Quality rating	Built/ resurfaced
16	Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium	Sand filled	Colchester HC	Good	1990 / 2019
17	Colchester Leisure World	Sand dressed	-	Poor	1990 / 2008
102	University of Essex Sports Centre	Sand dressed	Colne HC	Good	1987 / 2012 / 2022

Provision provided at Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium and the University of Essex Sports Centre are assessed as of a good quality, whilst the pitch at Colchester Leisure World is of a poor quality.

The AGP at Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium received a surface replacement and shock pad in 2019 funded entirely by the Merville Barracks.

Comparatively, the University of Essex Sports Centre pitch is of a good quality following the University funding a replacement sand dressed surface which took place over the summer of 2022. The University is fully funding the improvements.

The provision at Colchester Leisure World is of a poor quality having been condemned prior to 2020. Consultation with the site provider states it has no plans in place currently for a replacement surface being installed.

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The Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium AGP needs the fence raising behind both goals to be the same height as the fencing along the sides as they were replaced following damage caused by a storm in early 2022. This is due to ball strike issues on the adjacent Circular Road North. Furthermore, the yellow markings designed for junior hockey do not align correctly.

Finally England Hockey states that Colchester HC is frustrated by the lack of provision within schools and that it would look to deliver junior coaching sessions if a new pitch were to be installed at a school site.

### ***Ancillary facilities***

The term ancillary facility relates to built facility infrastructures at sites. Typically, this includes (but is not limited to) clubhouses, changing rooms, showers, car parking and toilet facilities.

Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium features five standard quality changing rooms and a large, good quality on-site bar and function room built in 2010. The function room has a dedicated catering team which provides after match teas for all teams.

The on-site changing rooms are a locally listed building, meaning there are limitations as to how many developments the Club can make. Although the electric showers and boiler were replaced in 2021 further efforts could be made to modernise the interior design.

Consultation with Colchester HC raises car parking at the site as being the biggest frustration to the Club as local residents utilise the only available spaces.

The University of Essex Sports Centre features 10 male and five outdoor female changing rooms that are all poor quality. The University is investing in renovating the showers and re-painting the interior. There is also a glass structure acting as a social space for people to have teas and coffees. Consultation with the University states it has long term ambitions to knock down and re-develop new changing rooms as to provide something of a better quality.

Finally, Colchester Leisure World features standard quality changing rooms with an on-site café and social space for members.

### **5.3: Demand**

#### ***Competitive play***

There are two community-based hockey clubs in Colchester. Colchester HC is the largest of the two and has five senior male, four senior female and four junior teams. Comparatively, Colne HC features just one senior female team.

The men's first team at Colchester HC competes in the East Division 2 South East, whilst the women's 1<sup>st</sup> team play in the Division 2 North East League. Finally, Colne HC plays in the Ladies 5<sup>th</sup> Division Southeast.

In addition to the two formal hockey clubs there is also the University of Essex HC, featuring two mens and one women's teams for the 2021/22 season. As of the upcoming academic year the Club will have two women's and one mens team. Teams access the site for BUCS fixtures from 12:00- 18:00 every Wednesday. Demand from the University of Essex broadly remains consistent with three to four teams submitted into the BUCS leagues every year.

With regard to Back to Hockey and walking hockey sessions, neither of the two clubs made any reference to delivering such England Hockey initiatives within its current operations.

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## **Imported demand**

Imported demand refers to teams which originate outside of Colchester, accessing facilities within the area for their home fixtures and/or training needs, normally because their pitch requirements cannot be met, which is usually because of pitch supply, in some cases quality issues or stipulated league requirements for access to certain facilities.

In the case of Colchester there is no identified imported hockey demand from neighbouring authorities.

## **Exported demand**

Exported demand refers to teams which originate within Colchester, accessing facilities outside the area for their home fixtures and/or training needs, normally because their pitch requirements cannot be met, which is usually because of pitch supply, in some cases quality issues or stipulated league requirements for access to certain facilities.

There is no identified exported hockey demand from neighbouring authorities into Colchester.

## **Training demand**

Access to artificial grass pitches for midweek training is important to sustain and grow all formats of hockey.

Colchester HC delivers several training sessions at Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium and accesses the site six days a week. Men's 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> team sessions are held on Mondays from 19:30 to 21:00, Tuesdays from 19:30-21:00 the women's 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> team train, the mens 3<sup>rd</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> team train on Wednesdays from 19:30-21:00 and womens 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> team training is held Thursdays from 19:30-21:00. Finally, on Sundays the Club access the pitch from 09:00 to 13:00 which is used for overspill fixtures and junior training.

In the case of Colne HC, the Club does not run any training sessions and only access the University of Essex Sports Centre for its one fixture on a Saturday. Finally, the University of Essex HC trains every Tuesday from 19:00-22:00, Fridays from 18:00-20:00 and Sundays from 12:00-17:00.

All information outlined above regarding training demand can be found summarised in table 5.6 below.

*Table 5.6: Midweek training demand summary*

Site ID	Site name	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
16	Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium (Colchester HC)	19:30-21:00 Mens 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> team	19:30-21:00 women's 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> team	19:30-21:00 Mens 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> team	19:30-21:00 Womens 3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> team	-
17	Colchester Leisure World	-	-	-	-	-
102	University of Essex Sports Centre	-	19:00-22:00 Uni of Essex training	-	-	18:00-20:00 Uni of Essex training

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### ***Future demand***

Growing participation is the number one aim within EH's Strategic Plan and key drivers include working with clubs, universities and schools, regional and local leagues, developing opportunities for over 40s and delivering a quality programme of competition. Growth in participation will not only come from the traditional 11 a side game but from the informal, recreational ways to play hockey such as small-sided hockey, which can be played at any time during the week or at weekends.

There remains a desire from EH to increase participation within the club/league-based game, not all future demand may be realised entirely as new formalised teams playing at peak time. Some clubs may decide to offer pay and play opportunities to participants or offer small-sided formats such in a bid to increase participation and club memberships by providing a different hockey offer.

Increased demand from new participants will lead to a requirement for increased capacity on available artificial grass pitches at peak time, but also midweek and on Sundays to deliver other formats of hockey activity. At present, it is not necessarily clear as to what format this may take or when it is likely to take place, however, it is clear that there will be a requirement for access to increased capacity on artificial grass pitches across the area. This should be considered when assessing demand for artificial grass pitches in the future, as not only will they be needed for peak match play times and midweek training to accommodate increased participation within the formalised hockey environment, but also throughout the week and at non-peak times to offer wider opportunities for play.

Unlike other pitch sports, EH do not use team generation rates to determine future demand and instead likes to understand growth by participation, rather than dedicated teams. As such, team generation rates have not been used to calculate future growth for hockey in Colchester. However, the forthcoming Strategy & Action Plan will include the use of the Sport England Playing Pitch Calculator which will forecast additional demand for hockey arising from new housing developments.

From a club perspective (the traditional 11 a side game), Colchester HC states a future demand aspiration of two junior teams. In contrast, Colne HC has no known ambitions to increase from being a one team club.

### ***EH Player Pathway***

The Player Pathway (PP) is the junior talent development pathway. It encompasses the whole of the hockey landscape which includes club and school activity as well as the PP Development Centres (DCs). The purpose of the PP is to provide development opportunities for young people, which is fair, equitable and consistent. It is to ensure that a suitable level of coaching and competition is offered for people at the appropriate stage of their development and to maximise the chance they have of fulfilling their potential whether that potential is as a club or international player, coach or official. The PP can be accessed by playing at school, a local club or attending one of the local centres. There is one entry point into the PP centres which is at DC level. The first time a player accesses the player pathway they must enter at DC level.

To enter an Academy Centre (AC) players must be nominated by their DC coaches, school or must display a consistent high performance at club level. This is a PP into higher performance hockey.

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### *Development Centres (DCs) and Academy Centres (ACs)*

DCs and ACs are local training centres for the U13 to U17 age groups. DCs are open to any hockey player who has been nominated by their club, school or coach, with ACs open to any player who has been nominated by a DC coach. After attending a DC, an AC is the next step on the player pathway. Included in the DCs/ACs are Goalkeeper (GK) Academies, which provide specific coaching sessions for goalkeepers.

There are no England Hockey DC or AC sites located within Colchester with the two centres for Essex being located in Chelmsford and Redbridge.

### ***Peak time demand***

Most men's and women's hockey teams currently play matches on a Saturday which is therefore the peak time for use of artificial grass pitches for competitive play.

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### 5.4: Supply and demand analysis

The PPS Guidance suggests that a floodlit pitch usually accommodates four match equivalent sessions on a Saturday with teams playing in a home and away format, as such this equates to one artificial grass pitch being able to cater for eight “home” teams. Teams play matches on home v away formats and therefore one team requires 0.5 match sessions per week on its “home” artificial grass pitch. On this basis, a pitch can cater for eight teams from a home club (with four playing away on the home vs away rotation) with each pitch considered to have a total capacity equating to four match equivalent sessions in the peak period. However, please note that the AGP at Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium is programmed in such a way to accommodate five matches on a Saturday.

Table 5.7: Supply analysis of peak time (Saturday) pitch access

Site ID	Site name	Number of pitches	Site user	Current hockey use in peak period (MES)	Spare capacity?	Comments
16	Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium	1	Colchester HC	4-5 MES	Yes	Colchester HC access the site from 10:00 to 18:00 meaning it hosts five games each Saturday. On this basis and with nine current teams, one more senior could be accommodated playing home and away. There is also capacity for additional fixtures on Sundays (outside the peak period), with the site currently accessed from 09:00-13:00 for overspill fixtures and junior training purposes.
17	Colchester Leisure World	1	-	-	No	Pitch is condemned and is therefore not accessed for either hockey or football demand.
102	University of Essex Sports Centre	1	Colne HC	2 MES	Yes	Pitch is used for one fixture by Colne HC from 13:30 to 15:00. The site has spare capacity for three additional senior fixtures. 1.5 MES of demand is raised from University of Essex fixtures held on Wednesdays from 12:00-18:00.

Colchester HC has nine senior teams, all of which, access provision at Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium on Saturdays. As shown above, the AGP is programmed in such a way to accommodate five matches on a Saturday (based on teams playing on a home and away allocation). On this basis, there is spare capacity to accommodate one more senior team at the site playing on a home and away basis.

Colne HC accesses the University of Essex Sports Centre between 13:30 and 15:00 for its one home fixture. Outside of these hours the pitch is unused until 17:00 when football demand accesses the site, meaning there is spare capacity for three additional hockey fixtures if required.

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Consultation with the University confirms it has not begun arranging possible partner football or hockey clubs to grant pitch allocation to once the playing surface has been replaced. The University also accommodates two mens and one women's BUCS team which access the site Tuesday and Friday evenings and as Sunday afternoons all for training purposes. Fixtures take place from 12:00 to 18:00 every Wednesday for the three teams.

### 5.5: Conclusion

With two usable full size AGPs offering community use across the City; Colchester HC and Colne HC can fully utilise the existing available provision, with both clubs currently operating without any formal security of tenure. Both pitches at Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium and the University of Essex Sports Centre are of a good quality.

With ten senior teams currently accessing provision within Colchester, the Guidance suggests that there is a need for two AGPs within the City in order to accommodate all current match play demand. If future demand aspirations from Colchester HC is achieved this would lead to a further two junior teams accessing provision, however, there will be no impact on current peak time (Saturday) capacity.

Consultation with Colchester HC states that it does not require access to a 2<sup>nd</sup> pitch as it is unlikely to generate future growth to the extent to warrant this. Therefore, future demand can be catered for with the current stock of provision within Colchester, and it is also likely it could utilise the pitch at the University of Essex Sport Centre if it ever needed too, as an overspill option.

With demand at the University of Essex from one team at Colne HC as well as three BUCS teams within the University of Essex, the site has capacity for an additional 2 MES. Furthermore, as BUCS fixtures are held on Wednesday afternoons, the site has spare capacity of 3.5 MES on Saturdays, something that could service Colchester HC if future growth were to take place.

With two good quality pitches, it is expected that hockey shall be adequately catered for across Colchester for the lifespan of the PPOSS. This means that the poor quality pitch at Colchester Leisure World is theoretically not required for hockey purposes.

Based on the outcome of the Assessment, it is determined that the existing stock of hockey suitable AGPs, which are in active use, require long term protection from development, with the completed improvements in quality at the University of Essex Sports Centre ensuring that hockey can continue to be sustained and grown across the area.

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### **Hockey summary**

- ◀ **There is sufficient supply of hockey suitable pitches in Colchester to accommodate current levels of peak time demand.**
- ◀ **Future demand of two junior teams can be accommodated with current provision.**

### ***Pitch supply:***

- ◀ There are three full size hockey suitable AGPs in Colchester located across as many sites. Two of these pitches are open to community use with the pitch at Colchester Leisure World being condemned for several years.
- ◀ Both full size pitches at Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium and the University of Essex Sports Centre are open to community use and accessed by Colchester HC for the former and Colne HC for the latter.

### ***Pitch quality:***

- ◀ Of all full-size hockey suitable pitches within Colchester, two are deemed good quality, whilst the other is poor.
- ◀ The good quality pitch at the University of Essex Sports Centre received a surface replacement as of August 2022.

### ***Affiliated demand:***

- ◀ There are two hockey clubs in Colchester, Colchester HC and Colne HC.
- ◀ Colchester HC operates nine senior teams made up of five senior male teams and four senior ladies, as well as having four junior teams.
- ◀ Colne HC operates one senior ladies' team who purely play fixtures on Saturdays and do not train.
- ◀ Future demand aspirations by Colchester HC equates to two junior teams, both of which can be accommodated at its home site, whilst Colne HC are not known to have ambitions to grow from being a one team Club.

### ***Supply and demand analysis conclusions:***

- ◀ Based on current levels of demand, there is a sufficient supply of provision to accommodate existing demand, however, this is dependent upon the scheduled pitch replacement taking place at the University of Essex Sports Centre.
- ◀ Future demand can be accommodated with existing provision.

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### PART 6: CRICKET PITCHES

#### 6.1: Introduction

Essex Cricket Board is the main governing and representative body for cricket within Colchester. 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.

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

#### *County Facilities Strategy (CFS)*

In 2022, to build upon the ECB's Inspiring Generations Strategy, the ECB has started the process of producing County Facilities Strategies (CFS). A CFS will be produced by each individual county cricket board and will be unique to its geographical area as well as being diverse in its representation.

The CFS will be a 'long-term' plan with county boards ensuring the Strategy provides a ten-year view of facility needs. Like a PPS, the county cricket boards will establish key stakeholders (clubs, leagues, county sports partnerships, county pitch advisors & Sport England etc) within its locality to consult during the development of the Strategy.

Each county cricket board will utilise up to date PPS within its locality to support the development of the CFS, utilising the PPS findings as a 'high-quality' evidence base. The CFS will look at a range of facilities which support cricket across its region, with the ECB setting out guidelines to ensure that the following facilities are considered throughout the development of the CFS:

#### *Types of facility*

- ◀ "Traditional" outdoor facilities
  - ◀ Pitches and Outfields
  - ◀ Pavilions
  - ◀ Practice
  
- ◀ "Non-traditional" facilities
  - ◀ Multi Use Games Areas
  - ◀ Tapeball/softball spaces
  - ◀ Courts or cages
  
- ◀ Indoor facilities
  - ◀ Practice (multi use halls)
  - ◀ Performance (cricket specific)
  - ◀ Matchplay (6 or 8 a side)

Each CFS will be used to shape investment decisions and priorities, particularly how each county cricket board will use the devolved budget within the County Grants Fund and prioritise larger scale strategic projects.

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Notwithstanding the above, it is important to recognise that the CFS 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 development proposals that need to be judged against the NPPF and Sport England's Playing Field Policy.

## Consultation

In total, 15 cricket clubs are identified as playing within Colchester, all of which, responded to consultation requests, giving a 100% response rate. Club responses are listed in the table below.

Table 6.1: Summer of cricket club response rate

Club name	Club response?
Abberton CC	Yes
Boxted CC	Yes
Chappel & Wakes Colne CC	Yes
Colchester CC	Yes
Colchester Cavaliers CC	Yes
Copford CC	Yes
Dedham CC	Yes
Earls Colne CC	Yes
Eight Ash Green CC	Yes
Great Horkelesley & Lexden CC	Yes
IPSCOL CC	Yes
Real Oddies CC	Yes
West Bergholt CC	Yes
West Mersea CC	Yes
Wivenhoe CC	Yes

## 6.2: Supply

In total, there are 18 sites in Colchester, which in total, provide 30 natural turf cricket squares and five standalone non-turf pitches across as many sites.

### Grass pitches (natural turf cricket squares)

There are 18 sites, which in total, provide 30 natural turf cricket squares. Of this total, 18 squares across 13 sites are open to community use. Five sites provide two squares whilst Holmwood House Preparatory School has seven squares, all of which, are not community accessible. Of the seven squares provided at Holmwood House Preparatory School, four are only capable of accommodating junior demand due to the size of the boundary. All provision at education sites is unavailable for community access.

Table 6.2: Summary of grass wicket squares (all sites)

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	No. of squares	Community available?
1	Abberton Cricket Club	South	1	Yes
9	Chappel And Wakes Colne Cricket Club	North	2	Yes
14	Colchester and East Essex Cricket Club	Central/ East	2	Yes
15	Colchester County High School For Girls	Central/ East	2	No

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Site ID	Site	Analysis area	No. of squares	Community available?
19	Colchester Royal Grammar School Sports Ground	Central/ East	1	No
24	Copford Cricket Club	West	1	Yes
29	Fordham Heath Playing Field	North	1	Yes
36	Holmwood House Preparatory School	West	7	No
39	King George Playing Field (Boxted)	North	1	Yes
51	Littlegarth School	North	1	No
55	Mile End Sports Ground	Central/ East	2	Yes
91	The Dutchy Field	North	1	Yes
93	The Glebe (West Mersea)	South	2	Yes
102	University of Essex Sports Centre	Central/ East	2	No
104	West Bergholt Cricket Club	North	1	Yes
107	Wivenhoe Town Cricket Club	Central/ East	1	Yes
121	Colchester A Ground	Central/ East	1	Yes
132	Earls Colne Recreation Club	North	1	Yes

The table below outlines the total number of natural turf squares, broken down by analysis area, and is inclusive of all active sites including ones which are unavailable for community use. It does not include provision which is disused. Central East and North analysis areas both provide the most sites, whilst the South Analysis Area has two squares from as many sites.

*Table 6.3: Analysis area breakdown of sites (natural turf squares)*

Analysis area	Number of cricket sites	Number of squares
Central East	7	11
North	7	8
South	2	3
West	2	8
<b>Colchester</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>30</b>

## **Non-turf pitches**

There are five standalone non-turf pitches across as many sites in Colchester, as can be seen below:

- ◀ Military Corrective Training Centre
- ◀ Phillip Morant School
- ◀ St Benedict's Catholic College
- ◀ The Gilbert School
- ◀ University of Essex Sports Centre

There are also non-turf wickets accompanying natural turf cricket squares at six sites. All of these are available for community use, in line with the position of the natural turf squares. These are located at Chappel Wakes Colne CC, King George Playing Field (Boxted), The Duchy Field, Colchester A Ground, Earls Colne Recreation Club and Wivenhoe Town Cricket Club.

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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, which is the case in Colchester in some instances where junior fixtures take place on NTP pitches.

From a school perspective, NTPs provide a reliable cricket offer, without the need for specific cricket preparation to be taken on natural turf playing field. In most instances, many schools do not have the resource or expertise to prepare natural turf wickets so NTPs provide a resource to ensure cricket can remain a key element of curricular sport.

### ***Disused provision***

There is one disused square within Colchester, located at Mill Road Playing Fields. The site formerly accommodated Colchester Rugby Club before its relocation to the Northern Gateway Sports Park and provided cricket, rugby and football provision. The square was formerly accessed by Colchester Cavaliers CC which has been relocated to Mile End Sports Ground.

There are also a further four sites that no longer provide cricket squares but still offer sporting provision, those being Corporal Budd VC Gymnasium, Langham Recreation Ground, Mile End Sports Ground and Wormingford Playing Field. Corporal Budd VC Gymnasium formerly provided a square that has now been re-designed to an American football pitch. Langham Recreation Ground currently has football pitches and tennis courts at its site and formerly accommodated a grass square over 20 years ago.

Mile End Sports Ground formerly provided three squares, however, the square to the South of the site is no longer in use. Finally, Wormingford Playing Field currently has two football pitches, but the site formerly also had a grass square.

### ***Future provision***

Consultation with Essex County Cricket Board confirms that Langham Recreation Ground is having a square re-installed with Suffolk based Ipscol CC which currently play at Ipswich CC's second square wanting to access the site.

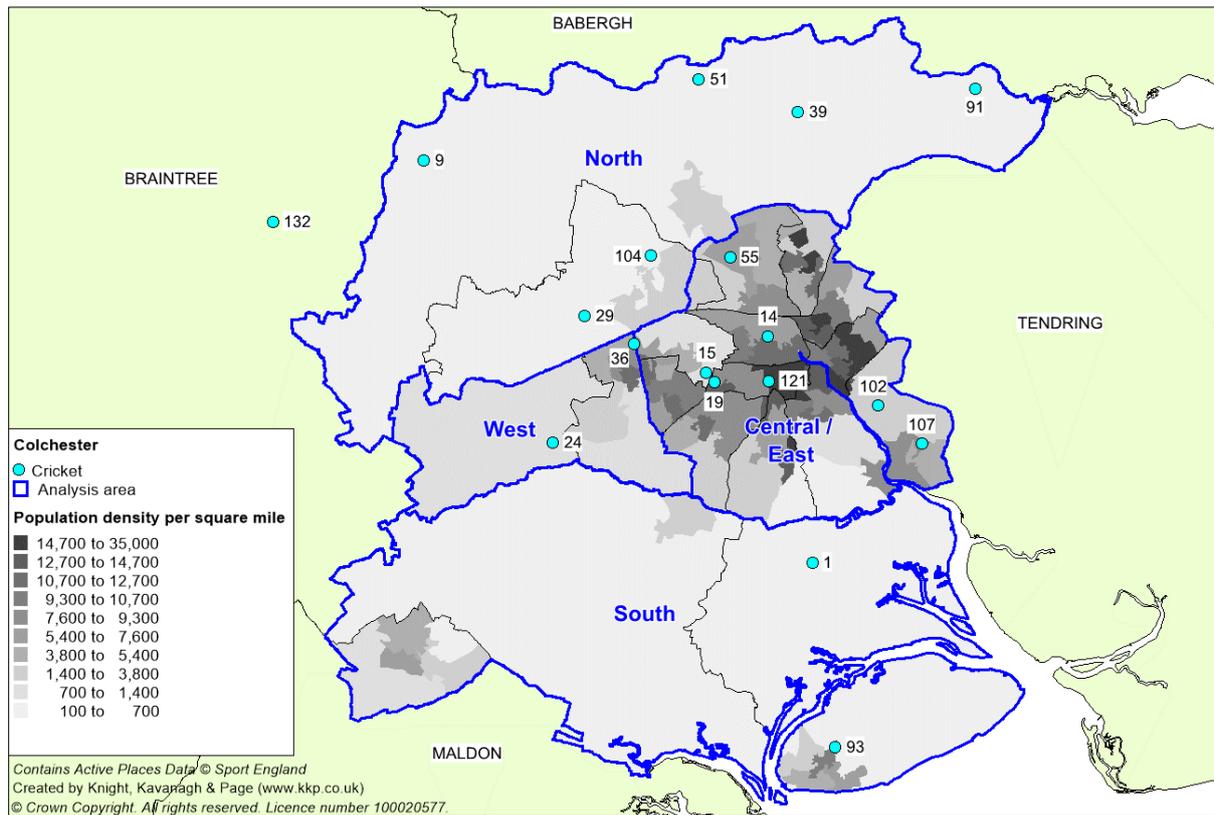
Mile End Recreation Ground is waiting to have a third square signed off by Colchester City Council before being accessible for play, which Essex Cricket Board hope shall happen during the lifespan of the PPOSS. Sport England confirm that Mile End Recreation Ground also has a proposal to extend the site following the Chesterwell development. If successful this shall result in a fourth square being added to the site, in addition to the third square that is to be re-instated.

No further reference to any future provision was made during consultations.

The map overleaf shows the location of all cricket squares currently servicing Colchester. For a key to the map, see Table 6.4.

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Figure 6.1: Location of grass cricket squares within Colchester



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Table 6.4: Key to map of grass cricket squares (community accessible)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	No. of squares	No. of wickets	NTP
1	Abberton Cricket Club	South	Yes	1	10	-
9	Chappel And Wakes Colne Cricket Club	North	Yes	2	10	1
					2	1
14	Colchester and East Essex Cricket Club	Central/ East	Yes	2	15	-
					4	-
24	Copford Cricket Club	West	Yes	1	14	-
29	Fordham Heath Playing Field	North	Yes	1	9	-
39	King George Playing Field (Boxted)	North	Yes	1	8	1
55	Mile End Sports Ground	Central/ East	Yes	2	10	
					8	
91	The Dutchy Field	North	Yes	1	5	1
93	The Glebe (West Mersea)	South	Yes	2	6	-
					6	-
104	West Bergholt Cricket Club	North	Yes	1	13	
107	Wivenhoe Town Cricket Club	Central/ East	Yes	1	12	1
121	Colchester A Ground	Central/ East	Yes	1	13	1
132	Earls Colne Recreation Club	North	Yes	1	8	1

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## **Security of tenure**

The broad position is that most clubs have secure tenure at their respective grounds and will be able to service cricket for the foreseeable future (and as a minimum over the lifespan of the PPOSS). This is detailed club-by-club in the following table.

*Table 6.5: Summary of security of tenure for clubs*

<b>Club</b>	<b>Primary site</b>	<b>Agreement</b>
Abberton CC	Abberton Cricket Club	Freehold ownership.
Boxted CC	King George Playing Field (Boxted)	The Club has a rental agreement with Boxted Parish Council.
Chappel & Wakes Colne CC	Chappel and Wakes Colne Cricket Club	The Club has a rolling five year lease with the local farmer.
Colchester CC	Colchester and East Essex Cricket Club	The Club has a rental agreement with Colchester City Council.
Colchester Cavaliers CC	Mile End Sports Ground	Club has a rental agreement with Colchester City Council.
Copford CC	Copford Cricket Club	The Club has a long term lease agreement with the private land owner.
Dedham CC	The Duchy Field	Freehold ownership.
Earls Colne CC	Earls Colne Recreation Ground	Freehold ownership.
Eight Ash Green CC	Fordham Heath Playing Field	The Club has a 37 year lease agreement with Eight Ash Green Parish Council.
Great Horkesley & Lexden CC	Mile End Sports Ground	The Club has a rental agreement with Colchester City Council.
IPSCOL CC	Ipswich CC (exported demand)	The Club has a rental agreement with Ipswich CC.
Real Oddies CC	Colchester A Ground	The Club pay a rental fee to Sedexo.
West Bergholt CC	West Bergholt Cricket Club	The Club has a 26 year lease with Stephen Penrose.
West Mersea CC	The Glebe (West Mersea)	The Club is negotiating a lease agreement with West Mersea Town Council.
Wivenhoe CC	Wivenhoe Town Cricket Club	Freehold ownership.

## **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.

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As an example, if a square is poor quality, a ball can bounce erratically on a wicket and become a danger to players. The quality of a cricket square is assessed by considering factors such as evidence of the wicket being rolled, the wicket being correctly cut, evidence of cover usage, evidence of maintenance and the presence of line markings. Comparatively, an outfield is assessed on the provisions grass length, quantity of weeds, evenness of the surface, level of undulations, damage to the surface and evidence of dog fouling.

The audit of community available grass wicket cricket squares in Colchester found 11 to be good quality, six to be standard quality and one assessed as poor quality. The site-by-site breakdown of this is shown in the following table. With regard to the outfield, six sites provide good quality outfields, 10 are standard and two assessed as poor.

Table 6.6: Quality ratings for community available grass wicket squares (site-by-site)

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Square quality	Outfield quality
1	Abberton Cricket Club	South	Good	Good
9	Chappel And Wakes Colne Cricket Club	North	Good	Standard
			Standard	Standard
14	Colchester and East Essex Cricket Club	Central/ East	Good	Good
			Good	Good
24	Copford Cricket Club	West	Good	Good
29	Fordham Heath Playing Field	North	Good	Good
39	King George Playing Field (Boxted)	North	Good	Poor
55	Mile End Sports Ground	Central/ East	Good	Good
			Poor	Standard
91	The Dutchy Field	North	Good	Standard
93	The Glebe (West Mersea)	South	Standard	Standard
			Standard	Standard
89	Great Bromley CC	Central West	Good	Standard
104	West Bergholt Cricket Club	North	Standard	Standard
107	Wivenhoe Town Cricket Club	Central/ East	Good	Standard
121	Colchester A Ground	Central/ East	Standard	Standard
132	Earls Colne Recreation Club	North	Standard	Poor

Mile End Sports Ground has the only poor quality square within the City. Colchester Cavaliers CC state the square has no covers and is maintained by the Council which only occasionally roll the provision. The Club also state it has experienced incidents where people have vandalised the site leaving holes and divots, that the square offers an inconsistent bounce and that the crease is prone to cracking.

The Glebe (West Mersea), West Bergholt CC, Colchester A Ground and Earls Colne Recreation Club all offer standard quality squares with issues such as a lack of rolling, minimal cover use and an un-even bounce.

Two sites have outfields assessed as poor quality with Earls Colne Recreation Club stating that peripheral building work has left stones, and that football use of the outfield has left worn patches. It also suggests significant outfield damage has been caused by a collapsed drain.

King George Playing Field (Boxted) is also assessed as a poor quality outfield with Boxted CC stating that the outfield has a rabbit problem which it states Boxted Parish Council is trying to address. This affects the quality of outfield as it causes holes and undulations.

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Comparatively, Wivenhoe Town CC state its outfield is worsened by having an uneven slope.

In addition, Earls Colne CC and Colchester Cavaliers CC report the quality of playing provision has worsened in recent years. The former states that its outfield has worsened because it has collapsed in one part due to poor drainage and winter junior football, whilst Colchester Cavaliers CC simply blames the weather for the worsening in quality.

Comparatively, West Mersea CC, Eight Ash Green CC, Colchester CC, Dedham CC and West Bergholt CC all state their squares have improved in quality due to factors such as new machinery, new groundsman being hired, more investment into maintenance, and hiring a dedicated groundsman.

Of the NTPs in Colchester, all provision at club sites is in an adequate and useable condition.

### **Ancillary facilities**

Ancillary provision refers to the accompanying building to a site that is accessed as changing facilities and a social space if applicable. All sites were assessed for its ancillary provision quality during non-technical site assessments and further evidenced by consultation responses. Quality ratings were determined by assessing matters such as the condition of the building, the quantity and quality of changing rooms and the social space offering.

*Table 6.7: Quality ratings for community available ancillary provisions (site-by-site)*

Site ID	Site	Club	Analysis area	Ancillary provision quality
1	Abberton Cricket Club	Abberton CC	South	Good
9	Chappel And Wakes Colne Cricket Club	Chappel & Wakes Colne CC	North	Poor
14	Colchester and East Essex Cricket Club	Colchester CC	Central/ East	Good
24	Copford Cricket Club	Copford CC	West	Standard
29	Fordham Heath Playing Field	Eight Ash Green CC	North	Standard
39	King George Playing Field (Boxted)	Boxted CC	North	Good
55	Mile End Sports Ground	Colchester Cavaliers CC Great Horkelesley and Lexden CC	Central/ East	Standard
91	The Dutchy Field	Dedham CC	North	Good
93	The Glebe (West Mersea)	West Mersea CC	South	Standard
104	West Bergholt Cricket Club	West Bergholt CC	North	Standard
107	Wivenhoe Town Cricket Club	Wivenhoe CC	Central/ East	Good
121	Colchester A Ground	Real Oddies CC	Central/ East	Standard
132	Earls Colne Recreation Club	Earls Colne CC	North	Good

All clubs in Colchester have access to ancillary provision, of which, there is a varying level of quality. All provision is either good or standard quality; other than Chappel and Wakes Colne CC which has a poor quality clubhouse.

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Chappel and Wakes Colne CC state its toilets, changing rooms, social area and the overall condition of its building are of a poor quality. It also states that the site has a communal shower space servicing both teams and that it does not have ample parking.

Colchester Cavaliers CC accesses Mile End Sports Ground following the Club's relocation from Mill Road Recreation Ground. The Club and the Essex Cricket Board confirm that part of the agreement with its relocation was that suitable ancillary provision was to be provided. Although a brand-new timber building was installed at Mile End Sports Ground in February 2022 through funding provided by the Council, the interior of the building is still in development with its kitchen and function space still being built.

Boxted CC state the interior of its clubhouse is being renovated. The building's function room is being made slightly smaller and its changing rooms are being extended which shall enable both teams to have a dedicated shower space. It is also renovating its bar area and function room in the process. Funding for the project has been secured through S106 funds following developments in Boxted, as well as Football Foundation funding for the changing rooms improvements.

West Mersea CC is in the process of enhancing its ancillary provision provided at The Glebe (West Mersea) following S106 funding being secured. The ancillary provision will benefit the cricket, football and rugby clubs playing on site.

Regarding the toilet facilities of the ancillary provision, West Mersea CC, West Bergholt CC and Chappel and Wakes Colne CC all describe having poor quality changing rooms. Regarding changing rooms, West Mersea CC, Wivenhoe Town CC and Chappel and Wakes Colne CC all its changing spaces as poor quality.

ECB state that West Bergholt CC and Eight Ash CC are both looking to invest into enhancing its ancillary provisions. Both sites currently provide standard quality clubhouses.

Of all clubs across Colchester, IPSCOL CC, Copford CC, Wivenhoe Town CC and Colchester Cavaliers CC have all reported incidents of vandalism at its sites including incidents of damage to buildings and items being stolen.

### ***Ball striking issues***

Abberton CC report that local residents are requesting a ball striking net to be installed, however, bats have been reported in the area and their flight path cannot be interfered with, meaning this is difficult to achieve.

Abberton CC has a somewhat small ground which has resulted in a ball striking net to be installed to the North of the site. Following this the Club received a request for a second net to be installed to the West of the site near the Poplar trees. It has been identified that bats are nesting within the trees which has presented a dilemma for the Club as a net would interfere with the bats flight path. The Club is however still looking to install a net, however funding for this is yet to be sourced.

### ***Training facilities***

Access to cricket nets is important, particularly for pre-season/winter training. In Colchester, Mile End Sports Ground, King George V Playing Field (Boxted), The Duchy Field, The Glebe (West Mersea), do not provide fixed practice nets.

Of the clubs across Colchester, 11 report having demand for additional training facilities. The table below outlines the additional training needs identified.

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Table 6.8: Additional training need by Club

Club	Training facility need
Boxted CC	The Club state it has the need for a two laned fixed practice net facility.
Colchester Cavaliers CC	The Club has the desire for a portable practice net or a fixed lane practice facility in order to support its restarting of the All Stars and Dynamos initiatives.
Copford CC	Club did not specify its need.
Dedham CC	The Club has desire for a portable practice net and fixed practice lane nets.
Earls Colne CC	The Club has desire for a portable practice net.
Great Horkesley and Lexden CC	The Club has desire for fixed practice nets at its site.
IPSCOL CC	The Club is wanting a fixed lane practice lane and an NTP installing at Ipswich CC.
Real Oddies CC	The Club state it has the need to replace the back net of its fixed practice net.
West Bergholt CC	The Club states it has demand for a second square and better quality practice nets.
West Mersea CC	The Club stresses the need for a new portable cage and a replacement surface for its ten-year-old fixed practice lane.
Wivenhoe Town CC	The Club has desire for a portable practice net.

## Indoor facilities

In total, 12 clubs report accessing indoor provision for winter net pre-season training sessions, with sites such as Northern Gateway Sports Park, Holmwood House Preparatory School, Gilbert School, Brightlingsea Sports Centre (Tendring), Gosfield School (Braintree) and Tabor Academy (Braintree) all being accessed.

Colchester Cavaliers CC praise the quality of Northern Gateway Sports Park; however, it raises frustrations with the price of the facility and the difficulty it has trying to book an allocation. Peak time prices for all four lanes are set at £60 per hour, whilst off peak prices for all four lanes are £50 per hour.

## 6.3: Demand

There are 15 clubs in Colchester which collectively provide 89 teams. When broken down this equates to 43 senior men's, six senior women's and 38 junior boys and two junior girls' teams. Nine of the clubs are relatively large and consist of both senior and junior sections, whilst three smaller clubs feature one senior team each.

Table 6.9: Summary of teams by club

Club	Analysis area	Number of teams			
		Senior male	Senior female	Junior boys' teams	Junior girls' teams
Abberton CC	South	5	1	5	-
Boxted CC	North	3	-	2	-
Chappel & Wakes Colne CC	North	3	1	6	-
Colchester CC	Central/ East	3	2	5	1
Colchester Cavaliers CC	Central/ East	2	-	-	-
Copford CC	West	3	-	3	-

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Club	Analysis area	Number of teams			
		Senior male	Senior female	Junior boys' teams	Junior girls' teams
Dedham CC	North	2	-	-	-
Earls Colne CC	North	1	-	-	-
Eight Ash Green CC	North	3	1	4	-
Great Horkesley & Lexden CC	Central/ East	1	-	-	-
IPSCOL CC	OUTSIDE	2	-	-	-
Real Oddies CC	Central/ East	1	-	-	-
West Bergholt CC	North	5	-	7	-
West Mersea CC	South	5	1	3	1
Wivenhoe CC	Central/ East	4	-	3	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>43</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>2</b>

In addition to the identified demand above, for the 2022 season, IPSCOL CC have exported two senior teams into neighbouring Ipswich.

As seen in the table below, most teams are based in the North Analysis Area (38 teams), whilst the West Analysis Area provides only six teams, all of which, are affiliated to Copford CC. The two senior teams based at IPSCOL CC are not currently assigned to an analysis area, as the Club has been based at Ipswich CC for the 2022 season. Following its relocation to Langham Community Centre, it shall

Table 6.10: Summary of teams by analysis area

Analysis area	No. of competitive teams			
	Senior men	Senior women	Junior boys	Junior girls
Central/ East	11	2	8	1
North	17	2	19	-
South	10	2	8	1
West	3	-	3	-
OUTSIDE	2	-	-	-
<b>Colchester</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>2</b>

### Participation trends

Nine clubs report that demand has increased in some form over the previous three years. In the case of IPSCOL CC, West Mersea CC, Abberton CC, Earls Colne CC, West Bergholt CC and Boxted CC there has been a growth in the number of senior mens teams. Comparatively, growth in the number of senior women's teams has taken place at West Mersea CC, Colchester CC, Abberton CC, West Bergholt CC, Chappel and Wakes Colne CC. Finally, Wivenhoe Town CC, Abberton CC, Earls Colne CC and West Bergholt CC have all seen a growth in the number of junior teams fielded in recent years.

In contrast, both Colchester CC and Chappel and Wakes Colne CC state that despite growth in the women's section there has been a decline in junior demand. Chappel and Wakes Colne CC describe that both Covid and the football season starting at a slightly different time has resulted in the loss of several older junior players.

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### ***Imported/exported demand***

As of the 2022 season, IPSCOL CC has exported demand to the second square at Ipswich CC. However, following the clubs relocation to Langham Community Centre for the 2024 season, the Club shall no longer export demand and shall be based within the City.

Exported demand also takes place from clubs accessing venues outside of Colchester for winter nets. This occurs at Wivenhoe Town CC when accessing Brightlingsea Sports Centre (Tendring), Earls Colne CC with Gosfield School (Braintree) and West Bergholt CC utilising the Tabor Academy (Braintree).

Imported demand is identified with clubs accessing sites for winter nets, such as Harwich and Dovercourt CC, Clacton CC and Brightlingsea CC confirm accessing Northern Gateway Sports Park (Colchester), whilst Great Bentley CC accesses Holmwood House (Colchester).

### ***Additional activity***

The ECB is currently running several initiatives across the Country which results 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.

#### *Dynamo's 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). Table 6.11 details the participation figures identified.

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Table 6.11: Summary of All Stars and Dynamos participation

Club	All Stars participation figures (2022)	Dynamos participation figures (2022)
Abberton CC	-	12 participants
Chappel and Wakes Colne CC	16 participants	14 participants
Colchester CC	34 participants	6 participants
Copford CC	35 participants	10 participants
West Bergholt CC	100 participants	10 participants
West Mersea CC	14 participants	-

There are five clubs currently delivering the All Stars program and five running Dynamos sessions. The highest level of All Stars participation can be seen at West Bergholt CC with an average of 100 participants attending, whilst Chappel and Wakes Colne CC have the highest average attendance for Dynamos sessions with 14 individuals.

### 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 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.

In Colchester, four clubs run women's softball sessions as shown below.

Table 6.12: Summary of women's and girls' softball participation

Club	Women's and Girls Softball participation figures (2022)
Abberton CC	10 participants
Chappel and Wakes Colne CC	15 participants
Colchester CC	15 participants
West Mersea CC	25 participants

### 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. Chance to Shine cricket coaching delivery has taken place in four schools in Colchester, as seen below:

- ◀ Friars Grove Primary School
- ◀ Layer De La Haye Primary School
- ◀ Myland Community Primary School
- ◀ St Johns C of E Primary School

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## *Other usage*

Colchester and East Essex CC features a square of a good enough quality that has enabled it to be used as an out ground for Essex County Cricket Club. The last known fixture at the site was Essex CCC vs Sussex CCC in 2016. Earls Colne CC describe hosting Essex North District U15's fixtures at its site.

In the case of Colchester A Ground, the site is also used by the military as it is a Ministry of Defence operated site. Finally, Wivenhoe Town CC has hosted the Marshall Hatchick Two Counties Cricket Championship, a regional feeder league for the East Anglian Premier League for Essex and Suffolk based clubs.

## **Future demand**

Future demand can be defined in two ways, through club ambitions 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 Colchester.

## *Population growth*

For population projections, Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator can estimate the likely additional demand for grass wicket cricket squares that will arise from forecasted growth. This uses the current population within each relevant age group together with current participation levels to establish team generation rates that are applied to future population projections.

For reference total population in 2020 of 197,200 is projected to increase to 217,837 by 2033. The table below shows the number of new teams generated by the new population and the requisite match equivalent sessions. It however shall not account for the scale or distribution of housing growth in the borough proposed in the Local Plan, such as the Garden Community development, and that this shall be subject to scenarios in the in the strategy report.

*Table 6.13: Authority wide team generation rates (2033)*

Age group	Team generation rate	Number of new teams generated by the new population	Number of new teams generated by the new population - rounded figure	Peak time for population	Average games for age group	Match equivalent session per season <sup>28</sup>
Men (18-55yrs)	<b>1:1222</b>	4.01	4	Saturday	12	48
Women (18-55yrs)	<b>1:8477</b>	0.56	1	Sunday	12	12
Boys (7-18yrs)	<b>1:381</b>	3.51	4	Midweek	6	24
Girls (7-18yrs)	<b>1:6767</b>	0.19	0	Midweek	6	0

The total amount of future growth is anticipated to equate to four senior men's, one senior women's, and four junior boys' teams which shall create a need for two cricket squares if played at peak time.

As these figures cannot be accredited to any one analysis area, as they are authority-wide, they will be added onto the overall supply and demand total for each pitch type.

<sup>28</sup> Two teams require one pitch to account for playing on a home and away basis; therefore, one team accounts to 0.5 match equivalent sessions on their relevant pitch type.

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## *Participation increases*

Through consultation many clubs state that capacity is limited, with secondary squares needing to be sought to realise both current and future demand aspirations. This particularly relates to Chappel and Wakes Colne CC which utilises two squares at its home venue in order to accommodate demand.

In total, six clubs in Colchester have plans to increase the number of teams they currently provide. Details of this potential growth are listed in the table below. This amounts to a total predicted growth of five senior mens teams, two senior women's teams and seven junior boys' teams. Essex Cricket Board is anticipating an increase in women's and girls demand across the City, as well as a general increase in mens and boys demand following the rising South East Asian community within Colchester.

*Table 6.14: Future demand expressed by clubs*

Club	Analysis area	Senior men	Senior women	Junior teams
Colchester CC	Central/ East	-	-	2
Colchester Cavaliers CC	Central/ East	2	-	1
Earls Colne CC	North	1	1	1
IPSCOL CC	OUTSIDE	1	-	-
West Bergholt CC	North	1	1	2
Wivenhoe Town CC	Central/ East	-	-	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>

## ***Future demand summary***

In summary, future demand shall be calculated using ONS population forecasts. A scenario exploring how future demand through club ambitions shall impact the supply and demand analysis shall be included in the forthcoming Strategy report.

## ***Peak time demand***

An analysis of match play identifies that peak time demand for senior cricket in Colchester is Saturday, although a many number 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.

## **6.4: 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.

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.

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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:

<b>Potential capacity</b>	Play is below the level the site could sustain
<b>At capacity</b>	Play matches the level the site can sustain
<b>Overused</b>	Play exceeds the level the site can sustain

The capacity analysis assumes that all clubs rotate its 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.

Please note that NTPs have been discounted from the analysis by means of not distorting the findings. This is because no NTPs are currently being used more than their recommended capacity, which is 60 match equivalent sessions per season (0 match equivalent sessions when poor quality). With no NTPs being overused, this translates to overall actual spare capacity for junior play, However, this is not considered to be actual spare capacity for senior weekend cricket due to league requirements generally not allowing usage.

With regard to midweek capacity, a maximum capacity rating of 36 match equivalent has been set for one square. This is calculated on the understanding that a square is to be rested at least two days during the week in order to enable necessary maintenance and reduce overplay. Therefore, on a home and away basis of three nights a week, a square has been set the capacity of six sessions per week for midweek play, multiplied by six (the average number of matches a junior team plays). Any square showing potential spare capacity for midweek demand shall be allocated 6 match equivalent sessions of actual spare capacity, due to the fewer number of fixtures within a junior calendar.

### ***Spare capacity***

The table below explains the difference between the potential spare capacity referenced in Table 6.16 in the final three columns (Saturday, Sunday and midweek).

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Table 6.15: Spare capacity examples

Potential spare capacity in peak period (examples)	Explanation of spare capacity
<b>No</b>	If the cell has a No it means the pitch is played to capacity within this peak period and therefore cannot accommodate any further demand.
<b>Yes</b>	If the cell has a Yes that is not highlighted it means there is spare capacity to accommodate further demand within this designated peak period however this is discounted due to unsecure tenure, poor pitch quality, the pitch not being available for community use or the pitch already being played to capacity or being overplayed so it cannot accommodate any additional demand.
<b>Yes</b>	If the cell has a Yes and is also highlighted in green it means there is actual available spare capacity within this peak period which can be utilised.

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Table 6.16: Capacity analysis of community available grass cricket squares

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Club users	No. of squares	Square quality	No. of grass wickets	Capacity (sessions per season)	Actual play (sessions per season)	Capacity rating (sessions per season)	Potential spare capacity for senior cricket? (Saturday)	Potential spare capacity for senior cricket? (Sunday)	Potential spare capacity for junior cricket? (Midweek)
1	Abberton Cricket Club	South	Abberton CC	1	Good	10	50	65	15	No	Yes	Yes
9	Chappel And Wakes Colne Cricket Club	North	Chappel and Wakes Colne CC	2	Good	10	50	29	31	No	Yes	Yes
					Standard	2	8	6	2	No	No	No
14	Colchester and East Essex Cricket Club	Central/ East	Colchester CC	1	Good	15	75	43	32	No	No	Yes
						4	20	7	13	No	No	Yes
24	Copford Cricket Club	West	Copford CC	1	Good	14	70	70	-	No	Yes	Yes
29	Fordham Heath Playing Field	North	Eight Ash Green CC	1	Good	9	45	54	9	No	No	Yes
39	King George Playing Field (Boxted)	North	Boxted CC	1	Good	8	40	38	2	Yes	Yes	Yes
55	Mile End Sports Ground	Central/ East	-Colchester Cavaliers CC -Great Horkesley & Lexden CC	2	Good	10	50	35	15	No	Yes	Yes
					Poor	8	0	0	-	Yes	Yes	Yes
91	The Dutchy Field	North	Dedham CC	1	Good	5	25	28	3	Yes	Yes	Yes
93	The Glebe (West Mersea)	South	West Mersea CC	2	Standard	6	24	28	4	No	No	Yes
					Standard	6	24	27	3	Yes	No	Yes
104	West Bergholt Cricket Club	North	West Bergholt CC	1	Standard	13	52	91	39	No	No	No
107	Wivenhoe Town Cricket Club	Central/ East	Wivenhoe CC	1	Good	12	60	65	5	No	Yes	Yes
121	Colchester A Ground	Central/ East	Real Oddies CC	1	Standard	13	52	12	40	Yes	Yes	Yes
132	Earls Colne Recreation Club	North	Earls Colne CC	1	Standard	8	32	14	18	Yes	Yes	Yes

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## **Actual spare capacity**

Although a large amount of spare capacity is identified, it is not as simple as to aggregate this into a general oversupply of cricket squares. Despite seven squares displaying some form of spare capacity, only two are available for further senior cricket activity on a Saturday, whilst three are available for further Sunday play. The squares in question are outlined below.

*Table 6.17: Site by site breakdown of spare capacity*

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Spare capacity	No. of teams that could be accommodated on Saturday	No. of teams that could be accommodated on Sunday
9	Chappel And Wakes Colne Cricket Club	North	31	-	1
121	Colchester A Ground	Central/ East	40	1	2
132	Earls Colne Recreation Club	North	18	1	2
<b>Total</b>			<b>89</b>	<b>2 teams</b>	<b>5 teams</b>

For both Saturday and Sunday demand, total spare capacity equates to 89 match equivalent sessions per season. When applying this to Saturday peak time cricket, actual spare capacity totals 24 match equivalent sessions per season. This is calculated by using the average number of matches played per season by senior teams (12) 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.

Actual spare capacity is present across two of the four analysis areas, with the Central/ East and North both accommodating for 12 match equivalent sessions of actual spare capacity.

*Table 6.18: Actual spare capacity for senior cricket (Saturday) by analysis area*

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (matches per season)
Central/East	12
North	12
South	-
West	-
<b>Colchester</b>	<b>24</b>

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 12 match equivalent sessions per season of spare capacity are required).

For Sunday cricket, actual spare capacity is provided on three squares (as seen in the table below) totalling 60 match equivalent sessions per season of actual spare capacity, with all capacity identified in the Central/East and North analysis areas showing some form of actual spare capacity. Spare capacity is highest in the North Analysis Area with 36 match equivalent sessions per season.

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Table 6.19: Actual spare capacity for senior cricket (Sunday) by analysis area

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (matches per season)
Central/East	24
North	36
South	-
West	-
<b>Colchester</b>	<b>60</b>

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, five squares have actual spare capacity. Working on the basis that a square can accommodate six midweek teams, and where actual spare capacity is present six match equivalent sessions per season is accounted for, it can be calculated that 78 match equivalent sessions per season if actual spare capacity are present.

Table 6.20: Site by site breakdown of midweek actual spare capacity

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Spare capacity	No. of teams that could be accommodated midweek
9	Chappel And Wakes Colne Cricket Club	North	12	2
14	Colchester and East Essex Cricket Club	Central/ East	24	4
55	Mile End Sports Ground	Central/ East	6	1
121	Colchester A Ground	Central/ East	36	6
132	Earls Colne Recreation Club	North	18	3
<b>Total</b>			<b>78</b>	<b>13 teams</b>

Table 6.21: Actual spare capacity for junior cricket (midweek) by analysis area

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (matches per season)
Central/ East	66
North	30
South	-
West	-
<b>Colchester</b>	<b>96</b>

The reason for midweek capacity being higher than the capacity for weekend cricket is because fixtures can be split across numerous days. Actual spare capacity for midweek demand is calculated by using the average number of matches played per season by juniors teams (six) multiplied by the number of additional teams that can be fielded at peak time (two teams per day for three days of play 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. It is therefore only clubs with a significant junior membership base that struggle for capacity, such as West Bergholt CC.

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## Overplay

Overplay translates to a site accommodating more demand than it can sustain. While it is possible to sustain certain minimal levels of overplay providing that a regular, sufficient maintenance regime is in place, a resolution is recommended to ensure that there is no detrimental effect on quality over time.

Six sites are identified as being overplayed in Colchester. Details of each are in the table below. As can be seen in Table 6.22, overplay has been identified at six sites and total 78 match equivalent sessions. The North Analysis Area contributes to 51 match equivalent sessions per season, whilst the Central/East Analysis Area total five match equivalent sessions per season. No overplay is present in the West Analysis Area.

For the six overplayed sites, all squares are either of a good or standard quality, meaning that provision is not being overplayed due to a poor-quality rating. Therefore, it is the sheer quantity of demand that is causing the identified overplay.

Table 6.22: Summary of overplay

Site ID	Site name	Club	Analysis area	Overplay (matches per season)
1	Abberton Cricket Club	Abberton CC	South	15
29	Fordham Heath Playing Field	Eight Ash Green CC	North	9
91	The Dutchy Field	Dedham CC	North	3
93	The Glebe (West Mersea)	West Mersea CC	South	7
104	West Bergholt Cricket Club	West Bergholt CC	North	39
107	Wivenhoe Town Cricket Club	Wivenhoe CC	Central/East	5
<b>Total</b>				<b>78</b>

Table 6.23: Summary of overplay by analysis area

Analysis area	Overplay (sessions per season)
Central/ East	5
North	51
South	22
West	-
<b>Colchester</b>	<b>78</b>

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.

## 6.5: 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 (12 matches for senior teams and six matches for junior teams).

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As previously discussed, future demand is calculated using population forecasts and Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator. Using current and future population forecasts it has been predicted that Colchester may see the growth of four senior men's teams, one senior women's team and four junior boys' teams by 2033.

When applied by match equivalent sessions, this equates to 48 match equivalent sessions per season for Saturday demand, 12 match equivalent sessions for Sunday demand and 24 match equivalent sessions for midweek demand. Total future demand has been equated to the entirety of Colchester.

### **Senior cricket supply and demand analysis (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, please note that 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 (12) 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 6.24: Supply and demand analysis for senior cricket (Saturday)

Analysis area	Demand (match equivalent sessions)				
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Central/ East	12	5	7	-	7
North	12	51	39	-	39
South	-	22	22	-	22
West	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Colchester</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>102</b>

As seen above, there is a current shortfall equating to 54 match equivalent sessions per season for senior cricket. When considering future demand of four additional senior teams by 2033, the shortfall is increased to 102 match equivalent sessions per season.

### **Senior cricket supply and demand analysis (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.

Table 6.25: Supply and demand analysis for senior cricket (Sunday)

Analysis area	Demand (match equivalent sessions)				
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Central/ East	24	5	19	-	19
North	36	51	15	-	15
South	-	22	22	-	22
West	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Colchester</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>30</b>

There is an overall shortfall of capacity amounting to 18 match equivalent sessions per season, with the North and South analysis areas showing shortfalls.

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Future demand of one senior women's team is identified through population growth, meaning shortfalls are exacerbated to 30 match equivalent sessions per season.

### **Junior cricket supply and demand analysis (midweek)**

For the junior supply and demand analysis, actual spare capacity equates to 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 6.26: Supply and demand analysis of cricket squares for junior cricket

Analysis area	Demand (match equivalent sessions)				
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Central/ East	66	5	61	-	61
North	30	51	21	-	21
South	-	22	22	-	22
West	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Colchester</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>6</b>

Midweek play within Colchester is currently showing actual spare capacity of 18 match equivalent sessions. When accommodating for future demand, the growth of four junior teams by 2033 reduces actual spare capacity and creates overplay of six sessions.

### **6.6: Conclusion**

In summary, the broad position in Colchester is there is insufficient capacity for current demand across Saturday, Sunday cricket, with some spare capacity present for midweek play. This is caused by the quantity of demand identified at overplayed sites, with no overplay caused by a poor quality square. Future demand further worsens the existing shortfalls and causes midweek demand to become overplayed.

A scenario exploring how future demand through club aspirations of five senior men's teams, two senior women's teams and seven junior teams shall affect the future capacity analysis will be included in the proceeding strategy document.

For the five overplayed sites, all squares provided are either of a good or standard quality, meaning that provision is not being overplayed due to a poor-quality square. Therefore, it is the sheer quantity of demand that is causing the identified overplay.

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### **Cricket – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ The broad position in Colchester is identified overplay for peak time senior men's cricket, with Sunday demand also also showing an undersupply of provision.
- ◀ Midweek demand is currently showing actual spare capacity of 18 match equivalent sessions. Once future demand is considered this is removed and overplay is identified.
- ◀ Current overplay of 54 match equivalent sessions per season is present for Saturday demand, which worsens to 102 match equivalent sessions when accounting for future demand.
- ◀ Sunday demand is also both displaying overplay for both current and future demand.
- ◀ Six sites are overplayed, totalling 78 match equivalent sessions per season.

### **Cricket – supply summary**

- ◀ In total, there are 30 natural turf cricket squares in Colchester across 19 sites as well as five standalone non-turf pitches.
- ◀ All non-community accessible provision is located at education sites, those being Colchester County High School for Girls, Colchester Royal Grammar School Sports Ground, Holmwood House Preparatory School, Littlegarth School and University of Essex Sports Centre.
- ◀ There are NTPs accompanying grass wicket squares at six of the community accessible sites, as well as five standalone NTPs identified, all of which, are not available for community use.
- ◀ Four clubs in Colchester have freehold ownership of its sites, five have lease agreements in place and six rent sites.
- ◀ The audit of community available grass wicket cricket squares found 11 to be good quality, six to be standard quality and one to be poor quality, that being the second square at Mile End Sports Ground.
- ◀ Of all clubs consulted with, only Chappel and Wakes Colne CC describe its ancillary provision as of a poor quality.
- ◀ Colchester Cavaliers CC, Boxed CC and Colchester CC are all in the process of developing its ancillary provision, whilst West Mersea CC is looking to develop its clubhouse.
- ◀ Of responding clubs, 11 state demand for additional training facilities at their home sites.
- ◀ There is one disused square (former grass pitch) within Colchester located at Mill Road Playing Fields. The site formerly hosted Colchester Cavaliers CC which now access Mile End Sports Ground.

### **Cricket – demand summary**

- ◀ There are 15 clubs in Colchester which collectively provide 43 senior men's, six senior women's, 38 junior boys and two junior girls team.
- ◀ Five clubs within Colchester currently offer the All Stars program, and five deliver Dynamos sessions.
- ◀ Four clubs confirm delivering women's and girls' softball sessions which bring total participation figures of 88 participants.
- ◀ Through population growth, future demand equating to the growth of four senior men's teams, one senior women's team and four junior boys' teams by 2033 is identified.
- ◀ Club aspirations equate to the potential growth of five senior men's teams, two senior women's teams and seven junior teams.
- ◀ The only instances of exported demand are clubs accessing sites for winter nets. Imported demand is not currently taking place, however, following Suffolk based IPSCOL CC's relocation to Langham Community Centre, the Club shall import demand into the City.

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### PART 7: TENNIS COURTS

#### 7.1: Introduction

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) is the organisation responsible for the governance of tennis and club-based tennis locally across Tendring. It has recently restructured its strategic approach to target several national focus areas, with a priority on developing the sport at park sites and removing key barriers to participation in park and club sites. In Tendring the LTA is working with the Council to improve access to provision in parks. More detailed discussion of the LTA's ClubSpark, Rally and Gate Access are set out later in the report.

#### Consultation

In total, there are 12 tennis clubs in Colchester. Eight of the 12 clubs responded to consultation requests, resulting in a response rate of 66% as shown below.

*Table 7.1: Consultation responses*

Club name	Analysis area	Club response?
Colchester Tennis Academy (Colchester Garrison TC)	Central/ East	Yes
Colchester Officers TC	Central/ East	Yes
David Lloyd Club Colchester	Central/ East	No
Dedham TC	North	Yes
Earls Colne TC	North	No
Langham TC	North	Yes
Lexden Hill LTC	Central/ East	Yes
Lexden Rackets and Fitness TC	West	Yes
Spring Lane TC	Central/ East	No
University of Essex TC	South	No
West Mersea TC	South	Yes
Wivenhoe TC	Central/ East	Yes

#### 7.2: Supply

There are 122 tennis courts identified in Colchester across 26 sites. Of the courts, 88 are categorised as being available for community use at 16 sites compared to 34 that are unavailable at 10 sites. Courts on sites that are available to the community include club, park and some school courts. The Central East Analysis Area contains the highest number of available courts (65), whereas South Analysis Area provides the fewest with ten courts.

Please note that courts classified as being available for community use are deemed to be easily accessible to the general population, either via pay and play or through a membership at a club (or a combination of both). All remaining courts identified as being unavailable are located at school sites.

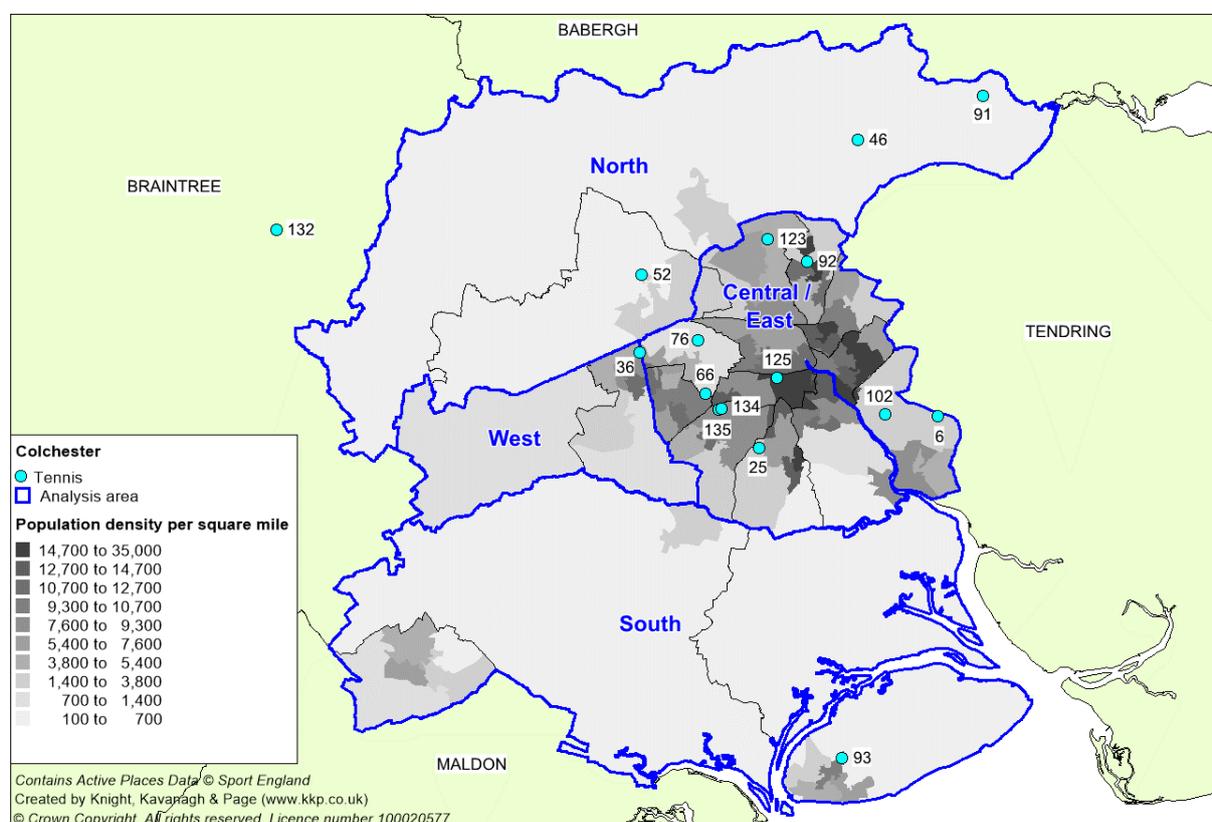
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Table 7.2: Summary of the number of courts by analysis area

Analysis area	Number of courts available for community use	Number of courts unavailable for community use
Central/ East	65	27
North	11	0
South	6	0
West	6	7
<b>Colchester</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>34</b>

Figure 7.1 below shows the location of the courts servicing Colchester, regardless of community use. For a key to the map, see Table 7.3.

Figure 7.1: Overview of tennis court locations



## Disused provision

Two sites have tennis courts which have fallen out of use and are classified as being disused. Colchester County High School for Girls has three concrete tennis courts that are now used as a car park. In addition, Colchester Royal Grammar Sports School formerly had five grass tennis courts that have now been converted into a senior rugby pitch.

Finally, four of the courts provided at Colchester Leisure World Tennis Centre have fallen out of use. The provision has been outlined by Colchester City Council to be converted into Padel courts. More detail regarding this shall be discussed later in the report.

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### *Future provision*

Langham TC outline ambitions to add a third court to its site, whilst Lexden Hill LTC is looking to install a padel tennis court to its site which shall be discussed in greater detail further in the report.

Finally, the Chesterwell development shall also result in Trinity Secondary School having a range of sports provision installed including tennis courts. The provision shall not be floodlit but shall be open to community use and is scheduled to be installed in September 2023.

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Table 7.3: Tennis courts in Colchester

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Ownership	Community use?	No. of courts	Sports lighting?	Court type	Court quality
6	Broad Lane Sports Ground	Central/ East	Council	Yes	4	Yes	Macadam	Good
25	Corporal Budd VC Gymnasium	Central/ East	M.o.D	Yes	8	4 Yes	Concrete	Good
36	Holmwood House Preparatory School	West	School	Yes	6	Yes	Macadam	Good
46	Langham Recreation Ground	North	Council	Yes	2	No	Macadam	Standard
52	Lorkin Daniell Playing Field	North	Council	Yes	2	Yes	Macadam	Good
66	Philip Morant School	Central/ East	School	Yes	5	Yes	Concrete	Good
76	Spring Lane Playing Field	Central/ East	Council	Yes	8	No	Macadam	Standard
91	The Duchy Field	North	Council	Yes	3	No	Macadam	Good
92	The Gilberd School (Leisure World Highwoods)	Central/ East	School	Yes	6	Yes all 10	Macadam	Standard
					4			
93	The Glebe (West Mersea)	South	Council	Yes	3	Yes	Macadam	Good
					3	No	Grass	Standard
102	University of Essex Sports Centre	Central/ East	University	Yes	4	Yes	Macadam	Good
123	David Lloyd (Colchester)	Central/ East	Private	Yes	5	Yes	Polymeric	Good
125	The Colchester Officers Club	Central/ East	Sports Club	Yes	3	Yes	Macadam	Good
					3	No		Standard
132	Earls Colne Recreation Club	North	Council	Yes	4	Yes	Macadam	Good
134	Lexden Hill Lawn Tennis Club	Central/ East	Council	Yes	9	No	Grass	Good
135	Colchester Leisure World Tennis Centre	Central/ East	Council	Yes	6	Yes	Macadam	Good
<b>No community use</b>								
13	Colchester Academy	Central/ East	School	No	4	Yes	Artificial turf	Standard
15	Colchester County High School For Girls	Central/ East	School	No	3	No	Macadam	Standard
19	Colchester Royal Grammar Sports School	Central/ East	School	No	3	No	Concrete	Poor
56	Military Corrective Training Centre	Central/ East	M.o.D	No	1	No	Concrete	Poor
79	St Helena School	Central/ East	School	No	6	Yes	Concrete	Poor

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Ownership	Community use?	No. of courts	Sports lighting?	Court type	Court quality
89	Stanway School	West	School	No	5	No	Macadam	Standard
97	The Thomas Lord Audley School	Central/ East	School	No	6	Yes	Concrete	Poor
119	Best Western Marks Tey Hotel	West	Private	No	2	Yes	Concrete	Poor
128	Paxman Academy	Central/ East	School	No	2	No	Concrete	Standard
141	Layer De La Haye Tennis Courts	Central/ East	Council	No	2	Yea	Artificial turf	Standard

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## Ownership and security of tenure

The table below highlights the ownership of tennis courts within Colchester. Most community use courts are operated by education sites, with 54 courts, 25 of which are community accessible located within Schools and University of Essex. Councils are the next most common operator of courts, with Colchester City Council or parish/town councils operating 46 courts. Of the council managed courts, only Layer De La Haye Tennis Courts provides provision that is not accessible, with the site being temporarily closed. Privately owned and MOD sites manage 16 courts, and finally only six courts are owned by sports clubs.

Table 7.4: Tennis courts by ownership type (all courts)

Availability for community use	Number of courts			
	Sports club	Councils (CBC/Town/Parish)	Education	Other
Available	6	44	25	13
Unavailable	-	2	29	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>16</b>

Table 7.5 outlines the current tenure position for clubs in Colchester. This helps understand the long-term security of clubs and informs its ability to access various grants. In instances where clubs have failed to respond to consultation attempts, their tenure position is unknown.

Table 7.5: Club management/ownership breakdown

Site ID	Site name	Club	Management	Ownership
6	Broad Lane Sports Ground	Wivenhoe TC	Sports Club	The Club pay a yearly rental agreement to Wivenhoe and District Sports Facilities trust.
25	Corporal Budd VC Gymnasium	Colchester Tennis Academy (Colchester Garrison TC)	MOD	Freehold ownership.
36	Holmwood House Preparatory School	Lexden Rackets and Fitness TC	Club	The Club is a tenant of the school and have a rolling lease in place.
46	Langham Recreation Ground	Langham TC	Council	<i>The Club did not specify any details.</i>
91	The Dutchy Field	Dedham TC	Council	<i>The Club did not specify any details.</i>
93	The Glebe (West Mersea)	West Mersea TC	Sports Club	The Club pay an annual lease agreement with Mersea Island TC.
125	Colchester Officers Club	Colchester Officers TC	MOD	<i>The Club did not specify any details.</i>
134	Lexden Hill Lawn Tennis Club	Lexden Hill LTC	Council	The Club have a lease agreement with Colchester City Council.

Wivenhoe TC state it has made several efforts to secure a lease agreement with Colchester City Council, however, it has been unable to do so. The Club confirm its current arrangement is not favourable for accessing grants and long term planning and would welcome the opportunity to enter into a lease agreement.

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### ***Court type***

The most common outdoor tennis court surface is macadam, with 66 courts identified across 14 sites. Of the remaining courts, a concrete surface is the most prominent with 33 courts identified across eight sites, followed by 12 grass courts across two sites. There are five polymeric courts and six artificial turf courts within Colchester. No clay courts have been identified.

Grass courts, whilst much sought after by players, are becoming increasingly rare across the Country, in part due to them requiring higher levels of maintenance and being able to accommodate less usage. They are generally reserved for summer use, with the weather at other times of the year making them unusable. In the case of Colchester, there are grass tennis courts identified at The Glebe (West Mersea) and Lexden Hill LTC.

There are bubble courts installed at University of Essex Sports Centre, Holmwood House Preparatory School and David Lloyd (Colchester), all of which are open to community use.

### ***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 Colchester, 58 tennis courts are serviced by sports lighting, representing 48% of the total provision. The courts with sports lighting are located at:

- ◀ Broad Lane Sports Ground (four courts)
- ◀ Colchester Leisure World Tennis Centre (six courts)
- ◀ Corporal Budd VC Gymnasium (four courts)
- ◀ David Lloyd (Colchester) (five courts)
- ◀ Earls Colne Recreation Club (four courts)
- ◀ Holmwood House Preparatory School (six courts)
- ◀ Layer De La Haye Tennis Courts (two courts)
- ◀ Lorkin Daniell Playing Field (two courts)
- ◀ Philip Morant School (five court)
- ◀ The Colchester Officers Club (three courts)
- ◀ The Gilbert School (ten court)
- ◀ The Glebe (West Mersea) (three courts)
- ◀ University of Essex Sports Centre (four courts)

Access to courts with sports lighting is considered particularly key for clubs as it allows for more usage of provision, which in turn can help accommodate more members. Seven of the 11 clubs within Colchester confirm having access to sports lit courts at its home sites. In the case of Langham TC, Spring Lane TC, Dedham TC and Lexden Hill TC all four clubs do not have access to sports lit courts at its sites.

Langham TC and Dedham TC confirm wanting to install floodlights at their respective sites, whilst Wivenhoe TC requires a replacement of its 20 year old floodlights that it wants to upgrade to LED.

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## Overmarking

Tennis courts, particularly within schools, are often over marked by netball, basketball and/or football markings. 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.

Overmarking of tennis courts is identified at 11 sites, as seen below. When broken down there are two community accessible sites and nine non community accessible sites showing overmarking, with netball being the most common overmarked provision.

- ◀ Colchester Academy
- ◀ Colchester County High School For Girls
- ◀ Colchester Royal Grammar Sports School
- ◀ Layer De La Haye Tennis Courts
- ◀ Philip Morant School
- ◀ St Helena School
- ◀ Stanway School
- ◀ The Gilbert School (Leisure World Highwoods)
- ◀ The Thomas Lord Audley School
- ◀ Paxman Academy

## 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).

The table below outlines the quality of courts which are both available for community use and unavailable for community use. In total, there are 62 good quality courts (49%), 42 standard quality courts (33%) and 22 poor quality courts (18%).

Table 7.6: Quality of tennis courts

Availability for community use	Number of courts		
	Good	Standard	Poor
Available	62	26	4
Unavailable	-	16	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>22</b>

Quality is presented site-by-site in the table below.

Table 7.7: Summary of quality by site

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Number of courts	Court type	Court quality
6	Broad Lane Sports Ground	Central/ East	4	Macadam	Good
25	Corporal Budd VC Gymnasium	Central/ East	8	Concrete	Good
36	Holmwood House Preparatory School	West	6	Macadam	Good
46	Langham Recreation Ground	North	2	Macadam	Standard
52	Lorkin Daniell Playing Field	North	2	Macadam	Good

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Number of courts	Court type	Court quality
66	Philip Morant School	Central/ East	5	Concrete	Good
76	Spring Lane Playing Field	Central/ East	8	Macadam	Standard
91	The Duchy Field	North	3	Macadam	Good
92	The Gilbert School (Leisure World Highwoods)	Central/ East	6	Macadam	Standard
			4		
93	The Glebe (West Mersea)	South	3	Macadam	Good
			3	Grass	Standard
102	University of Essex Sports Centre	Central/ East	4	Macadam	Good
123	David Lloyd (Colchester)	Central/ East	5	Polymeric	Good
125	The Colchester Officers Club	Central/ East	3	Macadam	Good
			3		Standard
132	Earls Colne Recreation Club	North	4	Macadam	Good
134	Lexden Hill Lawn Tennis Club	Central/ East	9	Grass	Good
135	Colchester Leisure World Tennis Centre	Central/ East	6	Macadam	Good
<b>No community use</b>					
13	Colchester Academy	Central/ East	4	Artificial turf	Standard
15	Colchester County High School For Girls	Central/ East	3	Macadam	Standard
19	Colchester Royal Grammar Sports School	Central/ East	3	Concrete	Poor
56	Military Corrective Training Centre	Central/ East	1	Concrete	Poor
79	St Helena School	Central/ East	6	Concrete	Poor
89	Stanway School	West	5	Macadam	Standard
97	The Thomas Lord Audley School	Central/ East	6	Concrete	Poor
119	Best Western Marks Tey Hotel	West	2	Concrete	Poor
128	Paxman Academy	Central/ East	2	Concrete	Standard
141	Layer De La Haye Tennis Courts	Central/ East	2	Artificial turf	Standard

There are no poor-quality community available courts within Colchester, following the four poor quality courts at Colchester Leisure World Tennis Centre being deemed out of use. The non-community accessible poor quality courts at Best Western Marks Tey Hotel service only its hotel guests.

Issues recorded during site assessments include poor grip underfoot, the presence of moss, worn line markings and loose gravel, with maintenance also considered to be basic and infrequent at most of the sites. This leads to further deterioration in quality. Such issues have been identified at Best Western Marks Tey Hotel and St Helena School as well as several other education sites.

Langham TC state that the quality of its courts has slightly declined in recent years, with its surface reportedly being 19 years old. West Mersea TC write that it has had frustrations with Mersea Island TC regarding the responsibility of repairing and repainting its courts, however, court improvements have now began taking place.

In the case of Lexden Hill LTC, the Club praises its groundsman that maintains the nine grass courts at its site for the quality in playing provision improving in recent years.

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The LTA writes that the six macadam courts at Colchester Leisure World Tennis Centre are outlined to have its six macadam courts cleaned, repainted and have the damaged fencing replaced in the spring of 2023.

Wivenhoe TC confirm it has paid for its courts to be pressure washed and moss treated which has improved the quality of its courts. Colchester Officers Club state that it has resurfaced three of its six courts which has noticeably improved quality.

Three of the five sites containing poor quality courts are operated by schools, with one of the sites under MOD ownership and the other a privately operated site.

Improving the quality and quantity of community accessible park courts is current a national priority for the LTA, with a focus on suitable sites that cater for high levels of recreational demand or that have the potential to do so. This is especially the case if the provision is serviced (or could be serviced) by changing facilities and sports lighting, whereby a sustainable tennis programme could be supported.

In the case of Colchester, Lorkin Daniell Playing Field and Earls Colne Recreation Club are the only example of park tennis courts that are Council operated and do not have a partnered club.

Several clubs confirm having written development plans, with Langham TC hoping to re-surface its two courts, add a third court and install floodlights. Dedham TC state it is hoping to receive planning permission to install sports lighting to its courts. Comparatively, Wivenhoe TC write that its 20-year-old sports lights are in urgent need of replacement, something it has some of the required funds in order to finance the installation. Finally, West Mersea hopes to improve the quality of its grass courts.

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
- ◀ Poor quality playing surfaces

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 three products for local authorities to use to remove the barriers and open tennis up to all of the residents in their area; ClubSpark, Rally and Gate Access (further explained in the demand section).

### *Renovation fund<sup>29</sup>*

The LTA has secured a £22 million investment fund to be put into public tennis courts across Britain, together with an £8.5 million investment from the LTA. This will see thousands of public park tennis courts that are in poor or unplayable condition improved for the benefit of local communities.

The LTA's ambition is to drive participation across park tennis sites, as well as ensuring the future sustainability of these facilities. As well as paying for the refurbishment of public park courts, the new investment will also pay for the implementation of sustainable operating models for the facilities, with specialist programmes and support to ensure courts are both affordable and utilised.

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<sup>29</sup><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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### Ancillary provision

All clubs have provided feedback on the quality of the ancillary provision which service their respective sites. A breakdown is detailed in the table below.

Table 7.8: Ancillary quality breakdown

Club	Analysis area	Facility as a whole	Changing facilities	Car parking
Colchester Tennis Academy (Colchester Garrison TC)	Central/ East	Good	Good	Good
Colchester Officers TC	Central/ East	Good	Good	Good
David Lloyd Club Colchester	Central/ East	Good	Good	Good
Dedham TC	North	Good	Poor	Standard
Earls Colne TC	North	Good	Unknown	Standard
Langham TC	North	Good	Poor	Good
Lexden Hill LTC	Central/ East	Standard	Standard	Standard
Lexden Rackets and Fitness TC	West	Good	Good	Good
Spring Lane TC	Central/ East	Standard	Unknown	Good
University of Essex TC	South	Good	Good	Good
West Mersea TC	South	Good	Poor	Poor
Wivenhoe TC	Central/ East	Good	Poor	Standard

None of the clubs consulted considered its ancillary provision to be of a poor quality, with only Lexden Hill LTC stating its site is standard. The site offers a fairly large brick building that overlooks its grass courts and has accompanying parking for its members.

Regarding changing facilities, Dedham TC, Langham TC, West Mersea TC and Wivenhoe TC all report having poor quality facilities. It is commonly the case at tennis club sites that a small building is provided which is used for storage and possibly a kitchen, with lots of members arriving to play without the need for changing rooms.

Wivenhoe TC outline that if better changing facilities, improved floodlighting and covered courts were to be provided it would increase in members. Langham TC state it is hoping to be in receipt of section 106 funding in the near future which it states shall invest into enhancing its clubhouse and increasing the number of courts provided if possible.

Langham TC state it hopes to develop its own dedicated clubhouse rather than share the existing good quality provision which is the community centre for the whole village.

Lexden TC confirm its clubhouse located within Holmewood House Preparatory School is of a good quality that provides a bar, two changing rooms with three showers and a working boiler.

Colchester Officers TC has a good quality clubhouse with changing rooms, a bar and functions room with the Club confirming it has no issues with the water pressure or boiler. The Club says it has no developments outlined for its site.

Nationally, for non-club courts, ancillary provision is generally considered to be problematic. Whilst most of the other sites do provide changing facilities and/or toilets, they are not specific for tennis and are generally too far away from the courts to be realistically used. Often, the facilities predominately service football/cricket pitch users and therefore are not readily available or suited to tennis court users.

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In the case of Colchester this is not much of an issue, with Earls Colne Recreation Club and Lorkin Daniell Playing Field being the only examples of park sites without a partnered club, yet both provide accompanying ancillary provision.

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.

### 7.3: Demand

It is reported that demand for tennis provision during the Covid-19 pandemic has increased substantially compared to prior levels when court restrictions have not been 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 be accommodated if the increases are sustained.

#### **Competitive tennis**

There are 12 tennis clubs in Colchester. Total known membership equates to 1,621 members, consisting of 1254 senior and 367 junior members.

In terms of size, Dedham TC is the largest club, with 320 members, whilst Spring Lane TC has the smallest known membership figures with 96 members. This is summarised in the table below.

*Table 7.9: Summary of tennis club demand*

Club	Analysis area	Number of members	
		Senior	Junior
Colchester Tennis Academy (Colchester Garrison TC)	Central/ East	250	50
Colchester Officers TC	Central/ East	145	15
David Lloyd Club Colchester	Central/ East	-	-
Dedham TC	North	181	139
Earls Colne TC	North	-	-
Langham TC	North	70	65
Lexden Hill LTC	Central/ East	100	12
Lexden Rackets and Fitness TC	West	130	20
Spring Lane TC	Central/ East	81	15
University of Essex TC	Central/ East	101	-
West Mersea TC	South	115	22
Wivenhoe TC	Central/ East	81	29
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1254</b>	<b>367</b>

Of all clubs consulted with, only Colchester Officers TC and West Mersea TC state that its membership has declined in recent years. Colchester Officers TC state this, however, was caused by a spike in growth during Covid which has now declined back to regular levels of demand. West Mersea TC write that its junior members have declined by roughly ten members since Covid with people not re-joining in the following seasons.

In the case of Lexden Hill TC, Dedham TC, Wivenhoe TC, Colchester Garrison TC all four report growth in demand in recent years.

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## ***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 Colchester for the Council and other providers to understand if such barriers exist locally and if so address such barriers, whilst also bettering understanding of court usage.

Sport England's Segmentation Tool<sup>30</sup> 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 3,602 people or 1.82% of people within Colchester. The highest latent demand from one demographic is 'settling down males' who resemble 506 people wanting to play tennis that currently are not. As a comparison, the tool has identified latent demand within Tendring as 2,531 people, giving Colchester a greater latent demand.

## ***Future demand***

Total future demand through club aspirations is 426 potential additional members (275 senior and 151 junior). Only Colchester Officers TC state it is not looking to further increase in members. All clubs hoping to increase in membership outlined future growth figures as seen below.

*Table 7.10: Summary of future tennis club demand*

Club	Analysis area	Number of members	
		Senior	Junior
Colchester Tennis Academy (Colchester Garrison TC)	Central/ East	50	20
Dedham TC	North	30	20
Lexden Rackets and Fitness TC	West	10	-
Lexden Hill TC	Central/ East	10	6
Langham TC	North	30	35
West Mersea TC	South	125	40
Wivenhoe TC	Central/ East	20	30
	<b>Total</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>151</b>

## ***Informal tennis***

It is considered that all local authority courts available for community use in Colchester 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. 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 has developed a package of support for local authorities to grow the use of tennis courts by removing key barriers to participation. The three initiatives are ClubSpark, Rally and Gate Access, which are further detailed below. In Colchester, University of Essex Sports Centre, Dedham TC, Langham TC, Lexden Hill LTC, Spring Lane TC, West Mersea TC, Wivenhoe TC and Colchester Officers Club are the known examples of offering ClubSpark.

<sup>30</sup>[Link to Sport England Market Segmentation](#)

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In relation to education providers, none report any regular demand from the community for tennis. It is believed by many that a lack of demand is a direct result of quality issues and/or a lack of sports lighting, as well as other courts being available for free. This results in the community being less likely to pay a hire charge for its provision.

In addition to the 12 tennis clubs within Colchester, pay and play community use agreements are in place at Colchester Officers Club, David Lloyd (Colchester), Dedham TC, Langham TC, Lexden Hill LTC, Spring Lane TC, West Mersea TC and Wivenhoe TC. This allows for less organised informal demand within Colchester to be offered.

### *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.
- ◀ 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.

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### *Gate Access*

The LTA has developed two 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. The LTA states that the six courts at Colchester Leisure World Tennis Centre are outlined to have a Gate Access system installed in the spring of 2023.

### *LTA Big Tennis Weekend*

The LTA Big Tennis Weekend is an LTA initiative which all registered venues can access. Clubs and venues have the ability to sign up to host open days, 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 weekends a year (in May, July and September) that are the UK's biggest public tennis events. Furthermore, 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 an 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. There are no known LTA Big Tennis Weekend sessions within Colchester.

### *Mini tennis*

Mini tennis provides children with the perfect opportunity to learn the fundamentals of tennis at an early age. Designed for children aged between 4-10, mini tennis utilises smaller courts, nets and rackets as well as lower-bouncing tennis balls to develop vital tennis skills and techniques. The game is split out into three levels, with the LTA stating that each stage there are key aims and goals:

- ◀ Red (Stage 3): 4-8 year olds – serve, rally and score
- ◀ Orange (Stage 2): 8-9 year olds – develop a rounded game
- ◀ Green (Stage 1): 10 year olds – put skills to the test

There are no known mini tennis courts within Colchester.

### *Padel tennis*

Padel is a form of tennis that is easy to play, fun and sociable. It 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 players serve underhand and the walls are used as part of the game, with the ball allowed to bounce off them.

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One of the fastest growing sports across continental Europe, it has gained increasing popularity over recent years. As of 2021, there are around 6,000 active paddle tennis players across Great Britain, with 107 courts provided at 52 clubs. This is predicted to grow substantially in future years.

There are currently no padel tennis courts in Colchester, however, consultation with Spring Hill LTC states it would like to establish this. The Club state that the land next to its most southerly courts is outlined for property development. This has resulted in conversations with Colchester City Council about the installation of a padel court at its site, something it hopes shall happen in the near future.

The four recently disused courts at Colchester Leisure World Tennis Centre have also been outlined by Colchester City Council to be converted into Padel courts. The funding and management of this provision would not involve Lexden Hill TC which is located next to the site, and would instead be managed by an outsourced padel operator.

### **7.4: Supply and demand analysis**

#### ***Club tennis***

The LTA suggests that a non-sports lit hard court can accommodate 40 members whereas a hard court with sports lighting can accommodate 60 members. Courts covered with an air dome can also accommodate 100 members.

In the case of grass courts, a capacity level of 20 members has been assigned to each court. This is due to the minimal amount of demand that a grass tennis court can accommodate due to the quick natured wearability of its surface. This means a grass tennis court cannot accommodate demand for a full season, with such courts across the UK commonly only in a usable condition for a matter of months.

As such a capacity total of 20 members is assigned to one grass court as to not completely discount its ability to accommodate demand, but also reflect the minimal capacity it can support.

Using the above figures, the table overleaf analyses whether or not courts currently in use by clubs are sufficient to meet current and future demand. However, it must be noted that this should only be used as a guide as capacity can, in reality, vary from site to site depending on how the demand operates and the programmes of use in place. Some clubs can comfortably operate over capacity guidance, whilst others may have pressures without theoretically being over capacity.

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Table 7.11: Capacity analysis (club courts)

Site ID	Site	Club users	Current demand (members)	Future demand (members)	No. of courts	Sports lighting?	Capacity (members)	Current capacity balance	Future capacity balance
6	Broad Lane Sports Ground	Wivenhoe TC	110	50	4	Yes	240	130	80
25	Corporal Budd VC Gymnasium	Colchester Tennis Academy (Colchester Garrison TC)	300	70	8	4 Yes	400	100	30
36	Holmwood House Preparatory School	Lexden Rackets and Fitness TC	150	10	6 (2 covered)	Yes	440	290	280
46	Langham Recreation Ground	Langham TC	135	65	2	No	80	55	10
76	Spring Lane Playing Field	Spring Lane TC	96	-	8	No	320	224	224
91	The Dutchy Field	Dedham TC	320	50	3	No	120	200	250
93	The Glebe (West Mersea)	West Mersea TC	137	165	6 (3 grass)	3 Yes	240	103	28
102	University of Essex Sports Centre	University of Essex TC	101	-	4 (all covered)	Yes	400	299	299
123	David Lloyd (Colchester)	David Lloyd Club Colchester	-	-	5 (4 covered)	Yes	460	Unknown	Unknown
125	Colchester Officers Club	Colchester Officers TC	160	-	6	3 Yes	300	140	140
132	Earls Colne Recreation Club	Earls Colne TC	-	-	4	Yes	240	Unknown	Unknown
134	Lexden Hill Lawn Tennis Club	Lexden Hill LTC	112	16	9 (all grass)	No	180	68	52

As identified in the table above, only one of the 11 clubs has current theoretical capacity issues. Dedham TC has 320 members despite only providing two non-sports lit courts, putting the site heavily over the LTA recommended supply. These further emphasises the club's ambitions to install floodlights to its site, given the current capacity issues the Club faces.

Future demand through club ambitions from Langham TC and West Mersea TC would create theoretical capacity issues if goals were to be achieved. In the case of Dedham TC, the Club has ambitions to gain a further 50 members, meaning its shortfall would be exacerbated to 250 members above recommended guidelines.

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### ***Non-club tennis***

As no non-club courts are identified as having any capacity issues, priority should be placed on improving quality of non-club courts to an adequate standard for promoting and increasing informal play, particularly at publicly available sites accommodating multiple courts and adequate ancillary facilities. Linked to this, the utilisation of LTA schemes at suitable sites should also be considered, as should the establishment of the other various initiatives supported by the NGB.

### **Conclusion**

In general, and particularly when considering the availability of public courts, it can be deemed that Colchester is serviced by sufficient tennis provision to accommodate both the current and future demand overall. However, Dedham TC is significantly overplayed based on having 300 current members and only three courts which do not have sports lighting. A priority should also be placed on providing floodlighting to the four clubs currently operating with no floodlights with Dedham TC being the priority given its current capacity balance.

The Strategy & Action Plan will assess how the capacity balance will be impacted by the installation of floodlights and increasing the number of courts provided at The Dutchy Field where Dedham TC is based.

Further to the quantity, all club courts are assessed as good or standard quality, other than the four courts at Colchester Leisure World Tennis Centre. Furthermore, the two park sites not featuring a partnered Club, Earls Colne Recreation Club and Lorkin Daniell Playing Field, both providing good quality accompanying ancillary provision.

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### **Tennis – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ Of the 12 clubs within Colchester, only Dedham TC is currently operating with capacity issues, with the Club being 200 members over the LTA recommended guidelines.
- ◀ If future growth ambitions through club ambitions were to be fully achieved, Langham TC and West Mersea TC would also have shortfalls of provision.
- ◀ Overall, Colchester is serviced by sufficient provision to accommodate both the current and future demand. However, Dedham TC is significantly overplayed, which needs attention and could help to be addressed through installation of sports lighting.

### **Tennis – supply summary**

- ◀ There are a total of 122 tennis courts identified in Colchester across 26 sites, with 88 courts categorised as being available for community use at 16 sites.
- ◀ Most community accessible courts are operated by the council, as it resembles 44 of the 88 courts.
- ◀ Most courts have a macadam surface, with 66 being of this type compared to 33 having a concrete surface, 12 courts have a grass surface, whilst six have an artificial surface and five being polymeric.
- ◀ In total, 58 of the 122 tennis courts are serviced by sports lighting, representing 48% of the provision.
- ◀ Of the community available courts, 62 are assessed as good quality, 26 as standard quality and zero are assessed as poor quality.
- ◀ Colchester hosts air domed courts located at the University of Essex Sports Centre, Holmwood House Preparatory School and David Lloyd (Colchester).
- ◀ Two clubs within Colchester describe its ancillary provision as standard quality, whilst the remaining sites all have good quality ancillary provisions. Dedham TC, Langham TC, West Mersea TC and Wivenhoe TC all describe its changing facilities as poor quality.
- ◀ Only Langham TC describe ambitions of developing its ancillary provision, despite already having access to the good quality Langham Community Centre.

### **Tennis – demand summary**

- ◀ There are 12 tennis clubs in Colchester which collectively cater for 1,621 members.
- ◀ Four clubs report that participation has increased in recent years.
- ◀ Seven clubs consulted with report future growth aspirations, with total future demand amounting to 426 potential additional members (275 senior and 151 junior).
- ◀ Away from clubs, it is considered that all local authority courts available for community use in Colchester 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.

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## PART 8: NETBALL COURTS

### 8.1: Introduction

England Netball is the governing body with overall responsibility for ensuring the effective governance of the sport.

Whilst often played indoors, there are far more outdoor courts provided and in use by the netball community than there are indoor. Nationally, England Netball reports that the challenge is that the supply of outdoor netball courts is generally not of a good enough standard for use by the community, whilst accessibility and a lack of floodlighting can also be problematic.

#### **Consultation**

Information to inform this section of the report was primarily obtained through discussions with Colchester Netball League and England Netball.

### 8.2: Supply

There are 63 outdoor netball courts identified in Colchester across 23 sites, of which, 47 are available for community use across 12 sites.

*Table 8.1: Summary of the number of courts by analysis area*

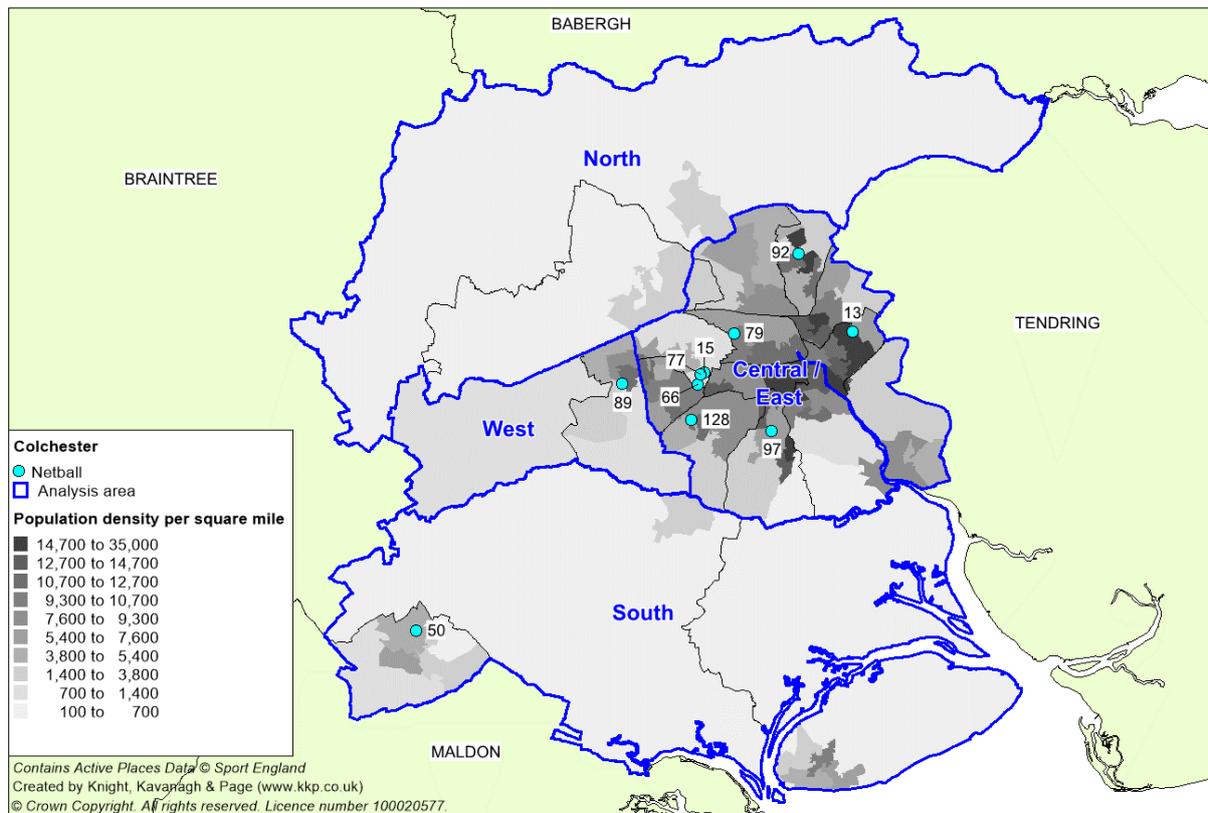
Analysis area	No. of courts available for community use	No. of courts unavailable for community use
Central/East	40	6
North	-	3
South	4	3
West	3	4
<b>Colchester</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>16</b>

Most provision is located in the Central/East Analysis Area with a total of 46 courts (73%) of provision. This is followed by South and West analysis areas both with seven courts (11%) and the North Analysis Area which accommodates only three courts (5%).

For a site-by-site breakdown of the courts supplied across Colchester, please refer to Table 8.2 and Figure 8.1 below.

# COLCHESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Figure 8.1: Location of netball courts in Colchester



## Future provision

The Chesterwell development shall result in Trinity Secondary School having a range of sports provision installed including netball courts. The provision shall not be floodlit but shall be open to community use and is scheduled to be installed in September 2023.

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Table 8.2: Netball courts in Colchester

Site ID	Site name	Post code	Analysis area	Community use?	No. of courts	Surface type	Overmarked for tennis?	Sports lighting?	Quality
13	Colchester Academy	CO4 3JL	Central/East	Yes	4	Artificial turf	Yes	Yes	Good
15	Colchester County High School for Girls	CO3 3US	Central/East	Yes	3	Macadam	Yes	No	Standard
50	Leisure World Tiptree	CO5 0EW	South	Yes	4	Macadam	Yes	Yes	Good
66	Philip Morant School & College	CO3 4QS	Central/East	Yes	5	Macadam	Yes	Yes	Standard
77	St Benedict's Catholic College	CO3 3US	Central/East	Yes	3	Macadam	No	No	Poor
79	St Helena School	CO3 3LE	Central/East	Yes	4	Macadam	No	Yes	Poor
89	Stanway School	CO3 0QA	West	Yes	3	Macadam	2 Yes	No	Standard
92	The Gilbert School (Leisure World Highwoods)	CO4 9PU	Central/East	Yes	4	Macadam	Yes	Yes	Standard
					6		Yes	Yes	Good
97	The Thomas Lord Audley School	CO2 8NJ	Central/East	Yes	6	Macadam	Yes	Yes	Poor
					3		No	Yes	Good
128	Paxman Academy	CO2 9DU	Central/East	Yes	2	Macadam	Yes	No	Standard
<b>No community use</b>									
2	Baynards Primary School	CO5 0ND	South	No	1	Concrete	No	No	Standard
5	Brinkley Grove Primary School	CO4 9GF	Central/East	No	1	Concrete	No	No	Poor
8	Camulos Academy	CO4 6AL	Central/East	No	1	Concrete	No	No	Poor
19	Colchester Royal Grammar School Sports Ground	CO3 3TW	Central/East	No	2	Concrete	No	Yes	Standard
36	Holmwood House School	CO3 9ST	West	No	3	Macadam	Yes	Yes	Good
43	Lakelands Primary School	CO3 8AJ	West	No	1	Concrete	No	No	Standard
48	Layer De La Haye Primary School	CO2 0DS	South	No	1	Concrete	No	No	Poor
51	Littlegarth School	CO6 4JR	North	No	3	Macadam	2 Yes	Yes	Standard
54	Mersea Island School	CO5 8QZ	South	No	1	Concrete	No	No	Poor
69	Prettygate Junior School	CO3 4PH	Central/East	No	1	Concrete	No	No	Poor
106	Willow Brook Primary School	CO4 0DT	Central/East	No	1	Concrete	No	No	Poor

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### ***Management and security of tenure***

Four netball courts in Colchester are operated by the Council, with these being located at Leisure World Tiptree. All remaining courts are at education sites.

### ***Court type***

Of total provision, 49 netball courts in Colchester have a macadam surface, ten have a concrete surface and four have an artificial turf surface located at Colchester Academy. The estimated lifespan of macadam and artificial courts is ten years, depending on levels of use and maintenance levels.

### ***Sports lighting***

Of total provision in Colchester, 44 courts (70%) are serviced by sports lighting. These are provided at:

- ◀ Colchester Academy
- ◀ Colchester Royal Grammar School Sports Ground
- ◀ Holmwood House School
- ◀ Leisure World Tiptree
- ◀ Littlegarth School
- ◀ Philip Morant School & College
- ◀ St Helena School
- ◀ The Gilbert School
- ◀ The Thomas Lord Audley School

Of these, the courts at Colchester Royal Grammar School Sports Ground, Holmwood House School and Littlegarth School are not available for community use. This results in 36 community available netball courts across Colchester being serviced by sports lighting.

A lack of sports lighting on netball courts is an issue nationwide, with England Netball's national database (updated in April 2020) identifying that only 1,941 of 5,108 outdoor netball courts are serviced by sports lighting throughout the Country (38%).

A lack of floodlighting presents a key reason as to why many courts are unavailable for community use. Many providers of non-sports lit courts state that making them available would not be financially viable as usage would be significantly limited.

### ***Over markings***

Netball courts, particularly at school sites, are often overmarked, predominately by tennis courts but also on occasion by basketball and/or football courts. Provision such as this tends to receive higher levels of use which can be detrimental to quality over time, as well as potentially causing capacity issues when there is external netball demand.

In Colchester, 41 netball courts are overmarked for tennis. This is common given that many courts are located at secondary schools where tennis markings are also often provided.

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## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORTS ASSESSMENT REPORT

### Quality

The quality of netball 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 Colchester, 24 (38%) are rated as standard quality. The remaining courts are either good quality (20 courts or 32%) or poor quality (19 courts or 30%), with significant issues surrounding grip, court markings and evidence of moss/lichen.

Table 8.3: Quality of courts

Community use	Quality		
	Good	Standard	Poor
Available	17	17	13
Unavailable	3	7	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>19</b>

The poor quality community accessible courts are located at St Benedict's Catholic College, St Helena School and The Thomas Lord Audley School (six courts). Issues surrounding these courts include poor grip underfoot, evidence of moss and worn line markings.

The good quality courts that are available for community use are provided at Colchester Academy, The Gilberd School, Leisure World Tiptree and The Thomas Lord Audley School (three courts). Consultation with Sport England confirms that the six poor quality courts at the Gilberd School have been resurfaced. The Colchester Netball League state that the top gate allowing access to the grass pitches should be closed as it results in mud on the courts which is reportedly not maintained frequently enough, thus worsening its quality.

The good quality courts unavailable for community use are located at Holmwood House School and are also accompanied by sports lighting.

### Ancillary provision

Ancillary provision is generally considered to be problematic. Whilst most sites provide changing facilities and/or toilets, they are not specific for netball and are generally located within main school buildings or are provided to predominately service sports halls and/or grass pitches. As such, access can be limited even at sites that allow for community use.

In the case of the Gilberd School, the outdoor courts are used to host the Colchester Netball League. Consultation with the League states that players are allocated one changing room and one set of toilets to access, which it states does not get used by members.

### 8.3: Demand

Demand for outdoor netball tends to come in two forms; league and club-based netball that consists of matches and training, and the various netball-based initiatives such as Back to Netball and walking netball.

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### ***Colchester Netball League***

Colchester Netball League currently accommodates six clubs across Colchester, equalling to 48 adult teams and 39 junior teams. All teams play at a central venue located at The Gilbert School. Fixtures take place at the site from 19:00 to 22:00, with a youth league also operating on Thursdays from 19:00 to 21:00.

### ***Play Netball***

Play Netball is a commercial organisation that runs various netball leagues across the Country that run all-year round (a new season begins as soon as the previous one ends). In addition to welcoming already established teams, it also encourages individual players to sign up, with it then placing each person within a team that suits their ability.

Play Netball operates a league in Colchester, located at The Gilbert School. Matches are played every Tuesday evening, with three time slots (19:00, 19:40 and 20:20). The sessions are a commercially ran league with four divisions.

### ***Back to Netball***

Back to Netball is a scheme put into place by England Netball in 2010, with participation increasing ever since. Sessions are running weekly by qualified coaches across England with the aim of re-introducing female players over the age of 16 to the sport.

In Colchester, Back to Netball run sessions at The Gilbert School, with sessions running every Monday from 17:45 to 19:00.

### ***Walking netball***

Walking netball is a lower version of the sport, designed so that anyone can play regardless of age or fitness level. It can give those who are isolated an outlet, provide an activity for those who do not deem themselves fit enough and offer a stepping-stone for those looking for a pathway back into traditional netball.

At present, there are no venues in Colchester which run walking netball.

### ***Netball Now***

Netball Now is a simple, straight forward way to play netball. It is not a competition led by rules or scores but rather a simple session where players can play a variety of positions and even have a go at umpiring.

There are no venues in Colchester which run Netball now sessions. The nearest known sessions to Colchester take place at Basildon Sporting Village, located 40.1 miles from the Gilbert School. Sessions are held every Tuesday morning from 10:30- 12:30 and are priced at £2.60 per person.

### ***Bee Netball***

A new initiative by England Netball, Bee Netball a programme for children all about friendship, inclusion, fair play and teamwork. Each session is managed by an England Netball accredited coach. Although there are currently no sessions operating in Colchester, it is still in its infancy so one may be established in the near future.

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### ***Latent/unmet demand***

Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in netball but 'are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 576 people within Colchester. Of these people, 23% are identified as being in the 'Chloe' segment – (young image conscious females keeping fit and trim). As a comparison, the Tendring District identifies 378 people wanting to participate in netball but are not currently doing so, with the 'Chloe segment also the most common demographic.

### ***Future demand***

Colchester Netball League reports that in the last few years lost a number of teams due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, it is looking to reinstate these teams and continue to grow.

In addition to the above, it is hoped that there will an increase in the number of initiatives held in Colchester and the demand for them. However, this is reliant on volunteers running and organising the sessions.

### **8.4: Supply and demand analysis**

Colchester Netball League has sufficient facilities in Colchester to cater for its demand. It has, in the last few years, lost a number of teams due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it is looking to reinstate these teams and continue to grow further.

### **8.5: Conclusion**

To conclude the Gilberd School adequately accommodates the Colchester Netball League. With the necessary court improvements having taken place in 2022, the site is able to offer a far better quality of provision for the league.

Sites such as Leisure World Tiptree in the South Analysis Area and Stanway School in the West Analysis Area should be explored as possible venues to deliver recreational programmes within the City. The accompanying strategy report shall explore further means of improving the Netball offering within Colchester.

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### **Netball – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ Through club consultation it is identified that at present Colchester Netball League has sufficient facilities in Colchester to cater for its demand.
- ◀ For netball demand away from the club and league environment, there is a need to ensure programmes provided by England Netball have suitable provision from which to be ran from and that curricular and extra-curricular needs are being met.

### **Netball – supply summary**

- ◀ There are 63 outdoor netball courts identified in Colchester across 23 sites, of which, 47 are available for community use across 12 sites.
- ◀ Most provision is located in the Central/East Analysis Area with a total of 46 courts or 73% of provision. This is followed by South and West analysis areas which both provide seven courts (11%) and the North Analysis Area accommodates only three courts (5%).
- ◀ Four netball courts in Colchester are operated by the Council, with these being located at Leisure World Tiptree. All remaining courts are at education sites.
- ◀ 49 out of 63 netball courts in Colchester have a macadam surface. Ten netball courts have a concrete surface and four courts have an artificial surface located at Colchester Academy. The estimated lifespan of a macadam and artificial courts is ten years, depending on levels of use and maintenance levels.
- ◀ In Colchester, 41 netball courts are overmarked for tennis.
- ◀ Despite 63 outdoor netball courts being provided in Colchester, 44 courts (70%) are serviced by sports lighting.
- ◀ Of the courts in Colchester, 24 (38%) are rated as standard quality, 20 courts (32%) are assessed as good quality and 19 courts (30%) are rated as poor with significant issues surrounding grip, court markings and evidence of moss/lichen.
- ◀ The poor quality community accessible courts are located at St Benedict's Catholic College, St Helena School and The Thomas Lord Audley School.
- ◀ The good quality courts that are available for community use are provided at Colchester Academy, The Gilbert School and Leisure World Tiptree.
- ◀ The good quality court unavailable for community use is located at Holmwood House School.

### **Netball – demand summary**

- ◀ Colchester Netball League currently accommodates six clubs across Colchester, equalling to 48 adult teams and 39 junior teams.
- ◀ Play Netball operates a league in Colchester, located at The Gilbert School. Matches are played every Tuesday evening, with three time slots (19:00, 19:40 and 20:20).
- ◀ At present, there are no venues in Colchester which deliver Walking Netball sessions.
- ◀ Sport England's Segmentation Tool identifies latent demand of 576 people within Colchester. Of these people, 23% are identified as being in the 'Chloe' segment – (young image conscious females keeping fit and trim).
- ◀ Colchester Netball League reports that in the last few years lost a number of teams due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, it is looking to reinstate these teams and continue to grow.

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## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORTS ASSESSMENT REPORT

### PART 9: BOWLING GREENS

#### 9.1: Introduction

All bowling greens in Colchester are flat greens. Bowls England (BE) is the governing body responsible for ensuring effective governance of outdoor flat green bowls across the Country. More locally, the sport is run and administered by the Essex Bowls Association.

#### **Consultation**

There are nine bowling clubs playing in Colchester, one club playing outside of Colchester which is Colchester BC (Tendring). Through online survey and telephone consultation, a total club response rate of 90% (nine of 10 clubs) was achieved. Those that responded can be seen below.

*Table 9.1: Summary of consultation*

Club name	Analysis area	Response
Arclight BC	Central/East	Yes
Colchester BC	OUTSIDE	Yes
Colchester West End BC	Central/East	Yes
Mersea Island BC	South	No
Severalls BC	Central/East	Yes
Three Clubs BC	Central/East	Yes
Tiptree Jobserve BC	South	Yes
West Mersea BC	South	Yes
Wivenhoe BC	Central/East	Yes
Woods BC	Central/East	Yes

#### 9.2: Supply

There are ten bowling greens in Colchester located across eight sites, of which, two sites are accommodating more than one green, located at West End Sports Ground Bowls and Old Heath Recreation Ground. All greens are available for community use.

*Table 9.2: Summary of community available greens by analysis area*

Analysis area	Number of greens
Central/East	7
North	-
South	3
West	-
<b>Colchester</b>	<b>10</b>

As seen in the table above most the available greens are located in the Central/East Analysis Area, this is followed by the South analysis area with three greens. There are no greens identified in the North and West Analysis Area.

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## ***Disused provision***

Two greens across two sites are identified as being disused, located at Castle Park Bowling (CO1 2SD) and Old Heath Recreation Ground. The Castle Park green is in the Central/East Analysis Area and was formerly accessed by Paxmans Bowls Club and fell out of use in 2015 following Colchester City Council reportedly no longer providing its annual funding towards maintenance of the site.

Consultation with Three Clubs BC confirm that Old Heath Recreation Ground has three bowling greens, one of which, is smaller than the regular six rink design and has fallen out of use. The Club state that the other green on site is used by a nearby retirement home.

## ***Ownership/management***

As seen in the table below all ten bowling greens are owned and managed by the respective sports club.

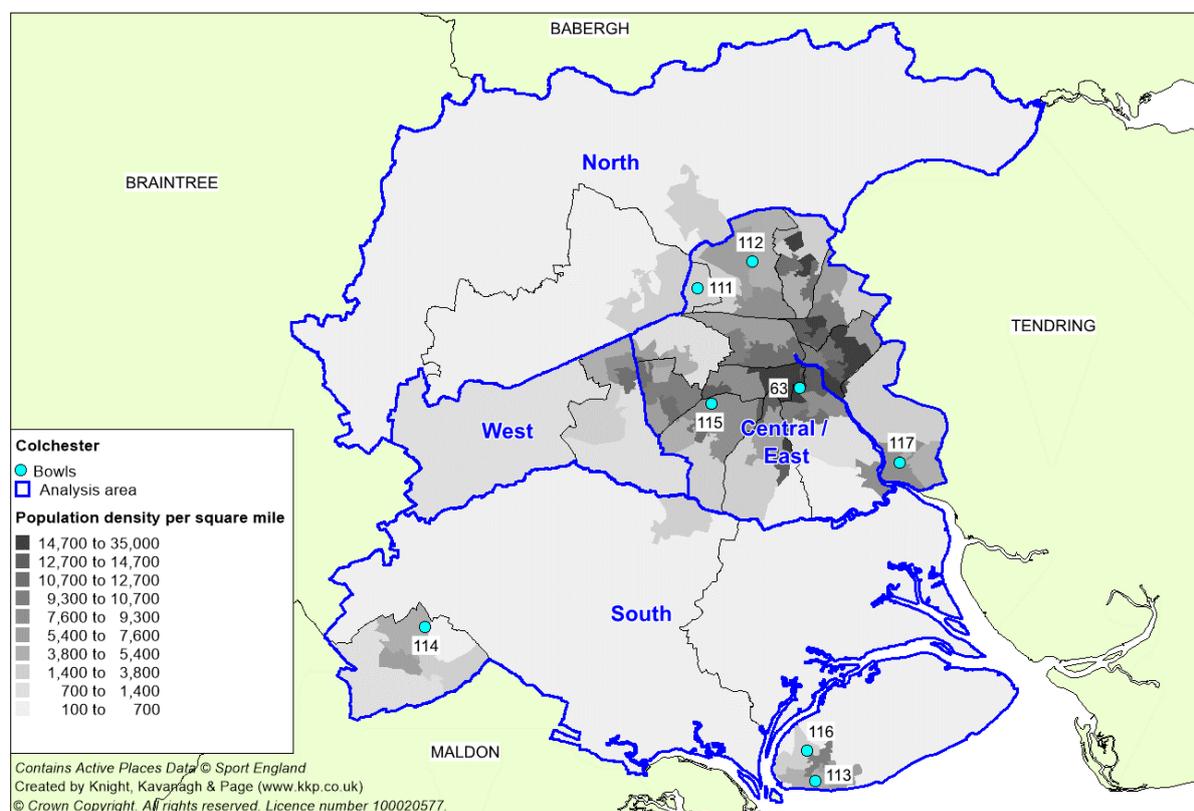
*Table 9.3: Breakdown of bowling greens in Colchester*

<b>Site ID</b>	<b>Site name</b>	<b>Post code</b>	<b>Analysis area</b>	<b>User(s)</b>	<b>Number of greens</b>	<b>Management</b>
63	Old Heath Recreation Ground	CO1 2ES	Central/East	Three Clubs BC	2	Sports Club
111	Keepers Green Bowling	CO4 5UT	Central/East	Woods BC	1	Sports Club
112	Kirby Drive Bowling	CO4 5LJ	Central/East	Severalls BC	1	Sports Club
113	Mersea Island BC	CO5 8AJ	South	Mersea Island BC	1	Sports Club
114	Warriors Rest Bowls	CO5 0ER	South	Tiptree Jobserve BC	1	Sports Club
115	West End Sports Ground Bowls	CO2 7XB	Central/East	Colchester West End BC / Arclight BC	2	Sports Club
116	West Mersea BC	CO5 8JZ	South	West Mersea BC	1	Sports Club
117	Wivenhoe BC	CO7 9AT	Central/East	Wivenhoe BC	1	Sports Club

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Figure 9.1 below highlights the location of all outdoor bowling greens in Colchester. For a key to the map, see Table 9.3.

Figure 9.1: Location of bowling greens in Colchester



## Quality

Following a non-technical assessment of greens in Colchester and cross referencing the findings against club consultation, most greens (six or 60%) are rated as good quality, with two green (20%) rated as standard quality and two (20%) poor quality greens.

The percentage parameters used for the non-technical assessments were as follows: Good (>80%), Standard (50-70%), Poor (<70%) and include, but are not limited to, the examination of; evenness of playing surface, condition of ditches/boarding, quality of surrounding hard areas, disability access, evidence of litter/leaf fall/fouling/inappropriate use and quality of ancillary provision (clubhouse/pavilion/car parking / floodlights/fencing).

Table 9.4: Summary of bowling green quality

Site ID	Site name	Post code	Number of greens	Quality of green
63	Old Heath Recreation Ground	CO1 2ES	2	Poor
111	Keepers Green Bowling	CO4 5UT	1	Standard
112	Kirby Drive Bowling	CO4 5LJ	1	Good
113	Mersea Island BC	CO5 8AJ	1	Standard
114	Warriors Rest Bowls	CO5 0ER	1	Good
115	West End Sports Ground Bowls	CO2 7XB	2	Good
116	West Mersea BC	CO5 8JZ	1	Good

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Site ID	Site name	Post code	Number of greens	Quality of green
117	Wivenhoe BC	CO7 9AT	1	Good

Even though most greens across City are good quality, they still require substantial levels of dedicated maintenance to sustain this standard.

A green is considered good quality if it has a high percentage of grass coverage, an even playing surface and limited signs of wear and tear on surrounding ditches/boarding and hard standing areas. In addition, there must be little to no evidence of litter, dog fouling, leaves and inappropriate usage of the green.

Colchester West End BC and Tiptree Jobserve BC both indicate green quality has improved at their respective home venues due to improved maintenance. Tiptree Jobserve BC state that the quality of their green improvement is also due to drainage improvements.

Colchester BC, Severalls BC and Wivenhoe BC all state that the quality of their green hasn't improved or deteriorated. This suggests that levels of maintenance at each site has stayed the same to sustain the current standard.

The provision found at Keepers Green Bowling is maintained by the Club which it states can be difficult due to the cost of new equipment being out of its budget.

In the case of Three Clubs BC, it states that in 2020 the playing provision was of a good quality; however, a new contractor has since taken the maintenance responsibility of the green and the quality has deteriorated. The Club states that work such as seeding and weed killing should take place earlier in the year as to allow the quality to be better for the start of the season. It also had issues with its irrigation that meant only half of the green was being correctly watered, however, this has since been addressed.

## **Ancillary facilities**

All clubs which responded to consultation have access to some form of clubhouse/pavilion on site or through an adjoining public house. The quality of these ranges from purpose built brick pavilions to basic wooden huts and shelters. Six sites are accompanied by standard quality facilities, whereas one sites is accompanying a good quality ancillary provision. No poor quality ancillary provisions have been identified.

*Table 9.5: Summary of club ancillary provision comments from consultation*

Site ID	Site name	Club	Analysis area	Quality
63	Old Heath Recreation Ground	Three Clubs BC	Central/East	Standard
111	Keepers Green Bowling	Woods BC	Central/East	Standard
112	Kirby Drive Bowling	Severalls BC	Central/East	Standard
114	Warriors Rest Bowls	Tiptree Jobserve BC	South	Standard
115	West End Sports Ground	Colchester West End BC / Arclight BC	Central/East	Standard
116	West Mersea BC	West Mersea BC	South	Good
117	Wivenhoe BC	Wivenhoe BC	Central/East	Standard

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### **Sports lighting**

There are no greens serviced by sports lighting in Colchester. This can mean that opportunities for access for training and matches during evenings outside of the summer months is infrequent. This is common to norm for bowling greens across the country. However, in Colchester no clubs reference aspirations to gain access to sports lighting.

### **9.3: Demand**

#### **Current demand**

There are nine bowling clubs identified as playing in Colchester eight, of which, have responded to consultation requests to date. Where known, membership of the responsive clubs' totals 541, broken down by club in the table below.

*Table 9.6: Membership for bowls clubs across Colchester*

Club name	Number of current members			
	Senior males	Senior females	Juniors (U18)	Total
Arclight BC	31	16	1	<b>48</b>
Colchester West End BC	39	18	2	<b>59</b>
Severalls BC	31	9	-	<b>40</b>
Three Clubs BC	60	-	-	<b>60</b>
Tiptree Jobserve BC	60	29	-	<b>89</b>
West Mersea BC	48	47	-	<b>95</b>
Wivenhoe BC	50	30	-	<b>80</b>
Woods BC	50	20	-	<b>70</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>541</b>

The largest club according to known membership is currently West Mersea BC, with 95 members, followed by Tiptree Jobserve BC with 89 members. The smallest club is Severalls BC with 40 members.

Three Clubs BC state that it formed in 2008 following Colchester Colne BC, St George BC and South Ward BC all merging to form one club.

#### **Exported demand**

Exported demand refers to clubs that are currently accessing facilities outside of Colchester, despite being registered to the City. Colchester BC play outside of Colchester in Tendring. This is not however an issue as it is just across the border of the authority.

#### **Future demand**

Bowls England is actively working to negate the stereotype that bowls is a sport for the older generation. As such, it is taking active steps at a County and National level to encourage younger players.

Of responding clubs, six clubs highlight plans to increase membership, this can be seen in the table below.

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Table 9.7: Future demand aspirations

Club name	Number of future members		
	Senior	Junior (U18)	Total
Arclight BC	12	-	12
Colchester West End BC	20	5	25
Severalls BC	3	-	3
Three Clubs BC	5	-	5
Tiptree Jobserve BC	10	-	10
West Mersea BC	10	-	10

## Latent demand

Sport England's Market Segmentation Tool<sup>31</sup> enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in bowls but are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 297 people who would like to participate in the sport within Colchester. This is relatively low compared to the neighbouring authority Tendring, which identifies latent demand of 374 people.

Notwithstanding this, none of the bowling clubs in Colchester are reported as operating at capacity, with all clubs willing to accept new members. As such, it is considered that anyone within Colchester who would like to start participating, could do so at the clubs and greens already in existence.

## 9.4: 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 which bowl socially, with access a potential issue during peak times if membership is particularly high.

Bowls England has no specific guidance on bowling green capacity, stating that it can vary from site-to-site and from club-to-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. Therefore, capacity ratings for bowling greens in Colchester are classified as follows:

<b>Within capacity range</b>	Membership ensures green is sustainable without capacity issues
<b>Outside capacity range</b>	Membership is below or above the recommended capacity range

Following this, the table below highlights the level of usage each green in Colchester receives, where the information is known. Where no membership information is known, further communication is required with clubs to fully understand their needs and any potential capacity or sustainability issues.

<sup>31</sup> <https://segments.sportengland.org/>

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Table 9.8: Bowling green supply vs demand analysis

Site ID	Site name	Club name	No. of greens	Analysis area	Total membership	Current capacity	Future capacity
63	Old Heath Recreation Ground	Three Clubs BC	2 (1 used by Club)	Central/East	60	-	5
111	Keepers Green Bowling	Woods BC	1	Central/East	70	10	10
112	Kirby Drive Bowling	Severalls BC	1	Central/East	40	20	17
114	Warriors Rest Bowls	Tiptree Jobserve BC	1	South	89	29	39
115	West End Sports Ground Bowls	Colchester West End BC / Arclight BC	2	Central/East	107	13	24
116	West Mersea BC	West Mersea BC	1	South	95	35	45
117	Wivenhoe BC	Wivenhoe BC	1	Central/East	80	20	20

Bowling clubs are generally considered viable if they have the appropriate level of membership to sustain their bowling green and accompanying ancillary facilities. Therefore, clubs that have lower levels of participation in comparison to the remaining clubs within Colchester may have issues maintaining their provision.

Conversely those clubs which have a substantial level of demand also need to be monitored to ensure they have the appropriate quantity /quality of provision. In the case of Colchester four clubs are currently operating above the recommended capacity guidelines, with Old Heath Recreation Ground also operating directly at capacity. One future demand is taken into consideration, West End Sports Ground and Old Heath Recreation Ground shall also become overplayed.

Four out of the six clubs currently access good quality greens meaning they can withstand operating marginally over capacity if quality is sustained. This applies to Warriors Rest Bowls, West Mersea BC, Wivenhoe BC and West End Sports Ground Bowls.

## 9.5: Conclusion

To conclude, there is a sufficient number of bowling greens within Colchester to support the identified demand, with all clubs willing to accept new members. As such, it is considered that anyone within Colchester that would like to start participating could do so at the clubs and greens already in existence.

As there is no evidence to suggest a need for new bowling greens in Colchester the priority should be based on supporting existing clubs improve their facilities and ensuring the overplayed sites can accommodate for the current levels of demand.

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### **Bowls summary**

- ◀ **There is currently sufficient capacity for flat bowling greens to meet both current and future demand.**
- ◀ There are ten bowling greens in Colchester located across eight sites.
- ◀ All ten bowling greens are owned and managed by the respective sports club.
- ◀ Six greens (60%) are rated as good quality, with two green (20%) rated as standard quality and two (20%) rated as poor quality.
- ◀ Colchester West End BC and Tiptree Jobserve BC both indicate green quality has improved at their respective home venues due to improved maintenance. Tiptree Jobserve BC state that the quality of their green improvement is also due to drainage improvements.
- ◀ Of the responding clubs, five sites are accompanied by standard quality facilities, whereas one sites is accompanying a good quality ancillary provision, and one poor quality ancillary provision.
- ◀ There are nine bowling clubs identified as playing in Colchester, eight of which have responded to consultation requests to date. Where known, membership of the responsive clubs' totals 541.
- ◀ The largest club according to known membership is currently West Mersea BC, with 95 members, followed by Tiptree Jobserve BC with 89 members. The smallest club is Severalls BC with only 40 members.
- ◀ Of responding clubs, all six clubs highlight plans to increase membership. In total, future demand aspirations total 65 members.

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### PART 10: ATHLETICS

#### 10.1: 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 Colchester as part of the South East region.

#### **Consultation**

There are seven England Athletics affiliated running clubs within Colchester, of which, only Team2gether responded to consultation requests. Consultation with England Athletics as well as general research took place as to inform this section.

#### 10.2: Supply

Consultation with England Athletics reveals that, nationally, no new standard 400-metre athletics tracks are planned to be constructed. Focus is instead on the retention of the existing 400-metre facility.

In Colchester, there is one purpose-built athletics track at the Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium, which provides a fully floodlit 400m track. The site was first developed in 1932 and had its track resurfaced in 2006 making it a standard quality surface. It has accompanying changing facilities, catering and parking all of which is also accessed by Colchester Hockey Club who are also located at the site.

The site is managed by Merville Barracks and is open to the general public from 18:30-20:30 Monday to Thursday and weekends from 10:00-12:00.

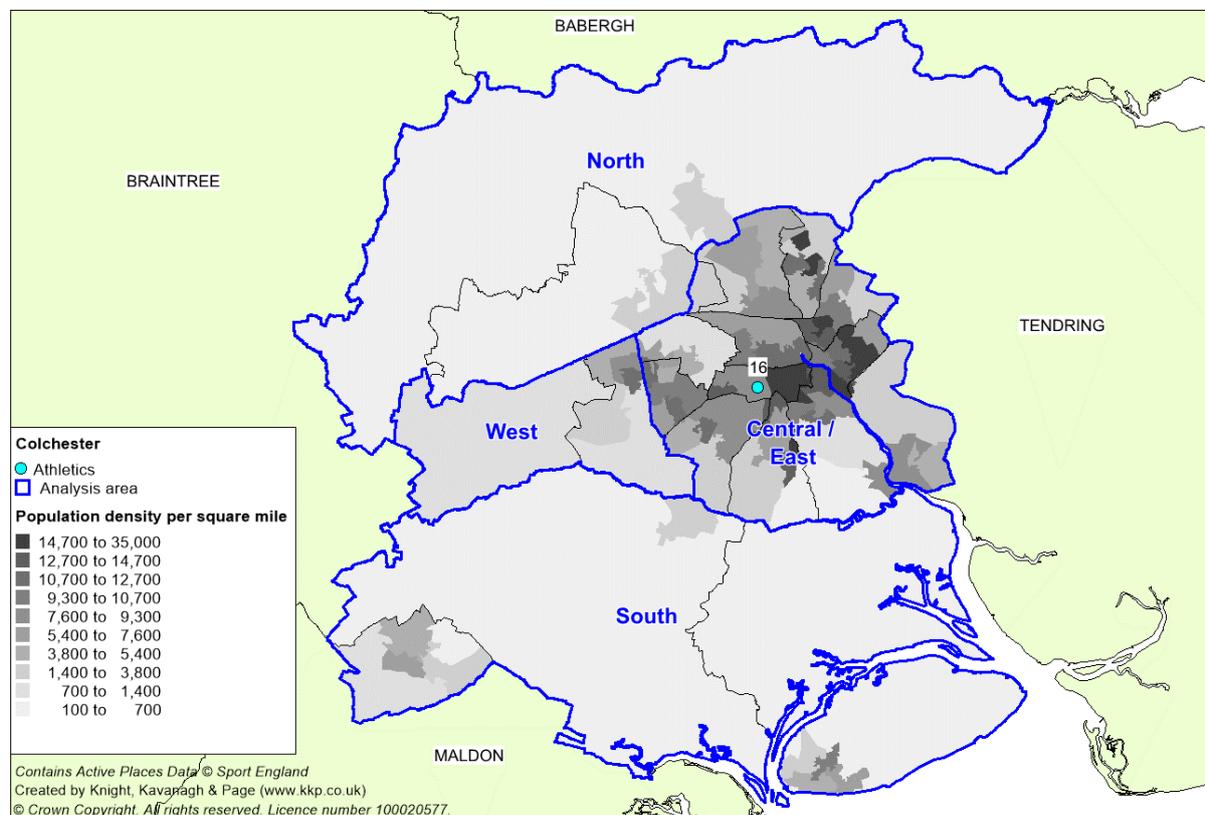
*Table 10.1: Summary of athletics tracks in Colchester*

Site ID	Site	Postcode	Analysis area	Length	Sports lighting?	Community use?
16	Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium	CO2 7SZ	Central/ East	400 metres	Yes	Yes

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Figure 10.1 below highlights the location of all athletics tracks in Colchester.

Figure 10.1: Location of athletics tracks in Colchester



## Alternative provision

Consultation with England Athletics confirms it is adopting a new approach to facility planning that can enable local councils to install new athletics provision at a much more affordable cost than a traditional 400m synthetic track.

The first of the three alternative designs is a 'compact track' featuring a 60m sprint straight with an accompanying jump lane and shot put space. This provision is the smallest of the three and is installed at sites with limited available land.

A 'mini track' features a 140m four lane oval track with a six lane 60m sprint, as well as accompanying shot put and jumping provision. An advantage to a mini track design is it leaves a large space in the centre of the oval track to be used for either various field events such as long jump/ triple jump, or alternatively it can be used for other sports such as football pitches or an outdoor gym. Mini track sites also feature a new design of shot-put practice areas, in which it flattens a natural slope and athletes throw into a hill allowing for the put to roll back to the participant thus reducing time spent retrieving the put after each throw.

Finally, an 'active track' is a synthetic loop with no fixed shape or distance (much like a formula 1 circuit), in which a track is drawn to fit its natural surroundings such as an existing park or school field. This is installed at sites where a 400m oval would not be feasible as it allows for adaptations to the shape in order to suit land in its current state.

These three designs present alternative approaches to athletics provision as to offer more affordable and feasible means of creating athletics tracks.

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The installation of such provision detailed above, could enable a more affordable means of installing athletics provision within the City.

### **10.3: Demand**

For the purposes of this study, athletics demand is considered to come in various forms, rather than just traditional track and field activity. As such, running clubs are also considered, as are organised running events and various running initiatives, some of which are governed by England Athletics. It is also acknowledged that recreational running forms a large part of demand, although this is difficult to measure.

#### ***Colchester and Tendring Athletics Club***

Colchester and Tendring Athletics Club is a friendly athletics club that caters for junior and adult members. The Club competes in four Athletics league, those being the Eastern Young Athletes League, East Anglian League, Southern Athletics League and the Eastern Masters Athletics Club.

The Club accesses Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium on Monday and Wednesday evenings. It offers a variety of membership rates with under 17s and under 20s and seniors charged £60 for the year, university students or armed forces members £30 a year, social memberships at £25 a year and family memberships ranging from £100 to £130 a year. A £1 gate fee is also charged per training session. Despite not completing a survey it is known that the Club has a waiting list in place for new members.

#### ***Colchester Harriers Athletics Club***

Formed in 1982, Colchester Harriers Athletics Club support a variety of athletics events including track field, race walking, road running, cross country and trail racing. It accommodates juniors and adults and offers coaching sessions as to improve its members abilities in their chosen discipline.

Club training sessions are held at Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 18:00- 20:30 and charge £2 per session. Despite not completing a survey it is known that the Club has a waiting list in place for new members.

#### ***Team2gether***

Team2gether is a regular running group that meets at Colchester Leisure World from 10 to 20 hours per week. The Club currently has 17 male members, 32 female members and five junior members which it states has stayed the same in recent years. The Club express ambitions to gain a further 100 adult members (50 male and 50 female), as well as 20 junior members, but did not specify how it hopes to achieve this goal.

The Club raise frustrations with the operating model in place at Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium which it states focuses too heavily on supporting the established athletics clubs, making access very difficult for a regular individual.

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### ***Running Colchester***

Running Colchester formed in May 2016 as a social running group that as of 2018 became England Athletics affiliated and now hosts qualified coaches. The Club looks to accommodate all running abilities and has a Facebook page with over 5,000 members. Weekly runs are organised through the clubs Facebook page, with venues accessed including Northern Gateway Sports Park and Balkerne Hill.

### ***Boxted Runners***

Boxted Runners is an inclusive running group that looks to accommodate for all levels of runners. The Club deliver couch to 5k programmes, as well as the #RunandTalk England Athletica initiative which is delivered in partnership with the charity Mind. The programme looks to improve mental health through advocating speaking with one another and removing stigmas against mental health.

### ***Tiptree Road Runners***

Tiptree Road Runners takes part in cross country, road and trial races in various locations. It hosts club nights on Tuesdays and from 19:15 at Leisure World and Thursdays from 19:00 at various venues announced each week. The Club competes in the Essex cross country leagues and the NESS cross country.

### ***Parkside Road Runners***

Parkside Road Runners is a social friendly running group with over 500 members on its Facebook page. The Club partake in Run Together sessions held at Abbey Fields on Thursdays from 19:30 in which fartlek sessions ranging from 5 to 10km are delivered with members allowed to run at their own pace.

### ***Run Together***

Run Together is an official England Athletics recreational running project which aims to get the whole nation running. Its aim is to provide fun, friendly, supportive and inclusive running opportunities for everyone, regardless of ability and availability. It believes that running is more fun and easier to become part of a lifestyle when shared with others.

Colchester and Tendring Athletic Club, Running Colchester and Parkside Road Runners all host Run Together sessions at various venues including Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium and Abbey Fields. A key focus for England Athletics is increasing demand for participation in initiatives such as Run Together, meaning this could be further targeted moving forward, especially given the number of other clubs that could be involved.

### ***Park Run***

Park Run is a series of 5k runs held on Saturday mornings in areas of open space around the UK, with 768 events now operating across the Country. They are open to all, free, and are safe and easy to take part in. Runners must first register online in order to access a printed barcode which gives them access to all Park Run events. Below are some statistics for each event.

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Table 10.2: Colchester Park Run statistics

Park Run	Number of times held	Average attendance	Average finish time (mins)
Colchester Castle	432	284	28:59
Highwoods	123	92	30:00
Mersea Island	231	89	29:54

The Colchester Castle parkrun is a two lap route of Colchester Castle park that finishes at the band stand behind the castle. The Highwoods parkrun held at Highwoods country park has a combination of gravel paths, trails and grass. The route single loop route starts and ends within the country park.

Finally, The Mersea Island route sees runners meet at Cudmore Grove Country Park before running around the East Mersea Flats Nature Reserve and Cudmore Grove Lookout.

### **Other running events**

Another annual running event that takes place in Colchester is the Colchester Half Marathon and the Santa Fun Run. The Colchester Half Marathon is scheduled to take place on the 21<sup>st</sup> of May 2023 whilst the Santa Fun Run shall take place on the 4<sup>th</sup> of December 2022 at Castle Park and sees members in fancy dress take part in a 3-5km fun run.

### **Couch to 5k**

Couch to 5k is a national health initiative promoted by the National Health Service (NHS) 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 NHS 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 of leading to increased demand at running groups and clubs as people may wish to continue develop their running further. In Colchester, Boxted Runners deliver the Couch to 5k programme.

### **Latent/unmet demand**

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 significant latent demand amounting to 4,154 people within Colchester. As a comparison, the Tendring District identifies 6,393 people wanting to participate in Athletics but are not currently doing so, giving Colchester is a lower latent demand.

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Notwithstanding the above, no clubs currently based in Colchester express latent or unmet demand, with no waiting lists in place, suggesting that anyone wanting to participate can do so via the clubs that are in place. Frustrations regarding the lack of accessibility at Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium was raised by Team2gether who state that the site focused too much focus towards supporting formal athletics clubs.

### ***Future demand***

Team2gether raised future demand ambitions for a further 100 senior members and 20 junior members, with the remaining clubs not having waiting list in place and are accepting new members.

In addition, England Athletics also believes that demand is likely to increase in the future, particularly for initiatives such as Park Run, although again to what extent is difficult to quantify.

### **10.4: Conclusion**

With Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium servicing Colchester, all running and athletics participation is accommodated for within the City. Additional sites such as Leisure World Tiptree, Northern Gateway Sports Park and Highwoods Country Park also accommodate additional demand, such as road running groups within the area.

As such there is no need for additional provision within the City.

Away from formal facilities, with demand likely to continue to increase for more running initiatives such as Park Run, it is important to ensure sites for these events can continue adequately accommodate the demand. With Team2gether stressing frustrations with the operating model at Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium, and Colchester and Tendring AC and Colchester Harriers AC having waiting lists in place, considerations should be made towards how access to the existing provision is balanced.

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### **Athletics – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium provides a fully floodlit 400m track.
- ◀ With the existing track provided at Colchester Garrison the need for an additional 400m athletics track does not exist. However, the management of the site in which partnered clubs use a majority of the allocation can limit general public accessibility.
- ◀ Efforts to install a compact, mini or active track within Colchester should be considered as an affordable means of providing the City with Athletics provision.
- ◀ Priority should also be placed on supporting activity being accommodated by the various running clubs in Colchester and the events that are being held.

### **Athletics – supply summary**

- ◀ Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium provides a 400m fully floodlit eight lane track with accompanying ancillary provision with changing facilities and catering.
- ◀ There are also no compact, mini or active tracks within Colchester.

### **Athletics – demand summary**

- ◀ Seven clubs have been identified within Colchester, those being Colchester and Tendring Athletics Club, Colchester Harriers AC, Team2gether, Running Colchester, Boxted Runners, Tiptree Road Runners and Parkside Road Runners.
- ◀ Colchester and Tendring Athletics Club and Colchester Harriers Athletics Club resemble the two formal athletics clubs within the City, whilst the remaining clubs are social running clubs.
- ◀ Colchester City Council writes that both Colchester and Tendring AC and Colchester Harriers AC have waiting lists in place.
- ◀ Colchester and Tendring Athletics Club, Running Colchester and Parkside Road Runners all deliver the Run Together programme.
- ◀ Three Park Run events are held each week within Colchester, those being Colchester Castle, Highwoods and Mersea Island parkrun.

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### PART 11: GOLF

#### 11.1: Introduction

Golf is the fifth largest participation sport in England, with around 730,000 members belonging to one of 1,800 affiliated clubs and a further two million people playing independently outside of club membership. There are an estimated 3,000 golf courses across the Country, with approximately 90 designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest because apart from the intensively managed trees and greens they have other habitats with high wildlife value. Many other courses also exist within designated Heritage Coast sites, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, or listed Historic Parklands.

Nationally, the sport is governed by England Golf. Its role includes providing competitions for players of all ages and abilities, identifying and developing the most talented golfers, maintaining a uniform system of handicapping, administering and applying the rules, and introducing new golfers via its initiatives such as 'Get into Golf'.

#### **Consultation**

The section was informed via consultation with England Golf, which has provided information relating to all facilities and clubs within Colchester.

#### 11.2: Supply

There are three different types of golf facilities recognised by Sport England and governed by England Golf, as defined in the table below. Facilities such as pitch and putt courses and miniature/crazy golf courses are not included as these are not considered to be traditional formats of the game and are not comparable offerings.

*Table 11.1: Definitions of golf facilities*

Facility type	Description
Standard	A standard par course, with a minimum of 9 holes but normally associated with 18-hole courses; many 9-hole courses have different tee boxes which allow the provision to be played as an 18-hole course. Some courses provide 27 holes, with any two loops of 9-holes played to make up an 18-hole round.
Par 3	Shorter length of holes than a standard course, with no hole longer than Par 3. Most likely to be a 9-hole course although 18-hole offerings do exist. Does not include pitch and putt courses, which are even shorter offerings and are not considered to be a traditional version of the sport.
Driving Range	Includes covered and uncovered driving range bays but not practice areas within golf courses; ranges are based on the hiring of balls, with users not required to retrieve, whereas practice areas are generally for members to use with their own balls (although a growing number have dispensers). Does not include 'entertainment' ranges or virtual offerings, although some driving ranges have expanded to also provide these features.

Within Colchester, there are four golf venues that provide facilities conforming with the above definitions, as identified in Table 11.1 and Table 11.2 below. There is also a nine hole crazy golf course at Waldegraves Holiday Park, however as this does not fit within the outlined facility types it has been discounted from the supply.

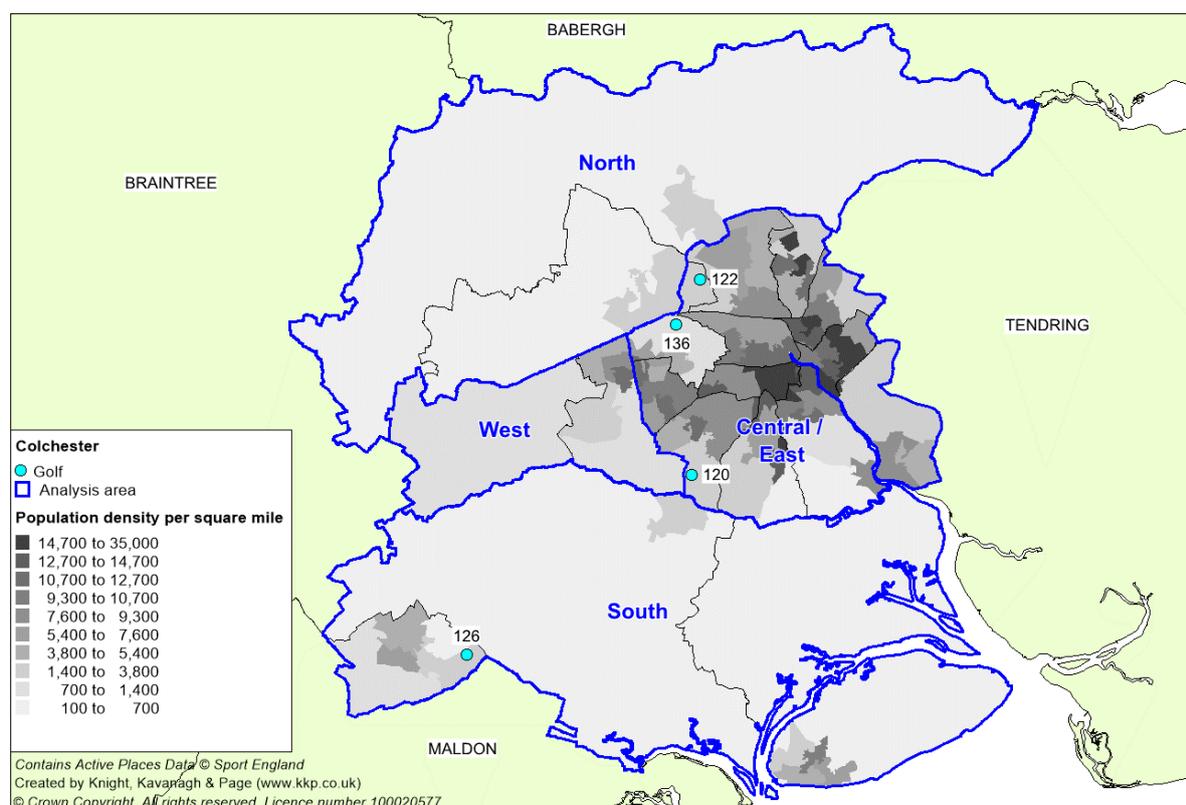
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Table 11.2: Golf facilities within Colchester

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area
120	Birch Grove Golf Club	CO2 0HS	Central/ East
122	Colchester Golf Club	CO4 5AU	Central/ East
126	Tiptree Golf Driving Range	CO5 0JA	South
136	Lexden Wood Golf Club	CO3 4AU	Central/ East

Figure 11.1 below highlights the location of all golf provision in Colchester.

Figure 11.1: Location of golf provision in Colchester



## Standard hole golf courses

Three of the five golf sites within Colchester provide a standard hole course, two of which are 18-hole courses, those being Lexden wood Golf Club and Colchester Golf Club. Finally, there is Tiptree Golf Driving Range which purely operates as a driving range.

Colchester Golf Club provides the longest offering at 6,347 yards, whilst the shortest course is Birch Grove Golf Club. Shorter courses tend to offer some variety that may appeal more so to a defined market that would not feel comfortable playing lengthier provision e.g. beginner and/or casual golfers.

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Table 11.3: Summary of standard hole provision in Colchester

Site ID	Site name	Holes	Par	Yardage <sup>32</sup>			Slope rating
120	Birch Grove Golf Club	9	33	2273	2210	2123	81
122	Colchester Golf Club	18	70	6,347	6,104	5,744	-
136	Lexden Wood Golf Club	18	70	5,895	5,626	5,370	113

There is one standard hole 9-hole courses in Colchester. Nationally, many 9-hole courses are shorter than the front or back nine of an 18-hole course, primarily to attract and cater for a different userbase.

### Slope ratings

Slope ratings are new to golf across the World. The intention is for them to allow the handicap system to reflect course difficulty and the difference in difficulty for all players compared to scratch golfers. In effect, this enables each player to have a handicap that will vary from course-to-course, depending on difficulty, as well as a general handicap.

The maximum slope rating is 155, whereas the minimum is 55. The standard difficulty is considered to be 113, which means that one of the identified golf courses within Colchester are considered to be more less than the mean.

### Par 3 golf holes

Most commonly, Par 3 provision is used by beginner and casual players, although they are also frequented by more traditional golfers wanting to practice their short game. Colchester does not provide a par 3 course.

### Driving range bays

Lexden Wood Golf Club provides a 24 undercover, floodlit driving range. The site offers apay and play rate. Titpree Golf Driving Range provides a covered floodlit driving range that was first built in 1988 and has a total length of 350 yards. The site formerly offered pay and play access however it is temporarily closed. England Golf confirms that one operational driving range within Colchester is a proportionately low amount for the City.

Nationally, many driving range providers are updating their facilities with such provision in a bid to increase demand. Others also seek the installation of automatic tees or entertainment systems such as TopTracer and FlightScope. These allows for users to simulate playing on courses across the world and provides ball tracking and statistical feedback. Such technology is offered at Lexden Wood Golf Club, but it is not available at Titpree Golf Driving Range.

Table 11.4: Summary of driving range bays

Site ID	Site name	No. of bays provided	Ball Tracking technology?
122	Colchester Golf Club	8 (members only)	No
126	Tiptree Golf Driving Range	14 (not currently open)	No
136	Lexden Wood Golf Club	24	Yes

<sup>32</sup> White denotes Championship tees, yellow denotes men's tees and red denotes ladies' tees.

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### **Management and ownership**

There are three main types of ownership and management models of golf facilities in England: members clubs, proprietary clubs, and municipal facilities. Each of these is summarised in the table below.

*Table 11.5: Types of ownership and management of golf facilities*

<b>Management type</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Members</b>	Traditionally owned by members and run by committees. They are likely to hire caterers and green staff. Most members' clubs offer some level of pay and play and encourage golf societies but are mostly focused on membership numbers.
<b>Proprietary</b>	Owned or managed by businesses or individuals, these can include country club type facilities at the high end of the golfing market alongside more localised facilities. Many have clubs operating within them but can also take a much more relaxed attitude to dress and traditions of golf. Pay and play opportunities tend to be a key feature of the business plan.
<b>Municipal</b>	These are generally owned by a local authority, although in a growing number of instances, management has been contracted and externalised to private companies. Due to a lack of financial viability, many have closed across the Country in recent years and many that remain are under threat.

It is recognised that members clubs and visitors to such clubs are normally expected to dress appropriately, have a registered handicap certificate (a certificate issued by the Council of National Golf Unions (CONGU)) and be familiar with the rules and etiquette of the game. This is not uncommon at some proprietary clubs, but municipal courses tend to be more relaxed with regard to dress codes and do not require people to have handicaps, making golf much more accessible.

Consequently, municipal courses are, in many instances, seen as entry level facilities, with players using them before having the confidence to move on to a members' or high-end proprietary club (although many people can and do stay attached to a particular course). They also tend to offer a more affordable golfing experience.

The business model for members clubs tends to rely heavily on income through membership subscriptions and use of ancillary facilities, rather than from pay and play usage, although attention has somewhat switched at many sites in recent years due to demand falling. The same can be said for some proprietary clubs, although, in general, more emphasis is placed on supplementing regular activity with green fee sales.

Conversely, municipal sites have always been heavily reliant on visitors even though membership packages are normally available (often in the shape of season tickets). On occasion, these can be linked to access to other local authority operated sports facilities, such as leisure centres and swimming pools.

Despite the above generalisations, each golf facility, regardless of management type, will have its own processes in terms of how much focus is placed on membership and pay and play usage, or whether it equally encourages both. There is no correct way to run a site. A club that focuses on members has guaranteed income, but this can often deter more casual players or nomadic golfers through, for example, a lack of peak time availability.

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In contrast, a site that depends on visitors can struggle to be viable if there are spells of inclement weather during summer months and can discourage people that want to be part of a club environment. On the other hand, more income can be brought in through regular users compared to what would be the case had they been part of a membership scheme.

In Colchester, there is one member's club, two proprietary clubs and one privately run site.

*Table 11.6: Summary of ownership/management in Colchester*

Site ID	Site name	Management type
120	Birch Grove Golf Club	Proprietary
122	Colchester Golf Club	Members
126	Tiptree Golf Driving Range	Private
136	Lexden Wood Golf Club	Proprietary

Tiptree Golf Driving Range is not affiliated to England Golf. Non-affiliation is most commonly the case at venues that have a focus on informal activity.

### **Pricing**

A key issue for the wider golf population is whether golf courses are available to the general population at a price point which is accessible to the majority of residents. Better quality courses tend to cost more to use, whilst 18-hole provision is generally more expensive to access than 9-hole provision.

Nationally, over the past few years, many facilities have altered their pricing structures to allow for discounts following a previous decline in golf membership. England Golf has positively encouraged this as its view is that clubs are more likely to experience growth when flexible packages are available. For instance, some now offer five and/or six-day memberships (whereby members can access the course on specific days but not on one or both weekend days), whilst others provide discounts that are no longer limited solely to junior players (e.g. discounts for those aged 18-21 and 21-30 or for those aged 65 and over). In the past, it was common for clubs to have membership waiting lists, but this has become rarer. That being said, a rise in demand following the Covid-19 pandemic has tested this and resulted in capacity pressures, with a third of clubs now thought to have waiting times before new members can join.

England Golf reports that the average cost of a full adult membership across the Country is currently £901. In Colchester, Lexden Wood Golf Club operates above this figure with costs reaching £920 per year, whilst Colchester Golf Club has fees reaching £1,285 whilst also charging a joining fee of £1,400 for all new members.

Conversely, Birch Grove Golf Club offers membership rates noticeably below the national average at £676.80 due to the site offering nine holes.

Green fees are available at all three sites. Pricing for weekday access at clubs varies from £19.00 at Birch Grove Golf Club to £55.00 at Colchester Golf Club. Weekend prices range from £19.00 at Birch Grove Golf Club to £70.00 at Colchester Golf Club.

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Table 11.7: Pricing structures at golf facilities within Colchester

Site ID	Site name	Joining fee	Full membership (per year)	Green fee (per round) <sup>33</sup>	
				Weekday	Weekend
120	Birch Grove Golf Club	-	£676.80	£19 (18 holes)	£19 (18 holes)
122	Colchester Golf Club	£1,400	£1,285	£55	£70
136	Lexden Wood Golf Club	-	£920	£35	£35

## Quality

There are no official national or county golf facility rankings. Generally, the better course quality and supporting infrastructure is, the higher the joining/membership and green fees are likely to be. Some sites gain status through hosting county, national and international golf events and some tend to feature in ranking articles put together by golf magazines.

In terms of golf course quality in Colchester, it is relatively good across the sites, with no significant issues identified. However, quality is, for obvious reasons, better at the likes of Colchester Golf Club when compared to Birch Grove Golf Club, with more sophisticated and regular maintenance regimes.

Despite its coastal location, all three standard courses are parkland courses, meaning no links courses are offered within Colchester.

Links courses offer golfers a different challenge with typical designs featuring un-even fairways and thick roughs. When paired with the increased wind caused by the coastal location and lack of trees, links courses offer golfers a different challenge to that seen on a parkland course.

The ancillary facilities across Colchester are also generally good. The clubhouse at Colchester Golf Club offers a large lounge that serves food and drinks. Lexden Wood Golf Club hosts a spacious function room that features a restaurant serving food. Finally, Birch Grove Golf Club has a good venue that also caters for events and serves food.

Golf clubs often need such revenue sources to operate effectively and the provision of a good quality, well equipped clubhouse is a key opportunity to provide a secondary income stream. This emanates from a variety of sources including bar and catering income from members and visitors as well as venue hire for special occasions including weddings, christenings and funerals.

From a golfing perspective, given the current emphasis on increasing levels of female and junior golf membership across the Country, it is also imperative that ancillary provision can adequately cater for all types of members e.g. by providing gender specific changing facilities.

<sup>33</sup> Where more than one course is provided, the price displayed is for the larger course.

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### 11.3: Demand

Around 2004, participation in golf began declining; however, recent signs show that the reduction has not only levelled off, but that demand has started to increase, especially following the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions, both in 2020 and 2021. As one of the first sports to be allowed on both occasions, people have been able to play whilst maintaining social distancing and England Golf has provided very clear guidance as to how this should manifest itself (e.g. by not allowing the flag to be taken out or rakes to be used). Some courses have reported a near doubling of usual demand compared to pre-pandemic levels, highlighting that a significant opportunity now exists to retain increased participation in the long-term. An opportunity now exists for this to represent a long-term increase in demand, although to what level is unclear as retention may in some instances be challenging as more and more users return to normal working/living conditions.

#### **Membership**

England Golf suggests that the average membership of a golf club nationally is 386, which is based on a central national handicap platform. In Colchester, the table below provides the most recent average memberships of the three formal golf facilities within the City, based on latest England Golf affiliation data. Information received from England Golf suggests that the average membership per club is now 452, although club-by-club figures are not available.

*Table 11.8: Summary of golf membership within Colchester*

Clubs	2015 Average	2016 Average	2017 Average	2018 Average	2022 Average
Average Club membership rates	367 members	371 members	377 members	351 members	452 members
Percentage change	-	+1.18%	+1.60 %	-6.90 %	+28.77%

As seen, membership rates remained fairly stable from 2015 to 2018, with minimal growth of 13 members identified. From 2018 to 2022, significant growth has been experienced with a 28.77% increase in average membership figures. England Golf largely attributes this to the restrictions imposed during covid, meaning it was able to remain a viable sport much sooner than most sports.

#### **Pay and play**

Whilst pay and play usage has generally increased across England in recent years, usage figures at the sites within Colchester are not known as it is not something that is tracked by England Golf. All three formal golf clubs provide green fee rates, with the remaining two sites also offering pay and play rates.

#### **Unmet demand**

Unmet demand is existing demand that is not getting access to golf facilities. This could be reflected via a waiting list at a club, although it is likely that people on a waiting list are still playing golf elsewhere, either via membership of another club or through pay and play access. As such, unmet demand in Colchester is present at Colchester Golf Club which has a waiting list in place to be granted membership.

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### ***Latent demand***

Latent demand is demand for golf that is not currently being realised. This could be for numerous reasons, such as time constraints, financial reasons and a lack of suitable, available provision. To that end, Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in golf but 'are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 2,238 people in Colchester, which is noticeably higher than the 1,831 people identified in neighbouring district Tendring.

Whilst the reasoning for the latent demand is unknown and is likely to be varied, the data does show relatively high demand which would significantly increase membership and/or pay and play usage across facilities if realised. England Golf is supportive of clubs that proactively target new audiences in an attempt to tap into such demand i.e. through developing a variety of golfing offers, coaching programmes and a range of membership options.

In addition, England Golf has a mapping tool that enables an assessment of potential demand within a 20-minute drive time of each golf facility, with the population broken down into nine golfing segments. These segments are defined to help provide an indication as to what type of golfing offer each would be most likely to access. They are:

- ◀ Relaxed members
- ◀ Older traditionalists
- ◀ Younger traditionalists
- ◀ Younger fanatics
- ◀ Younger actives
- ◀ Late enthusiasts
- ◀ Occasional time pressed
- ◀ Social couples
- ◀ Casual fun

For the South East, demand from each of the segments is relatively evenly split across the nine segments; the highest demand is from "casual fun" (6,494 people), whilst the lowest is from "older traditionalists" (5,662 people).

Across Colchester, from a 20-minute drive time catchment area perspective, Lexden Wood Golf Club is identified as having the largest potential demand with 45,611 people falling within the segments within a 20-minute drive time, followed by Colchester Golf Club 42,242 people. Tiptree Golf Driving Range has the smallest potential demand within the catchment area with 6037 people.

### ***Future demand***

England Golf has an aim to increase membership of clubs nationally from 650,000 to 675,000, representing an increase of 3.85%. If this was extrapolated to the clubs in Colchester, total average membership would increase to 441 members across all clubs, meaning a growth of 21 members which is relatively minimal when split across three sites and could be accommodated. England Golf confirms that having reached its previous target it now no longer has a fixed goal in terms of growth.

In reality, each facility will have different aspirations in terms of future growth. Nationally, many clubs, especially the most established ones, will be happy to retain current demand levels, whilst many other will be open to growing by significantly more than 1.07%. In that regard, England Golf reports that many of the clubs are proactively targeting new audiences through coaching programmes and wider range of membership and playing options.

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### 11.4: Supply and demand analysis

With four golf facilities in Colchester, supply is reasonable for the area, particularly given the variance of the facilities with 18- and nine-hole standard courses and driving ranges all being supplied. Furthermore, a variety of operational structures are in place, with some facilities prioritising membership and others prioritising pay and play usage and with some offering a high price point and others offering a low price point. This suggests that all types of golfers can be catered for.

### 11.5: Conclusion

To conclude, with four golf facilities within Colchester, three of which operate as standard hole courses, it can be determined that there is adequate provision to accommodate the identified levels of golf demand within the City. Each venue should be protected and supported, including the driving range provision, particularly given the recent membership increases reported by England Golf.

To protect and support the facilities, England Golf can offer assistance, primarily through a variety of tools that can be used to better understand the local market. There may also be opportunities for some clubs across the area to work more collaboratively in terms of creating pathways where appropriate to collectively cater for all types of players.

#### **Golf – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ Colchester has a reasonable supply of golf provision, with a variety of facilities available and with capacity for growth.
- ◀ As no clubs have a significantly low membership and as levels have recently increased, it is apparent that each venue is required, meaning that each facility should be protect and supported to ensure long-term sustainability.

#### **Golf – supply summary**

- ◀ There are currently four golf sites in Colchester.
- ◀ Three sites provide a standard hole course, two of which are 18-hole courses.
- ◀ No Par 3 courses are provided within the City.
- ◀ Tiptree Golf Driving Range provides a covered floodlit-bay driving range, however the site is not currently operating. Colchester Golf Club has an eight bay driving range accessible only to its members. Finally Lexden Wood Golf Club has a 24 bay driving range with ball tracking technology.
- ◀ One site is a members club, Lexden Wood and Birch Grove Golf Clubs are proprietary facilities and Tiptree Golf Driving Range is privately operated.
- ◀ Average Club membership across Colchester is at 452 members across the three formal clubs, putting the City above the national average of 386 people.
- ◀ In terms of quality, it is relatively good across Colchester with a range of facilities available for players of differing abilities.

#### **Golf – demand summary**

- ◀ Across the clubs with a membership scheme in place, average membership is at 452 people.
- ◀ England Golf reports that membership has increased considerably over the last 12-18 months, with the average membership across the sites having increased by 28.77% from 2018 to 2022.
- ◀ England Golf has an aim to increase membership of clubs nationally by 3.85%, which would represent an increase of 21 members across all combined sites within Colchester.
- ◀ England Golf's mapping tool identifies a significant amount of potential demand, with Lexden Wood Golf Club shown to have a more densely populated location.
- ◀ Pay and play usage is unknown but it is provided at all four sites across Colchester.

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### PART 12: OTHER SPORTS

Included within the scope of work is four additional sports and sporting provision, those being cycling, American football, rugby league and American football.

#### 12.1: Cycling

British Cycling is the NGB for all forms of cycling. It oversees six sporting disciplines, with each having a dedicated facility type:

- ◀ Track cycling – velodromes
- ◀ Road cycling – closed road circuits
- ◀ Mountain biking – trails
- ◀ BMX racing – race/pump tracks
- ◀ Cycle speedway – cycle speedway tracks
- ◀ Cyclocross – non-dedicated, non-permanent venues

British Cycling aids in the development of all six formats, helping to safeguard those that wish to participate in a competitive and compelling environment. The popularity of cycling has increased since recent, elite sporting success in the Olympics and Paralympics as well as in other major championships.

Broad cycling specific aims of the project the project included:

- ◀ Making cycling inviting and attractive to everyone
- ◀ Making cycling safe and secure
- ◀ Making cycling easy and intuitive
- ◀ Normalising cycling to reduce inequalities

#### **Supply**

Colchester is home to several dedicated cycling facilities, countryside mountain biking trails and road cycling routes. Colchester Northern Gateway Sports Park features a 1600m macadam cycling track that runs along the South side of the site. The provision was installed in 2020 and is frequently accessed by cyclists within the area.

Colchester Orbital provides a 15-mile circular route through the city that begins at Castle Park and concludes at Middle Mill Gate near the South bank of the River Colne. The route passes noteworthy sights such as Highwoods Country Park, Wivenhoe Park and Lexden nature reserve.

The Dedham Vale Area of Natural Beauty offers several picturesque cycling routes that incorporate various regions of the natural space to the North of Colchester. Finally, Shrub End Sports Ground formerly hosted an oval cycle speedway track that is now in an overgrown condition.

#### **Demand**

Prominent cycling clubs within Colchester include Colchester Rovers Cycling Club, Colchester Cycling UK and VC Revolution.

Colchester Rovers Cycling Club is a British Cycling affiliated club that features a variety of cycling abilities from beginners to experienced cyclists. It incorporates race time trials, road

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races, cyclo-cross- and cross-country mountain biking. Club training sessions are held on Saturday and Sunday mornings with the clubs website outlining 39 club routes previously ran. Membership fees for the Club are priced at £6 for juniors (16-18), £10 for 65+, £18 a year for adults and £24 for families. It also accepts junior members aged under 16 for free, with 12 British Cycling accredited coaches within the Club supporting both youth and adult development.

Formed in 1927, Colchester Cycling UK is a free, accessible, informal cycling Club that caters for all abilities. The Club meet every Sunday from 08:45 and currently has 1,600 members. All routes start from Colchester Leisure World and incorporate a stop for elevenses, before concluding in pub across the local area, such as The Eight Bells in Bures.

Formed in 2007, VC Revolution Colchester takes part in time trials, road cycling, track races and on and off road challenge rides. The Club encourages a racing ethos, with many competitive riders within its remit. It meets once a week, predominantly on Saturdays in which one route covers roughly 40 miles at an average speed of 17mph.

Membership rates start for youth members (16-17) at £10 a year and adults are charged £20 a year.

### *HSBC UK Go-Ride*

HSBC UK Go-Ride is a British Cycling's development programme for young people. It offers a fun and safe way to introduce young people to the sport and provides a platform to improve cycling skills. People can get involved through holiday coaching programmes or through their local accredited club which allows them to sample the various disciplines of the sport. Progression is obtainable with Go-Ride Racing, offering competition for riders to transition from school or club coaching to inter club and open regional competitions.

Go-Ride is currently implemented in Colchester and is delivered at Northern Gateway Sports Park.

### *Future/latent demand*

Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in cycling but are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 8,224 people who would like to participate in the sport within Colchester. As a comparison, Tendring hosts 5,970 people that would like to participate in cycling, giving Colchester a much higher latent demand.

The demographic featuring the highest percentage of adults that would like to participate in cycling is sporty male professionals, buying a house and settling down with a partner. This high total should be caveated that it includes people looking to cycle recreationally or as a means of transport, meaning that cycling provision shall not always be required.

Notwithstanding the above, it must be noted that future and latent demand does not account for societal factors or changes in the way people may wish to participate in sport and cannot account for specific targeted development work within certain areas or focused towards certain groups, such as NGB initiatives or coaching within schools. For example, there is a focus by British Cycling to develop youth participation through the HSBC UK Go-Ride or HSBC UK Breeze schemes, which may lead to further increases in demand.

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### **Supply and demand analysis**

Colchester has a variety of offering for cycling provision, with Northern Gateway Sports Park and Dedham Vale AONB providing a variety of routes across the City. Protecting and sustaining such sites should be seen as particularly key given the off-road facilities offered (it should be seen as a destination venue for cyclists in the area). The resurrection of the Shrub End Sports Ground speedway tracks should be explored as to offer a wider variety of provision.

A continuation of initiatives promoted by British Cycling, such as Go-Ride and Breeze should also be encouraged as to further grow the sport within Colchester.

### **12.2: American football**

#### **Introduction**

The British American Football Association (BAFA) is responsible for the governance of the sport which is continuing to grow in popularity in the UK and there are now hundreds of clubs and thousands of players competing regularly across the country.

The American football season in England generally runs from May until August.

#### **Supply**

Table 12.1 outlines that there is one adult pitch provide at Corporal Budd VC Gymnasium and one adult pitch at the University of Essex Sports Centre. The former site formerly accommodated a cricket square with an NTP that has now been converted into an American football pitch, whilst the latter is overmarked onto Wivenhoe Park during the American football season.

*Table 12.1: American football facilities within Colchester*

Site ID	Site name	Provision	Postcode	Analysis area
25	Corporal Budd VC Gymnasium	1 adult pitch	CO2 9RQ	Central/ East
102	University of Essex Sports Centre	1 adult pitch	CO4 3SQ	Central/ East

#### **Demand**

The Essex Blades American Football Club and Colchester Gladiators resemble the two American Football clubs within Colchester. Part of Essex University, Essex Blades American Football Club hosts training sessions every Tuesday from 19:00-21:00, Thursday from 20:00-22:00 and Sunday from 11:00-12:30. Social memberships are free of charge, with playing membership rates starting at £90 a year, and a full membership including kit hire costing £120. The Club currently has one senior mixed team that competes in the BUCA South East 1A League.

Comparatively, Colchester Gladiators American Football Club is based at Corporal Budd VC Gymnasium.

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### ***Supply and demand analysis***

With Essex Blades resembling the one American football club within Colchester, and forms part of Essex University, it can be considered that there is sufficient supply of provision to accommodate existing demand within the City.

### **12.3: Rugby league**

#### ***Introduction***

The Rugby Football League (RFL) is the governing body for rugby league in England. It administers the England national rugby league team, the Challenge Cup, Super League and the championships which form the professional and semi-professional structure of the game in the UK.

#### ***Consultation***

Consultation with Eastern Rhinos Rugby Club has taken place as to inform this report.

#### ***Supply***

There are no rugby league pitches in Colchester.

#### ***Demand***

Colchester features one rugby league club, that being Eastern Rhinos Rugby Club. The Club formed in 1992 and was originally based in Felixstowe under the name of Felixstowe Eastern RFL Club, before moving to Ipswich in 1995. In 2010 the Club changed its name to the Eastern Rhinos and relocated to Colchester Rugby Club.

The Club now has two senior men's, four junior boys, three mini and has junior girls' members. It accesses the rugby provision provided at Northern Gateway Sports Park, home to Colchester Rugby Club and competes in the Southern Conference League.

The Club confirms it accesses the 3G pitch nearest to the clubhouse which has secondary pitch markings for rugby league. The provision is accessed for both fixtures and club training which is held on Wednesday evenings from 19:00-21:00.

The Club formerly accessed Mill Road Recreation Ground prior to Colchester RUFC's relocation to Northern Gateway Sports Park, however, the Club claims that Colchester City Council failed to include the Club within any of the formal reports regarding the relocation from Mill Road Recreation Ground. Following this the Club accesses its provision without any formal tenure and purely has good will with Colchester RUFC for its allocation from April to August.

### ***Supply and demand analysis***

With Eastern Rhinos Rugby Club resembling the only demand within the City, and the Club accessing Northern Gateway Sports Park during summer months there is no requirement for provision to be provided in Colchester. The lack of security of tenure should be of concern for the future of Rugby League within Colchester, and efforts to secure a longer team agreement for Eastern Rhino Rugby Club's pitch access should be explored.

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## 12.4: Multi use games areas (MUGAs)

Multi use games areas (MUGAs) are a reference to any sport or games areas which are often used for social and recreational sport in the community and are generally categorised into typologies, as seen in the table below. To qualify as a MUGA, a facility should be minimum of a five-a-side football pitch (two tennis courts) in size and be marked out for at least three sports.

Table 12.2: Types of MUGAs

Type	Surface	Characteristics	Preferred sports
Type One	Open textured porous macadam	Used for ball rebound sports. Suitable for wheelchair sports.	Tennis and netball.
Type Two			
Type Three	Polymeric surface over macadam		
Type Four	Polymeric surface over macadam base	Due to their greater shock absorbency and lower surface friction, these areas are not recommended for tennis or netball.	Football, basketball and recreational activity
Type Five	Sand based or third generation turf (3G)	Shock pad and either heavily doused with water before play or filled or dressed with sand or rubber crumb	Formalised sports including hockey, football, American football, lacrosse and rugby.

### Supply

Across Colchester there are a total of four MUGAs all of which are within the Central/ East Analysis Area.

Table 12.3: Summary of MUGAs in Colchester

Analysis area	Number of MUGAs
Central/East	4
North	-
South	-
West	-
<b>Colchester</b>	<b>4</b>

Table 12.4: Summary of provision

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	No. of courts	Surface type	Sports lighting?	Quality
63	Old Heath Recreation Ground	Central/ East	1	Type One/Two	No	Standard
138	Pondfield Open Space	Central/ East	1	Type One/Two	Yes	Good
139	Magnolia Fields	Central/ East	1	Type One/Two	No	Standard
140	ADI Zone / Monkwick Open Space	Central/ East	1	Type One/Two	Yes	Good

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## Future developments

### Local Football Facility Plans (LFFP)

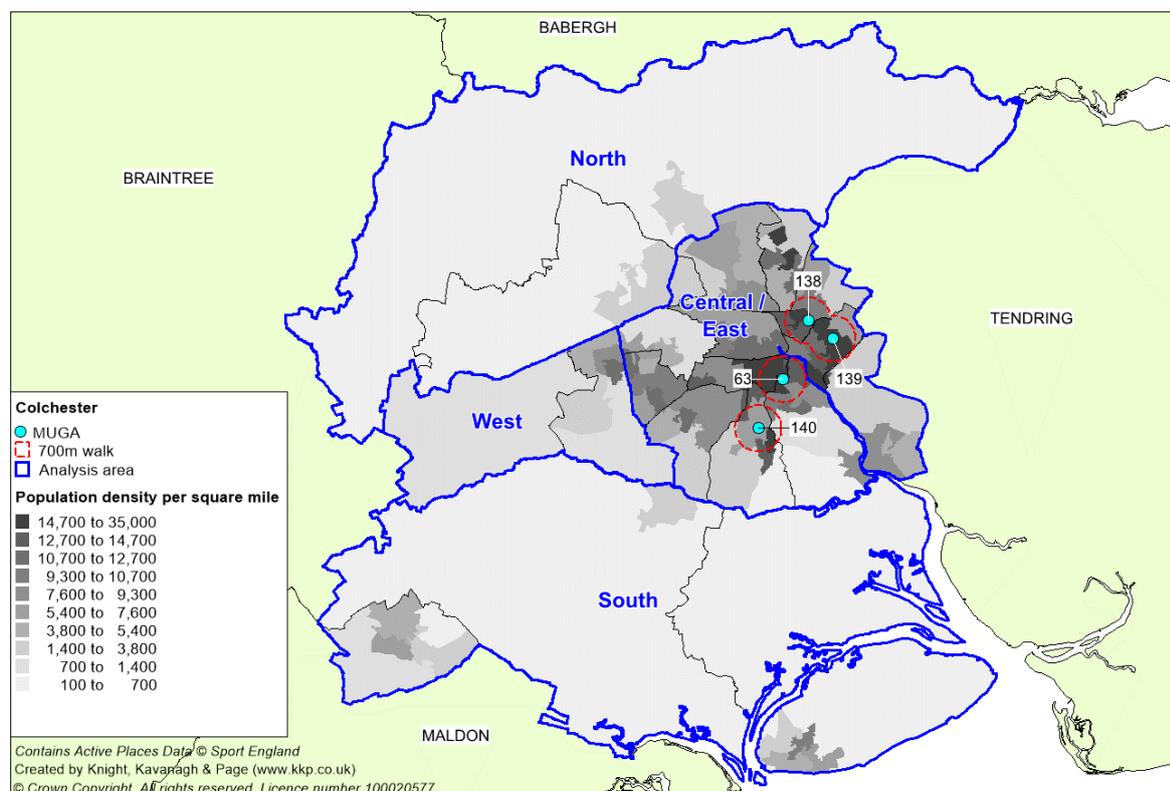
One potential opportunity for provision of a MUGA has been identified within the Colchester LFFP. In its case the rationale is based on the site being in an area with limited recreational provision with high local demand for informal football. The site identified is Monkwick Estate (ADI Zone upgrade).

Informal players require facilities that are open and free to access as this enables play opportunities that are often spontaneous. In these circumstances MUGAs can be effective in areas of high urban population and limited green space. Such facilities can be modern, bright, creative and engaging. The facilities are often caged macadam courts with goals built in to the surrounding cage. MUGAs also have line markings for a number of sports such as football, basketball and netball and can often also have basketball nets built into the facility.

### Management

All MUGAs across Colchester are owned by Colchester City Council or town and parish councils and available as open access meaning they do not need to be booked. Anecdotal evidence suggests that they are well used in the summer months for activities such as informal football.

Figure 12.1: Location of MUGAs in Colchester



For a key to Figure 12.1, please refer to Table 12.3.

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### Quality

The quality of MUGAs across Colchester has been assessed via a categorisation of the scale and quality of provision, with matters such as quality of fencing, lighting, quality of surface and line markings determining the quality of the MUGA.

- ◀ Good
- ◀ Standard
- ◀ Poor

The percentage parameters used for the non-technical assessments were as follows: Good (>80%), Standard (50-80%), Poor (<50%).

In total, across Colchester there are two MUGAs assessed as good quality and two assessed as standard quality with no poor quality MUGAs identified.

Table 12.5: Summary of MUGA quality in Colchester

Analysis area	Number of MUGAs		
	Good	Standard	Poor
Central/East	2	2	-
North	-	-	-
South	-	-	-
West	-	-	-
<b>Colchester</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>

MUGAs are deemed to be poor quality if they have inadequate grip underfoot, loose gravel and evidence of litter, glass and moss with maintenance of such provision also considered to be basic and infrequent. In the case of Colchester, all four sites have either fully enclosed good quality walls or in the case of ADI Zone/Monkwick Open Space, the site has a 2012 legacy design which encompasses both basketball and football.

### Sports lighting

The presence of sports lighting is considered to encourage more demand as it enables evening use all year round. However, it is also acknowledged that it also encourages higher levels unofficial use resulting in increased anti-social behaviour, vandalism and littering.

In total, two MUGAs across Colchester are accompanied by sports lights, those being Pondfield Open Space and ADI Zone/Monkwick Open Space.

### Demand

Given that demand for MUGAs falls into informal use it is difficult to assess and quantify demand. It is likely that the courts are utilised by residents of the City, as well as others which live in close proximity to provision from outside of the area.

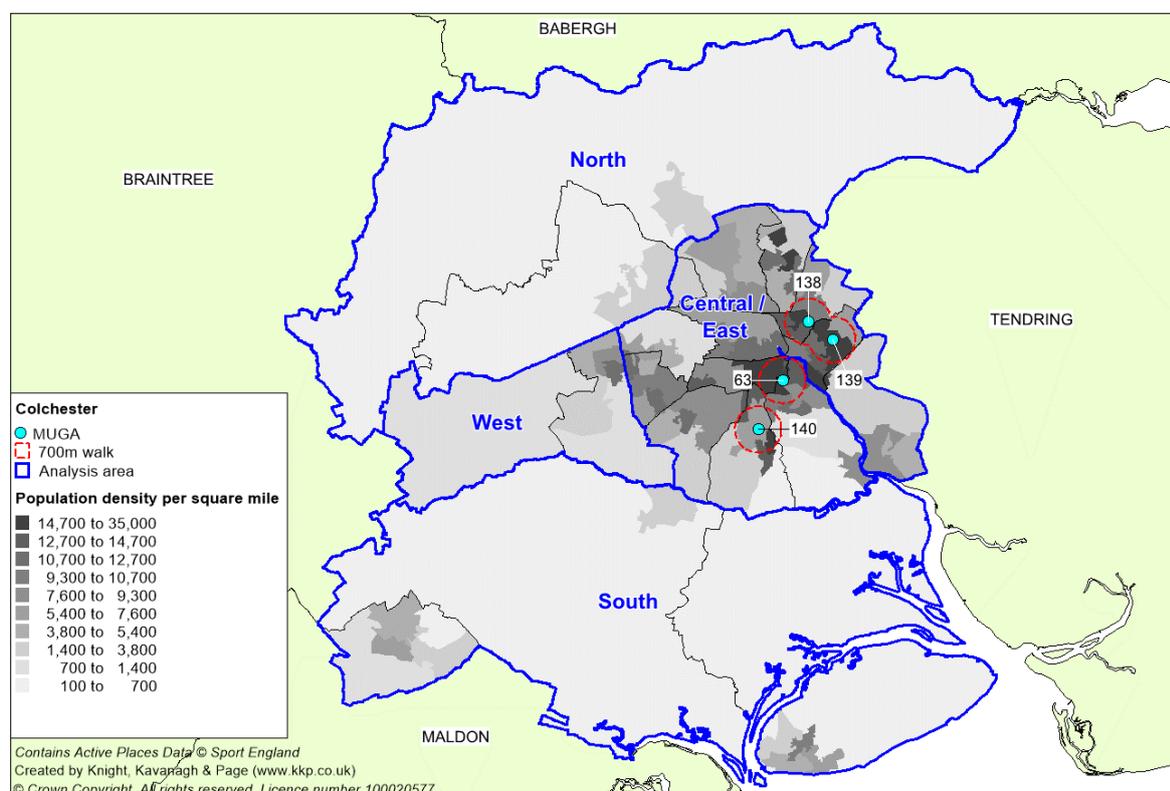
# COLCHESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORTS ASSESSMENT REPORT

## Supply and demand analysis

In order to analyse the catchment for MUGA facilities in the City, a standards based approach has been taken from the Fields in Trust guidance<sup>34</sup>, unlike all other sections of this report, which take a non-standards based approach. The catchment guidance for MUGAs is set at 700m walking distance.

Taking this into consideration a total of 10.5% of the City population (or 29,086 people) live within 700m of a MUGA. The map can be seen below in Figure 12.2.

Figure 12.2: Coverage of MUGAs across all analysis area



As seen in the map above, three of the four analysis areas have significant gaps in coverage of MUGAs. Analysis suggests that the Central/ East Analysis Area population has the highest population of people located within a 700m walk of a MUGA with 29,086 people, which totals 79.5% of the total population. With no MUGA's identified in the remaining analysis areas, 100% of all residents live over 700m from such provision.

Table 12.6: Summary of MUGA population coverage in Colchester

Analysis area	MYE 2020	Population within 700m walk of a MUGA		Population not within 700m walk of a MUGA	
Central/East	142,005	29,086	20.5%	112,919	79.5%
North	16,361	0	0.0%	16,361	100.0%
South	23,273	0	0.0%	23,273	100.0%
West	15,561	0	0.0%	15,561	100.0%
<b>Colchester</b>	<b>197,200</b>	<b>29,086</b>	<b>10.5%</b>	<b>46,636</b>	<b>79.5%</b>

<sup>34</sup><https://www.fieldsintrust.org/Upload/file/guidance/Guidance-for-Outdoor-Sport-and-Play-England.pdf>

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### Conclusion

Colchester provides four MUGAs, two of which are assessed as of a good quality and two assessed as standard. None of the four sites are considered poor quality, with all sites providing good quality fencing and adequate grip underfoot, as well as ADI Zone/Monkwick Open Space which falls under a London 2012 legacy project.

With 10.5% of Colchester's population located within a 700m radius of a MUGA, it can be considered that the District is somewhat well serviced for MUGA's. This is entirely caused by the North East Analysis Area, where 20.5% of the population lies within the specified radius. Therefore, if an increased number of MUGA's were to be installed in the remaining three analysis areas, this total would be improved.

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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.
- ◀ A more productive sport sector.
- ◀ A more financially and organisationally sustainable sport sector.
- ◀ A more responsible sport sector.

#### ***Sport England: Uniting the Movement 2021***

Sport and physical activity has a big role to play in improving the physical and mental health of the nation, supporting the economy, reconnecting communities and rebuilding a stronger society for all. From this notion, Sport England has recently released its new strategy, Uniting the Movement, its 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity.

It seeks to tackle the inequalities long seen in sport and physical activity. Providing opportunities to people and communities that have traditionally been left behind, and helping to remove the barriers to activity, has never been more important.

There are three key objectives to the Strategy:

- ◀ Advocating for movement, sport and physical activity.
- ◀ Joining forces on five big issues
- ◀ Creating the catalyst for change

In particular, the five big issues are identified where the greatest potential is seen for preventing and tackling inequalities in sport and physical activity. Each one is a building block that, on its own, would make a difference, but together, could change things profoundly:

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**Recover and reinvent:** Recovering from the biggest crisis in a generation and reinventing as a vibrant, relevant and sustainable network of organisations providing sport and physical activity opportunities that meet the needs of different people.

**Connecting communities:** Focusing on sport and physical activity's ability to make better places to live and bring people together.

**Positive experiences for children and young people:** Unrelenting focus on positive experiences for all children and young people as the foundations for a long and healthy life.

**Connecting with health and wellbeing:** Strengthening the connections between sport, physical activity, health and wellbeing, so more people can feel the benefits of, and advocate for, an active life.

**Active environments:** Creating and protecting the places and spaces that make it easier for people to be active.

The specific impact of the Strategy will be captured through programmes funded, interventions made, and partnerships forged. For each specific area of action, a set of key performance indicators will be developed. This hybrid approach will help evidence the overall progress being made by all those involved in supporting sport and physical activity.

### **National Planning Policy Framework (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.

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### ***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.

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.

### *Local Football Facility Plans*

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

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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, DCMS, Football Foundation) to inform and direct an estimated one billion pounds of investment into football facilities over the next ten years.

Each LFFP will build upon PPS findings (where present and current) regarding the formal and affiliated game, to also include strategic priorities for investment across small sided football (recreational and informal including indoors). The LFFP will also incorporate consultation with groups outside of formal football, as well as underrepresented communities. This could include those which may be key partners with regards to football for behavioural change and groups which may be key drivers of FA NGS priorities around participation in the likes of women and girls' football, disability football and futsal.

LFFPs will 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.

It is important to recognise that a 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 will, 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.

### ***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.

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### ***Essex FA aims and objectives***

In conjunction with the LFFP, Essex FA has outlined released a 'Moving Forward 2024' strategy looking to united grassroots environment which delivers football opportunity for all.

With regards to facilities, the strategy has the goal develop a sustainable network of quality football facilities across the county which allows participation to continue to sustain and grow. It outlines four key areas of focus in order to achieve such a goal which are as follows:

- ◀ Work with local authority network and other partners to address shortfalls in 3G provision through actively developing projects identified in Local Football Facility Plans, targeting £2 million of total project cost investment in each year of the strategy.
- ◀ Work with our grass pitch operators to improve a minimum of 328 pitches to a good standard across the country, utilising Grounds Maintenance Associate expertise, Pitch Power and respective Football Foundation opportunities.
- ◀ Support our grassroots club network to access relevant funding opportunities which improve the training and matchday environment.
- ◀ Work closely with Sport England and our local authorities to respond to planning applications which influence future facility development to service grassroots football.

Through outlining these goals, Essex FA hopes to improve the overall football experience within both Colchester and all of the County through tackling a wide range of issues from grass pitch improvements, the development of 3G pitches and other associated planning applications.

### ***England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) Inspiring Generations (2019-2024)***

"Inspiring Generations" is the new ECB participation strategy which was announced in January 2019. It builds on the strong foundations laid by Cricket Unleashed and supports the growth of cricket in England and Wales between 2020 and 2024. At the heart of this strategy is a single unifying purpose, which gets to the core of what the game can do for society both on and off the field to ensure that cricket is in an even stronger position that it is in 2019.

Inspire Generations has six key priorities and activities including transforming women's and girls' cricket to increase the representation of women in every level of cricket by:

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

### ***The Rugby Football Union Strategic Plan 2021 onwards***

The RFU has released its new strategic vision for rugby in England. The strategy is based on four main elements which are; Protect, Engage, Grow and Win. It covers all elements of rugby union ranging from elite rugby to grassroots, although the general relevancy to the PPS is centred around growing the game.

The RFU exists to promote and develop rugby union in England and ensure the long-term sustainability of clubs by growing player numbers and retaining them across all age groups. Responding to wider market influences, work will continue on developing new ways to take part in all forms of the game, without comprising the sports traditions. This will ensure a lasting legacy from elite success by attracting new players and encouraging current male and female adult players to play.

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### *England Hockey Strategy*

England Hockey's Facilities Strategy can be found [here](http://www.englishockey.co.uk/page.asp?section=2075&sectionTitle=Facilities+Strategy).  
<http://www.englishockey.co.uk/page.asp?section=2075&sectionTitle=Facilities+Strategy>

**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:

#### **1. 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.

#### **2. 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.

#### **3. 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.

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.

### *Bowls England: Fit for the Future (2021-2026)*

Bowls England's new Strategy; 'Fit For The Future' frames an exciting course for the sport. The five-year plan has been designed with the ultimate goal of getting more people playing & enjoying bowls. It sets out its vision for the sport, how it plans to achieve its objectives and what success looks like in 2026. The priorities that will get it the target of 1 million bowls experiences per year by 2026 are:

- ◀ Building the brand of bowls by increasing focus on international & top domestic bowls, and utilizing opportunities such as Birmingham 2022 to achieve larger media coverage;
- ◀ Ensuring the sport is truly accessible to all by offering different formats of the game which suit all time constraints, as well as driving more people to clubs in new ways;

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- ◀ Creating positive playing experiences for everyone who steps on the green, both for casual and competitive players, as well as growing our events calendar and introducing a Performance Pathway
- ◀ Putting volunteers first, as the lifeblood of our sport, by increasing our support for clubs in order to empower them to thrive;
- ◀ Leading the sport with purpose by developing our Governance structures, diversifying our revenue streams, and work collaboratively with all the sport's key stakeholders.

### **British Tennis Strategy 2019**

The new LTA Strategy includes seven strategies relating to three objectives which are built around the following vision and mission:

**Vision:** tennis opened up

**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 from [1.9% (858,700)] of the population to [2.2% (1,000,000)] by 2023.
  - The number of children playing tennis from [x] to [y] by 2023 (to be finalised December 2018 on publication of Sport England's new Child Participation Survey).
- ◀ 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
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.

### **England Netball**

In November 2021 England Netball launched a 10-year 'Adventure Strategy' for the game with a new brand identity for the organisation.

England Netball's 'Adventure Strategy' shares a purpose-led ambition for the game, to build on the momentum the sport has seen in recent years and take it to new heights for the decade ahead.

The 'Adventure Strategy' outlines the intention to:-

- ◀ accelerate the development and growth of the game at every level, from grassroots to the elite,

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- ◀ elevate the visibility of the sport, and
- ◀ lead a movement to impact lives on and beyond the court.

At the heart of its purpose, England Netball, with its proud and unique female foundations, will remain dedicated to increasing opportunities for women and girls to play the game as a priority, working tirelessly to address the gender participation gap in sport that has widened since the global pandemic.

Underpinned by years of engaging with and delivering netball for female communities, the organisation pledges to understand, support and nurture women and girls more deeply at every life stage, at every age.

The organisation is also committed to opening the sport to new audiences in every community, so netball better represents the rich diversity of the country it proudly represents, and ensures the sport continues to evolve and adapt to thrive in the future, helping to create a truly inclusive sport for all where everyone can belong, flourish and soar. A recent partnership announcement with England Men's and Mixed Netball Association (EMMNA) to help develop and grow male participation in the game, supports this commitment as England Netball pledges to promote difference and embrace the opportunity to make the sport a possibility within everyone's reach.

Transforming netball for children and young people is a strategic priority to protect the future of the sport. Working with schools and policy makers to extend physical literacy within, and after the school day with a focus on netball specific provision will pave the way for greater community participation.

The organisation will accelerate the expansion of its Bee Netball programme for young children, whilst supporting teens and young women to stay in the game to keep them physically active and in the game for life.

The elite game is in focus too, with the ambition for the Vitality Roses to be the best female sports team in the world, supporting the national team to consistently win on the world stage, with an outstanding talent pathway in place to fuel sustainable successes on court, and setting new standards for netball. The professionalisation of the game over the next decade is a priority, focusing on growing world-leading international and domestic competitions and events, and creating more careers in the sport.

Grounded in feedback from the Netball Family, with over 3,000 members and stakeholders consulted as part of the strategic process to understand what they wanted netball to 'look like' in 2031, the plan is aspirational and ambitious and sees the organisation pledge to continue to be a trailblazer for women's sport as it embarks on its new adventure.

### *Facility Development*

The facility development aspirations stated within the Strategy are to:-

- ◀ Take a fresh look at the spaces required to support the sport, creating accessible places in every community to allow netball to be incorporated into how and where women and girls live their lives;
- ◀ Protect, enhance, and extend the network of homes that house the sport at a local and regional level;
- ◀ Develop an elite domestic professional competition that supports full time athletes underpinned by a world class infrastructure and environments.
- ◀ For England Netball to achieve its ambitions to make the game accessible to wider audiences and in every community, it encourages Local Authorities to adopt policies within Playing Pitch Strategies and Built Facilities Strategies that:-

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- ◀ Facilitates informal netball activity within neighbourhood multi use games areas for example by installing combined outdoor basketball and netball goals and art courts in Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAPs).
- ◀ Incorporates the cultural and health needs of women and girls within any designs for improved or new facilities.
- ◀ Protects and enhances netball facilities within all Primary and Secondary School environments so they offer a positive first experience of the sport for students and the wider community during out of school hours.
- ◀ Supports the installation of floodlights on outdoor courts to increase all year-round use.
- ◀ Facilitates the development of netball growth programmes, club training and competition within public leisure centres.
- ◀ Where appropriate, supports the development of netball homes and performance environments that enable local women and girls to pursue a career in netball as an elite athlete, official, coach or administrator.

### ***England Athletics Facility Strategy (2018 – 2025)***

The purpose of this document is to set out our long term vision for athletics facilities in England. Facilities form a vital component of the overall England Athletics strategy.

The development, protection and enhancement of facilities will support our strategic plan and help England Athletics contribute to the delivery of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's Sporting Futures: A New Strategy for Sport and Sport England's strategy Towards an Active Nation. Appropriate facilities help to attract and inspire new participants and provide the foundation and focus for a significant proportion of the England Athletics family.

The England Athletics Strategic Plan notes that the sport increasingly needs to become financially sustainable and that a business-like and innovative approach is a vital component of its future success. Facilities are fundamental, but they are also expensive to create and to maintain. The sport therefore faces a significant challenge to develop, improve and maintain facilities, most of which are currently operated and funded by third parties.

This strategy sets out a challenge to all those involved with the delivery of the sport to be innovative and business like in the operation and development of facilities at a time of financial challenge, as it aims "To create an innovative and inspiring network of sustainable athletic facilities, with the capacity to meet both current and future demand across England".