

OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

PLAYING PITCH
ASSESSMENT
& STRATEGY

2003-2006

A Final Report

By

Strategic Leisure Limited

January 2006

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SECTION I – INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Introduction

- 1.1 Oxford City Council (OCC) appointed Strategic Leisure Limited (SLL) in August 2003 to undertake a Playing Pitch Assessment and develop a Strategy for the area. The assessment undertaken and strategy developed has been completed in accordance with the recently revised guidance, *“Towards A Level Playing Field: A Guide to the production of Playing Pitch Strategies”* published by Sport England and the Central Council for Physical Recreation (CCPR) in October 2002.
- 1.2 During the course of the study, a number of issues arose which have impacted on the timescale for completion of the work e.g. Local Plan Inquiry. Also, the initial research highlighted a number of issues which have required additional work.

Why Develop a Playing Pitch Strategy?

- 1.3 The rationale for undertaking the study is to identify current levels of provision in the area, across the public, education, voluntary and commercial sectors, and to compare this with current, and likely future levels of demand. The supply and demand analysis will help identify the need for new pitch facilities, and also suggest where there are too many facilities, perhaps in the wrong location. The analysis will help to underpin future planning policy and allocation, and help to support bids for external funding.

Specific Issues to be tackled by the Strategy

- 1.4 The development of new residential areas, population growth and changing expectations of leisure activities and opportunities all have implications for future provision of playing pitches. Equally, the plans of other providers will have an influence on the future location, mix and scale of playing pitch provision in the Oxford City boundary.
- 1.5 Increasing concern at national government level over the loss of playing fields has prompted the need for 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, and specifically residential proposals on land in, and around, urban areas
 - Identify pitch (natural grass and artificial) supply and demand issues in relation to predicted population changes
 - Address ‘demand’ pressures created as a result of specific sports development pressures e.g. mini soccer, move to use of artificial pitches by hockey
 - Identify inequalities in supply and demand across the area committee zones within the City Council Boundaries
 - Identify priority sites for development or improvement in relation to external funding opportunities e.g. Football Foundation (FF).

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- 1.6 The Oxford Playing Pitch Assessment and Strategy covers the overall City Council boundary area and considers in some cases the overlap of supply and demand with adjoining areas.
- 1.7 A major driving factor for this pitch assessment and strategy is the need to identify a hierarchy of investment priorities for pitch improvement and development. This will need to encompass an assessment of use and quality of sites and whether they are currently “fit for purpose”. A number of key consultees contributed to the development of the strategy and a full list of key consultees is attached as Appendix 1.

Benefits of a Playing Pitch Strategy

- 1.8 There are a number of key benefits in undertaking a local assessment and developing a strategy for Oxford City. These can be summarised as¹:
- 1.9 **Corporate and Strategic benefits**, which include:
- Ensuring a **strategic approach** to playing pitch provision. During times of change for local authorities, a playing pitch strategy will provide direction and set priorities for pitch sports. The playing pitch assessment will also form part of the Councils overarching assessment of Open Space (as prescribed as part of the revised Policy Planning Guidance Note 17 – PPG17)
 - Providing **robust evidence** for capital funding. As well as proving the need for developer contributions towards pitches and facilities, a playing pitch strategy can provide evidence of need for a range of capital grants. Current funding examples include the Sport England Lottery Fund, Heritage Lottery Fund (as part of wider park improvements), the Football Foundation and New Opportunities Fund.
 - It will **help to deliver government policies** for social inclusion, environmental protection, community involvement and healthy living
 - It will help to **demonstrate the value of leisure related services** during times of increasing scrutiny and non-statutory services
 - It will help demonstrate **commitment to Best Value**. The assessment methodology has included considerable **consultation** with local sports clubs, schools and stakeholders, **challenges** the current pitch supply arrangements, **compares** some aspects (e.g. Hire fees) of pitch provision with those of neighbouring authorities and as a result can encourage **competitiveness**.
 - It provides **valuable links** to other strategies and local plans and can support and inform such plans e.g. the Community Plan, Local Cultural Strategy, Leisure Strategy, Sport and Recreation Plan.
- 1.10 **Planning related benefits**, which include:
- Providing a basis for establishing new pitch requirements arising from new housing developments

¹ Taken from “Towards a Level Playing Field” (Sport England, CCPR, 2002)

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- It is one of the best “tools” for the protection of pitches threatened by development
- It links closely with work being undertaken on open spaces (through PPG17) to provide an holistic approach to open space improvement and protection

1.11 Operational benefits, which include:

- Improving the local authority's asset management by providing detailed audit information and facility user views. This should result in more efficient use of resources and reduced overheads
- It highlights locations and specific sites where quality can be enhanced

1.12 Sports Development benefits, which include:

- Helping to identify where community use of school pitches is most needed
- Providing better information to residents and other users of sports pitches
- Helping to promote sports development by helping to unlock latent demand through identifying where facilities are lacking and might be suppressing the formation and further development of teams

National Strategic Context

1.13 A review of the national strategic context, within which playing pitches and wider sport and recreation services are provided, is important in justifying current provision and future investment. A full review of the national context is provided in Appendices 2 (National Planning Context) and 3 (Sport Specific Context).

1.14 The provision of playing pitches as part of sport and recreation services can have a positive impact across the social policy agenda helping the local authority to achieve social inclusion, community development, community safety, lifelong learning, healthy living and sustainable development objectives.

1.15 The following contributions can be realised through a strategic plan based on a local assessment. These include:

- **Social Inclusion.** Pitches can relate to community identity, be a focus for local sporting activity, and encourage “collective” effort.
- **Community Involvement** through providing local venues for sports teams who in turn can create or strengthen community identity and enhance the social fabric of an area. Success in local leagues by local teams can also create local pride.
- **Community Safety.** Strong experimental evidence exists to show that sport has a part to play in preventing crime. Indirectly sport can have an impact by providing challenge and adventure, and giving meaning and a sense of purpose to young people's lives. Ensuring that facility provision meets local needs is important in ensuring that sport fulfils its potential.

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- **Lifelong Learning.** Many important social attributes can be learnt through pitch sports. Young people can develop a range of skills and attributes ranging from risk-taking through to social and behavioural skills
- **Healthy living.** The health benefits of participation in sport are well documented. Facility provision is important in ensuring that effective development work can take place
- **Local access and sustainable development.** Centralising several pitches onto a single municipal site has a positive impact on maintenance etc but can have major effects on accessibility. It is important to ensure that local community pitches are available where needed.

Local Strategic Context

- 1.16 Oxford City Council is a one of five districts in Oxfordshire. It is located centrally in the county, about 50 miles north-west of London. Oxford is the main urban centre of Oxfordshire a historic city with a modern service economy as well as a major manufacturing and academic centre. Over 5 million people visit the City per year, primarily to visit the University and bringing in the region of £250 Million to the cities economy. The City has experienced rapid change over the past 30 years moving from a university and manufacturing town to a new role as one of the largest employment centres in the South East.
- 1.17 It is important to ensure that local priorities of the Council and other key stakeholders are considered in assessing the adequacy of current provision and in making recommendations for the future. A brief summary of key strategic plans is provided below.

Oxford Community Partnership

- 1.18 The Oxford Community Partnership has been established with the view to developing a Community Strategy for the Oxford City. The partnership aims are:-
- To provide a bold vision for the future of Oxford, developing its environmental, economic and social life, and contributing to a positive and sustainable future.
 - To improve the quality of life in Oxford, and support the needs and aspirations of our local communities.
 - To encourage closer working between local agencies to deliver responsive services across the City.

Oxford Cultural Strategy

- 1.19 Oxford's Cultural Strategy identifies a history of poor communication with the communities living alongside each other, but not working together successfully the 'Town versus Gown tensions are recognised. As a means of tackling the issues the Cultural Strategy 'Making the Difference' has been developed and has two broad strands

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- To make sure that Oxford and its surroundings remains as culturally rich for decades to come
- To break down barriers which restrict access to this culture for some of Oxford's residents and visitors

1.20 The Cultural strategy is supported by a number of key themes

- **Lifelong Learning**- to improve engagement with, access to and quality of formal and informal education and continuing professional development in Oxford
- **Access and Social Inclusion**- to remove barriers which prevent anyone in Oxford watching and participating in Cultural activities
- **Promotion and Co-ordination**- To improve the co-ordination of Cultural activities and to improve their promotion
- **Heritage**- to protect and enhance the built and natural environments
- **Cultural Venues**- to prioritise and fill gaps in cultural facilities
- **Resources**- To maintain and increase the public and private resources needed to develop Oxford's cultural assets
- **Sustainability**- to reduce the negative environmental impact of cultural activities and to ensure the long term future of cultural organisations
- **Partnership and Collaborative Working**- To achieve more and better partnerships between public, voluntary and commercial cultural organisations
- **Children and Young People** – To invest in the future by improving opportunities for children and young people
- **Celebration** – To develop a stronger sense of civic pride through more celebration of Oxford's talent

Demographics

1.21 Oxford City is 4560 Hectares in size. The 2001 census data identifies a population of 134,248 for Oxford City; the population density is 29.44 persons per Hectare. The population figures are taken from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) although concern has been raised over the accuracy of the population figures within the City Council as it is believed that one ward has been excluded from the figures. For the purpose of this study the ONS figures have been used.

Population Profile

1.22 The Office of National Statistics (ONS) profile of the Oxford City population shows that the distribution across key age groups mainly matches that of the national average. It is important to consider key differences in profile as some age groups have a higher propensity to participate than others (particularly young people). Key differences within Oxford City are:

- A much higher percentage of 16-19, 20-24 and 25-29 year olds. The City has the highest number of economically active students and the second highest number of economically inactive students in England and Wales.
- A lower than average population of people 0-4, 5-7, 8-9 10-14 and 45-59 years.

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- 87% of the population are white, the next largest ethnic group is Asian or Asian British and comprises 4.8% of the total population. 3% of the population are of Chinese origins and the remaining groups are Afro Caribbean, African or other Black or mixed origin.

Population Growth

- 1.23 Predicting population growth, and subsequent future facility needs has been undertaken using data available from the Office of National Statistics (ONS). In 2001 the City had a population of 134, 248, this is expected to increase to 142,364 in 2003 and then drop slightly to 139,299 in 2011.
- 1.24 The age structure for the City is different from regional and national patterns in that it has a much higher population of 19-29 year olds who are mostly the student population within the City.
- 1.25 With the government's plans to increase the number of university students it is anticipated that there will be a sharp increase in the number of 18-25 year olds, residing in the city. This fits in with the Local Plan estimates of an increase of 4,820 extra students.
- 1.26 The South East Plan, produced by the South East England Regional Agency is set to comply with the government's wish that thousands of new homes are built in the areas. This would likely mean that there would be sections of new housing in the area which would have a knock on effect by increasing the population in the City.
- 1.27 The City also has a higher than regional or national average population from Black and Minority Communities making up 12.9% of the population compared to 8.7% in England and Wales. The City now has the third highest population of black and minority ethnic groups in the South East after Slough and Reading. The largest sub group is the South Asian Community who constitute 4.82% of the population.

Households

- 1.28 The City has marked household population differences compared to regional and national averages for example a higher number of single person households, lower number of family households and higher all student households.
- 1.29 **Headington** and **Wolvercote** wards have high number of pensioner households. **Northfield Brook** has high numbers of households with families, especially lone parents. **St Clements** and **St Marys** have the largest numbers of all student households
- 1.30 The City has a much higher proportion of people living in the rented sector and a lower number of owner occupiers than the national and regional average. There is nearly double the national average of people renting in the private sector. In addition there are a relatively high number of shared households, including houses in multiple occupations. These are mainly located in the more central wards and those

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to the east of the City centre, where the majority of the private rented stock is located.

- 1.31 The majority of Council and social housing tenants are located on the larger peripheral estates namely **Blackbird Leys, Barton and Rose Hill**.
- 1.32 Approximately 16% of the population of Oxford live in Council owned accommodation, the National average for England and Wales is 13.2%. **Blackbird Leys** has 42% of the total Council tenants living on the estate.
- 1.33 **Blackbird Leys** falls within the worst 10% in England in terms of multiple deprivation according to the 2000 Index of Deprivation.
- 1.34 Oxford City has the highest number of properties with no bath, shower or toilet in the South- East (0.61%) whilst the national average for England and Wales is (0.16%).
- 1.35 As of March 2003 average house prices for the City were £200k with detached properties averaging £420k, terraced properties £175k and flat prices averaging £158k whilst the annual average wage is £27.5k.

Deprivation Index

- 1.36 Data from the 2000 Index of Local Deprivation shows that the City is especially deprived in terms of housing. The Index shows that there are 14 City wards in the worst twenty five percent in England and 7 in the worst ten percent.

Economy

- 1.37 The City is generally prosperous however there are pockets of poverty especially in the east and south east of the City. Annual earnings in the City are on average similar to the County figures; however they are less than the regional average.
- 1.38 Blackbird Leys average income is below the regional average, whilst the higher incomes are concentrated in the central, west and north of the City.
- 1.39 There is generally a low unemployment rate for the City (1.9%, June 2003 is above the regional but below the national average). However parts of the City, notably those in the South and East, show above average levels at 4%, the differences in the two areas illustrate diverging levels of employment and unemployment in the City.
- 1.40 Approximately 23% of the population are registered as students, but this is expected to grow.
- 1.41 20.7% of the population are recorded as being inactive; this is primarily due to the large numbers of students within the City Population. The national average is 4.7% for England and Wales.

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Education

- 1.42 The City has higher qualification levels than the national average, but this varies greatly across the City e.g. in Blackbird Leys 8% of the people are educated to degree level, whereas in St Margaret's the figure is 61%. In Blackbird Leys over 45% of the people have no qualifications at all.
- 1.43 The highest proportion of people in the South East with a first degree as their highest qualification, live in Oxford City.
- 1.44 The University of Oxford is a major landowner in the City comprising of 39 colleges, 6 private halls and a student population of 16,500 in residence.

Car Ownership

- 1.45 Car ownership statistics must also be considered as this could affect ability to travel to facilities.
- 1.46 Car ownership varies between wards; with the exception of Cowley Marsh most wards with high numbers of households with no cars are in the central wards closest to the City Centre. Carfax (59.37%) and Holywell (54.09%) have the highest non-car ownership levels; they are also areas with the lowest household levels. The wards Jericho & Osney (42.04%), St Mary's (41.8%) and Blackbird Leys (40.98%) also have relatively high percentages of people with no vehicle.
- 1.47 Travel patterns to work vary across the wards:
- St Margaret's ward has the highest % of people who work from home (14.9%)
 - Blackbird Leys has the highest % of people who use the bus
 - Northfield Brook has the highest % of people who drive
 - Holywell has the highest % of the population who walk
- 1.48 From the above analysis, **the key demographic factors which need to be acknowledged in future planning for outdoor sports facility provision in the City are:**
- the high % of residents aged between 16 and 29, which is the age group with the highest propensity to participate in active sport and recreation
 - the high % of ethnic minority residents in the City, who have specific cultural needs in relation to sports provision
 - the few, but specific areas of deprivation in the City, where issues such as poor housing, low household income (and therefore less disposable income), and poorer health will be perceived as more of a priority than participation in sport and physical activity
 - the variance in the level of car ownership across the City, and specifically the reliance on public transport in the more deprived areas of Oxford

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1.49 From the above analysis, **the key demographic factors which need to be acknowledged in future planning for outdoor community sport facility provision in the City are:**

- A lower than average population in the 4-14 and 45-59 age groups
- the high % of ethnic minority residents in the City, who have specific cultural needs in relation to social and community centre provision
- the few, but specific areas of deprivation in the City, where the provision of a community facility can be crucial for facilitating access to advice and support eg benefits, housing , and for promoting social interaction
- the variance in the level of car ownership across the City, and specifically the reliance on public transport in the more deprived areas of Oxford

Talkback Initiative

1.50 The `Talkback programme is a partnership initiative undertaken by Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council, Oxfordshire Health and the Oxford area of Thames Valley Police as a systematic means of listening to the views of Oxford residents on matters of local concern. One of the key surveys to be undertaken as part of the `Talkback` programme is Leisure and Youth Issues and the key findings to be identified by the people of Oxford who participated are outlined below

Leisure Time Activities

- The survey shows informal leisure and recreation are the most popular uses of people's spare time. Activities such as socialising with friends, walking, reading and visiting parks or the countryside.
- Participation rates in Leisure activities are linked to social class
- The main factors influencing people's choice in terms of leisure activities are the need for relaxation, to meet friends and to socialise.
- Only 6% of tenants believe that parks are safe
- Most of the people surveyed obtain most of the information regarding leisure activities in Oxford from the newspaper, a general view is that more information is needed, whilst it was also stated that whilst there is plenty of information available it is not always clear on how to access the information
- The respondents of the survey identified that public spending on leisure centres was the highest of their priorities and that the majority would welcome the development of a bowling alley
- 38% of the people surveyed would like to see commercial leisure developments in the City Centre.
- Sporting activities should be available to as wide a range of people as possible
- Most people recognise the link between their leisure activities and good health
- Outdoor activities are the favoured healthy option
- The main obstacle to participation in leisure activities outside the home is time, cost, caring responsibilities and transport
- Only 28% of the people taking part in the survey participate in sport and the same proportion reported that they visit museums or historical sites

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Local Planning Policy

1.51 The Second Draft Oxford Local Plan (SDOLP) 2001-2016, deposited February 2003 sets out relevant planning policies in respect of playing pitches and indoor sports facilities. *(Reference paragraph 11.1.3)*

1.52 The City Council's planning policy towards recreation is based on three principles: -

- Seeking to protect existing facilities, as very little land is available for replacement facilities;
- Wherever possible seeking to provide, or encourage others to create, new recreational facilities;
- Improving access to such facilities, in terms of geography, and in terms of social inclusion, disability and income.

(Reference paragraph 11.2.3)

1.53 The City Council has identified that Oxford possesses many playing fields and other areas for open-air sports, such as tennis courts and football pitches. These are recognised to be an important recreational resource, which therefore require protection and enhancement. The City Council's assessment indicates that in terms of the National Playing Field Association's (NPFAs) Standards there is a shortfall in the overall area of playing fields accessible to the general public. This is mainly due to many outdoor sports areas being owned by Colleges, or private schools, which are not necessarily available for public use.

1.54 The City Council will resist any overall loss in outdoor sports provision in Oxford, as it considers that most outdoor sports areas are also of significance in terms of their amenity value and contribution to green space in the urban environment. Exceptions to the normal policy of safeguarding these areas will be considered only where alternative provision can be made of equivalent, or improved, community benefit in terms of size, utility and access and if the loss of the site would not lead to a shortage of recreation and amenity space in the local area. In suitable circumstances, the alternative provision could be in the form of significant improvements to existing outdoor facilities, such as the provision of changing facilities, improved drainage or an all-weather surface, which would enable it to be more intensively used as an all-weather facility.

(Reference paragraph 11.2.7)

1.55 Policy SR2 seeks to protect open-air sports facilities. It states that planning permission would not be granted for development that would result in the loss of these facilities where there is a need for the facility to be retained in its current location and where the open area provides a green space for local residents. The policy also aims to protect school playing fields. Where this is not the case, planning permission will only be granted where: -

- There is a need for the development
- There are no alternative non-greenfield sites; and

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- The facility can be replaced by either:
 - Providing an equivalent or improved replacement facility; or
 - Upgrading an existing facility.
- 1.56 The City Council accepts that it is important to provide new facilities where there are gaps in existing provision, and to seek to enhance existing facilities where there is the opportunity to do so. Proposals for new sports facilities will be supported providing they are consistent with other environmental policies contained in the plan.
- 1.57 Section 14.0 Development Sites, contained within the SDOLP, gives details of three sites proposed for new sporting facilities in Oxford. These are: -
- Bayswater School, Barton – an indoor swimming pool; planning consent has been granted subject to a S106 agreement
 - Oxford University Sports Centre, Iffley Road – a new indoor sports facility; planning consent has been granted and it is under construction; and
 - Oxford Road, Horspath – a Centre of Excellence for cricket and rugby – planning consent has been approved in principle subject to S106 agreements.
- 1.58 Under Policy SR.3 the City Council will seek to ensure that measures are implemented to ensure that new sports facilities are realistically accessible by walking, cycling or public transport.
- 1.59 The City Council will seek public access to private and institutional facilities through sharing schemes and joint user agreements, in accordance with Policy SR.3.
- 1.60 Most developments in Oxford are on reasonably small sites on which it is not normally realistic to expect the provision of sports facilities. However, the demand on existing facilities is unlikely to increase as a result of the development, and in such circumstances contributions will be sought, through S106 agreements towards improving local facilities, in accordance with Policy HS.29.
- 1.61 There is an opportunity to create new outdoor facilities on an area of former allotments on the Abingdon Road. Significant built or hard-surfaced areas are not considered appropriate on this site, as it occupies a prominent position in the green wedge adjacent to Abingdon Road. (Policy SR.4).

Housing Development Guidelines

- 1.62 On new residential developments involving 20 or more dwellings and/or occupying more than 0.4 ha, the City Council will require a minimum of 10% of the site area to be used to provide public open space. Unless it is considered that the recreational needs of the development would be better served by taking a contribution towards improving existing local facilities. Such contributions will also be required on smaller sites.
- 1.63 The nature of open space provision will differ depending upon the size of development, the type of dwellings involved, the character of the area, and what public open space is already provided in the locality.

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- 1.64 Policy HS.29 states that the City Council will require residential development involving 20 or more dwellings, or occupying more than 0.4 ha, to provide a minimum of 10% of the site area as suitable open space where: -
- There is a shortage of public open space in the vicinity; or
 - The development would create a significant additional need for public open space; or
 - The site contains a feature of recreational, ecological, visual or historic interest which it is desirable to conserve; or
 - The site adjoins a site that contains a feature of recreational, ecological, visual or historic interest and provides an opportunity to enhance it further.
- 1.65 The City Council will also seek contributions from developers towards the improvement of local sports facilities when the need arising from the development justifies it. When necessary, these will be secured by a planning obligation.

Public Open Space

- 1.66 The most popular areas for informal recreation are Oxford's parks, nature parks and common land. Each one has a unique character and offers a particular experience that cannot be enjoyed anywhere else. The City Council aims to protect the areas that are used for such purposes. Policy SR5 states that planning permission will not be granted for development that would result in the loss of public open space including parks, common land, nature parks and historic cemeteries.
- 1.67 To the southeast of Cutteslowe Park there is an area of disused allotments and a low lying agricultural field fronting the River Cherwell. The City Council considers that this could be used as an extension to the park. As much of this land is susceptible to flooding, it is considered that the most suitable use would be to create new wildlife habitats while providing public access. Policy SR.6 states that planning permission will be granted for the extension of Cutteslowe Park to create an area of informal public open space. From discussions with the City Council, it is understood that planning permission has been granted, but the current agricultural leases have yet to be terminated.
- 1.68 The City Council believes that it is important to provide open space as part of large-scale business developments. Policy SR.7 states 'on large scale business, commercial and institutional developments the City Council will expect suitable public open space to be provided to serve the recreational needs of employees, customers and hospital patients/visitors where: -
- a. there is a shortage of public open space in the vicinity; or
 - b. the development would create a significant additional need for public open space.
- 1.69 Where appropriate, as part of major new commercial development, the City Council will seek contributions for the provision, or enhancement, of public squares which

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will be secured by planning obligations. Developers will be asked to secure adequate maintenance of new areas of public open space where appropriate.

Car Ownership

- 1.70 Car ownership statistics must also be considered as this could affect ability to travel to facilities. For example, the majority of league hockey is now played on Synthetic Turf Pitches. These facilities are not as prominent or as local as grass pitches, which increases the reliance on public and private transport.
- 1.71 Car ownership varies between wards; with the exception of Cowley Marsh most wards with high numbers of households with no cars are in the central wards closest to the City Centre. Carfax (59.37%) and Holywell (54.09%) have the highest non car ownership levels; they are also areas with the lowest household levels. The wards Jericho & Osney (42.04%), St Mary's (41.8%) and Blackbird Leys (40.98%) also have relatively high percentages of people with no vehicle.
- 1.72 Travel patterns to work vary across the wards
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 - Holywell has the highest % of the population who walk

Ethnic Groups

- 1.73 In relation to the needs of minority ethnic communities for sports pitches, there have not been any significant issues raised from the consultation undertaken. In general, there will however, be an increasing need to ensure that all pitches are accessible and provide private changing facilities (particularly for eg Asian women). Critically, it is the programming of activities which is important for many minority ethnic groups; to ensure that pitch provision fits within their other cultural needs eg commitments in terms of religious observance.

SECTION II – OXFORD CITY COUNCIL ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Assessment Methodology

- 2.1 The Sport England and CCPR methodology for assessing playing pitches (contained within “Toward a Level Playing Field”) does not provide specific standards for pitch provision that can be universally applied. Its focus is on providing the means for deriving **local** standards, using **local** information, and developing policy to meet **local** circumstances.

How the Methodology works

- 2.2 The overall aim of the assessment methodology is to determine the number of pitches required for each specific sport (**Football, Cricket, Rugby Union & Hockey**) to meet demand or a predicted set of circumstances, for e.g. future population projections.
- 2.3 Ascertaining accurate supply and demand information is critical in producing a robust, accurate strategy, which is ‘owned’ by all stakeholders. The Electronic Toolkit Assessment is attached as Appendix 4.
- 2.4 The Sport England methodology for assessing local playing pitch provision comprises of an eight stage approach, as summarised overleaf in Figure 2.1. This methodology is designed for use in football, rugby, cricket and hockey. The methodology *“does not include provision for athletics, tennis and bowls, and is therefore concerned with a more limited range of provision than that embraced by the Outdoor Playing Space Standard of the National Playing Fields Association”*.

SECTION II – OXFORD CITY COUNCIL ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Figure 2.1 – Assessment Methodology for Football, Rugby, Hockey and Cricket

Stage	Description and Key Output
Stage 1	<p>Identification of the number of teams</p> <p>The team is the most basic unit of demand. Demand is established through a count of the number of teams for each sport using a variety of information sources, including pitch booking records, league handbooks, and a club survey. Latent demand and the impact of future population projections should also be considered. In this study the future levels of demand have been assessed, together with current latent demand through analysis of the questionnaire information returned.</p>
Stage 2	<p>Calculating home games per team per week</p> <p>This figure can be derived from survey data or assumptions can be made. In a 'normal' situation for winter sports, the number of home games is calculated as 0.5 of the total number of teams, representing weekly 'home' and 'away' fixtures. For cricket, and the more senior levels of other sports, it is likely to be higher than 0.5 due to the tendency for teams to play more than once per week</p>
Stage 3	<p>Assessing Total Number of Home Games per week</p> <p>This variable is the product of Stages 1 and 2, and is therefore not independent. The resultant figure will indicate how many games have to be accommodated in the study area in the average week</p>
Stage 4	<p>Establishing Temporal Demand for Games</p> <p>This stage assesses the proportion of total home games played on each day. The data from this stage is expressed as a percentage of total weekly demand. This Stage will determine what percentage of all games are played on a Saturday for example</p>
Stage 5	<p>Defining pitches used / required on each day</p> <p>This variable is the product of Stages 3 and 4, and is not therefore independent. The resultant figure will indicate the pitches used/required on each day and time e.g. Saturday p.m.</p>
Stage 6	<p>Establishing Pitches available</p> <p>An accurate assessment of supply is produced which distinguishes between pitches for each sport and between ownership (public, private, voluntary and educational sites). In modelling the existing situation, only pitches currently available for the appropriate days/times will be relevant.</p>
Stage 7	<p>Assessing the Findings</p> <p>The requirements to accommodate demand assessed at Stage 5 are then compared with the facilities as available at Stage 6. If the existing situation has been accurately modelled there should be either a good numerical fit between requirements and facilities available, or even 'surplus' provision on some days.</p>
Stage 8	<p>Identifying policy options and solutions</p> <p>A range of policy options can be developed, such as new provision or pitch improvements, to help the problems identified at Stage 7. The method can then be used to further assess the impact of policy options, and contribute to the selection of the most cost-effective solution.</p>

Adapted from *Toward a Level Playing Field* – Sport England and CCPR (Page 11)

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Assessment of Supply

2.5 The current supply of pitches was established through undertaking a series of data review, research and consultation exercises. These consisted of:

- Review of information held by Oxford City Council
- Audit of pitches owned and managed by Oxford City Council, and other providers at local level with identified community use
- Consultation with key stakeholders (e.g. Governing Bodies of Sport)
- A postal survey of all schools within the authority
- A postal survey to all identified Sports Clubs as agreed with Oxford City Council
- Consultation with neighbouring authorities

Assessment of Demand

2.6 The current demand for pitches was established through undertaking a series of research and consultation exercises. These consisted of:

- An initial sports club questionnaire sent to identified clubs within the authority area (and a number located just outside of the boundary) Overall 197 questionnaires were sent out with a return of 62 (31%)
- Additional telephone consultation with key sports clubs
- Booking information from pitch sites within the authority area
- Analysis of local League handbooks
- Consultation with governing bodies of sport

Structure for the Strategy

2.7 The supply and demand assessment has been undertaken on the basis of a City wide assessment

2.8 Recommendations and the identification of priorities have been developed for the City Council Area. It is important to retain a City-wide perspective, and as a result some areas of the City have greater needs for development and investment than others.

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Data Collection Issues

2.9 Establishing precisely how many pitches and teams there are within the study area is difficult for a number of reasons (in addition to those stated above), including:

- The number of pitches at a given site can fluctuate over short periods of time for reasons relating to management and husbandry. This means that the findings of a count conducted in one season may differ from results of similar exercise conducted previously or in future seasons. A specific example might relate to a sports and social club opting to supply a specific type of pitch because it yields a greater income potential, e.g. football rather than rugby or cricket.
- Although the inspection programme will help to provide a consistent comparison across the City, it may be difficult to compare quality against other authorities if inspections have been undertaken at different times.
- Mini football matches often make use of portable goals. This can make pitches difficult to identify through a site visit.
- Due to the timescale of the study, consultation was difficult to undertake, specifically because:
 - For teams using Sports pitches only a 31% response rate was received to the questionnaire consultation survey, this was despite a follow up call to clubs in all identified sports in an attempt to boost response rates (the initial club response was 12%).

2.10 For the reasons stated previously the assessment of playing pitch supply and demand within the study area can only be considered to be a “snapshot” in time. There is a need to ensure that the data used within the assessment is updated at appropriate intervals. (Area Assessments are attached as Appendix 5).

Data Analysis

2.11 A key component of the analysis of data was an examination of the extent to which pitches identified were in “secured public use”. This was undertaken in the context of the Sport England definition of community use, and broadly embraces:

- All local authority pitches (Oxford City Council)
- Educational facilities where they are subject to formal dual use / community use agreements / formal hire arrangements with local teams. These pitches include facilities at the University where they are available for hire by local teams. This was assessed through a specific questionnaire sent to the Colleges and Universities.
- Any other institutional facilities which are available to the public as a result of formal dual / community use agreements.

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- Any facilities owned, used or maintained by clubs / private individuals, which as a matter of policy or practice are available by large sections of the public through membership of a club or admission fees. It is important to consider the “cost of use” of this category of pitch as it must be reasonable and affordable for the majority of the community within the local catchment area. Clubs were asked to state how much they pay to hire facilities and to comment on issues relating to hire charges. Unfortunately this question received a very low response rate, therefore accurate analysis can not be carried out. A comparison has also been undertaken of hire charges in neighbouring authorities.
- Only formal playing pitches that are marked out and in use for the relevant pitch sports have been included in the audit of facilities.

2.12 It is important to note the difference in outputs from assessment using the Sport England methodology, and assessment based on the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) standards. The two methods provide useful outputs, which must both be considered when developing appropriate recommendations. Fundamentally the key differences are:

- The Sport England methodology is based on identifiable requirements of individual teams converted into an assessment of “peak-demand” for pitches
- The NPFA is a more simple calculation using an accepted ratio of space required per capita

2.13 The application of these different methods can produce contrasting conclusions about the adequacy of sports pitches. Most notably it is possible to have a surplus of playing pitches against known demand (numbers of teams) but record a “deficiency” against the NPFA recommended standards of provision, or vice versa.

2.14 Team Generation Rates (TGR’s) have also been considered in the assessment of future needs for playing pitch provision. A TGR is the ratio of the number of teams within a given area to the total population within a given age group from that same area. The groupings which have been used reflect age groups participating in the different sub-groups of each of the assessed sports (e.g. 6-9 year olds for Mini Soccer).

2.15 Identifying TGR’s provides the means to:

- Compare participation in the assessed sports between the study area and other parts of the country where TGR’s have formed part of Playing Pitch Strategy developments.
- Assist in modelling future demand for pitches.

2.16 The use of TGR’s needs to be cautious. It is important to make use of them as a guide only and not at the expense of using qualitative evidence gathered as part of the study. Essentially, TGR’s reflect the current situation and are based on current demand information. They may not include potential / latent demand where teams

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may for example not be able to develop due to lack of a suitable facility. Team Generation Rates are attached as Appendix 6.

Inclusions, Exclusions and Exceptions – Sport on a Local Level

- 2.17 The Assessment Methodology requires an assessment of the facilities' and teams' suitability to be included within the methodology. Specific teams and facilities must be excluded from the methodology in order to establish the local supply and demand for community accessible facilities. In this study, the Sport England Methodology includes key clubs within local communities, which contribute to the development of sporting opportunities for local people. These community clubs are often the key clubs within the local area and have open membership policies and sports development opportunities where otherwise they may not exist, despite them owning their own grounds, and having exclusive team use of the pitches thereon. These local factors must be taken into account when establishing the quantitative analysis of playing provision within the area.
- 2.18 The **facilities not** covered by assessment can be identified as follows:
- Industrial facilities which are reserved for the team associated with the site
 - Educational establishment facilities, which have no formal community use agreement and are not available for hire by the public.
 - Professional or semi-professional stadia / pitches, which are reserved by a specific team for elite use only.
 - All other sports pitches which are not available for public use e.g. Prison Service, Military
- 2.19 The **facilities that are** included in the assessment can be identified as follows:
- Local Authority owned facilities, which have established community access arrangements. Educational establishment facilities which have formal community use agreement and are available for hire by the public
 - Voluntary and private facilities which are available to the public to hire
 - Private clubs who own their own grounds, but who have open membership
 - Teams which play on the above facilities
- 2.20 It is more difficult to apply strict criteria to the assessment of demand. Many teams and sports clubs are comprised of members that live in neighbouring areas or settlements so it is not always easy to identify "where" a team comes from. People do not live their daily lives within the confines of area committee and council boundaries. Inevitably there are some "grey areas" relating to some clubs and whether they should be included within the assessment or not. It is important that the assessment reflects the way sport operates on a local level. As a result, the following assumptions have been made within the assessment:

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Football

- Only teams originating from the City have been included. Some clubs originate from communities that “cross over” the boundary of Oxford City Council and adjoining neighbouring authorities. An assumption has been made that these clubs draw some or all of their membership from the Oxford City Council area and therefore are included.
- Clubs that clearly originate from Oxford but may own/manage/lease facilities that are just outside of the City have been included.
- With regard to determining where within the City teams originate, the following criteria have been applied:
 - Name of club / team (is this a clear indication of the settlement/ward/area that the team is from (e.g. Barton United).
 - Headquarters of the club / team (as defined by League Handbook). If this is not obvious;
 - The location of the pitch (or main pitch site) that is used by the majority of teams. If this is not obvious, then a judgement has been based on;
 - Assumptions as to the catchment area of specific leagues likely to draw teams mainly from certain parts of the City. Finally, if none of the above information was available (rare cases);
 - The address of the team secretary has been used to “place” the club/team into an appropriate area.

Cricket

- A number of cricket teams only participate in informal friendly games and operate with no home ground, booking pitches from providers on an adhoc basis eg ‘Far from the Madding Crowd C.C play at Pembroke College, Horspath, Cutteslowe and Cowley Marsh.
- Where these clubs have been included, if the facilities are owned/managed by the club these have also been included within the assessment.
- The assessment on a local level (by Area Committee areas) has included Cricket Clubs and facilities through “placing” them into the area committee area that they predominantly serve.

Rugby Union

- Only clubs operating within the City have been included within the assessment.

Hockey

- Only Hockey clubs originating from the City have been included within the assessment. All Clubs have been “placed” in an area on the basis of their club name or home venue.

The National Playing Fields Association Assessment (NPFA)

Facilities Included in the Assessment

- 2.21 An assessment of the current levels of provision of pitch sports has also been undertaken against the National Playing Fields Association minimum standard of

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provision. The recommended minimum levels of provision for the four key pitch sports of football, cricket, rugby and hockey is 1.2 hectares per 1,000 of the population. This recommended level of provision is within a recommended allocation of 1.6 hectares per 1,000 population, for all outdoor sports facilities.

2.22 The following types of provision have been included in this assessment:

- Pitch facilities (for the 4 key pitch sports of Football, Rugby, Hockey and Cricket only) in the ownership of local government, at all tiers.
- Facilities as described above within the education sector, which are available for public use by written agreement
- Facilities as described above within the voluntary, private, industrial and commercial sectors that serve the leisure time needs for outdoor sport and recreation of their members and the public
- The guidance stipulates that when examining the provision of playing fields, up to 55% of the playing area should be added to the dimensions of pitches or other facilities, to allow for the seasonal adjustment of pitches, safe play margins and the provision of ancillary facilities such as training areas and pavilions
- Synthetic and non-grass pitches can be included. The NPFA view artificial surfaces as a complementary resource to the provision of other outdoor facilities. For the purposes of assessment the NPFA guidance states that it is reasonable to equate artificial pitches to twice the area of natural turf pitches due to their capacity for more intensive use. Where an artificial facility (synthetic pitch, athletics track, and tennis court) contributes to the overall recorded area of provision, a management plan should be in place, which allows for the replacement of such facilities.
- Sports pitches in parks are included where it is clear that their primary function is the provision of match venues. Designated sports pitches within the District and Neighbourhood Parks and Playing Fields across the local authority have been included within the assessment.

Facilities Excluded from the Assessment

2.23 In line with the NPFA guidance for assessing outdoor sports provision, the following facilities have been excluded from this assessment²:

- Outdoor sports facilities, which are not as a matter of policy and practice available for public use, such as professional or semi professional sports stadia.
- Grounds of Her Majesty's Services, unless as a matter of policy and practice and by formal agreement they are made available for public use
- Verges, woodlands, commons, nature conservation areas, allotments, ornamental gardens and parks (except for clearly defined areas within them)
- Golf facilities

² Taken from the NPFA's Six Acre Standard, pg. 16

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- Sports halls or leisure centres (indoor)
- Commercial entertainment complexes and theme parks
- Car parks for non-recreational use

Assessment of Supply

2.24 The NPFA guidance on the assessment of the supply of outdoor playing space stipulates several ‘criteria’ that need to be met for an outdoor sports facility to be included. All facilities included within the assessment of supply undertaken for Oxford City Council conform to these.

Measurements of Sites Included

2.25 For the purposes of the assessment, the space requirements detailed within the NPFA guidance “The Six Acre Standard” (page 21) have been used in the absence of accurate measurements. On many sites, the pitch facilities to be included fall within a wider facility or open space area, and without detailed and accurate site plans, actual measurements are difficult to obtain. The supply and demand for pitches is attached as Appendix 7.

2.26 The following measurements shown in Figure 2.2 have been used:

Figure 2.2 – Pitch Dimensions (NPFA)

Pitch / Facility Type	NPFA measure	With additional 25% allowance
Senior Football Pitch	0.90 ha	1.13 ha
Junior Football Pitch (smallest dimension of senior pitch)	0.82 ha	1.03 ha
Mini Soccer Pitch	0.35 ha	0.44 ha
Rugby Union Pitch	1.26 ha	1.58 ha
Cricket: 1 square with boundary of 46m	1.50 ha	1.88 ha
Grass Hockey Pitch	0.62 ha	0.78 ha
Full Size STP*	0.90 ha	N/a

Taken from ‘The Six Acre Standard’ p.21. *Assumed to be 0.9 ha to accommodate a full size hockey / full size football pitch. Where there is full community use, 1 full size STP has been counted twice (ie 1.8 ha) in accordance with NPFA guidance.

2.27 These space requirements allow for safety margins and any movement of pitches from season to season. They do not include the additional area required for the run of the ball, which in the case of football could require 55% more space. In cricket a ‘six’ may often travel beyond the boundary by a further 50%. This area is normally taken into account by the careful siting of adjacent pitches, or appropriate arrangements during play to remove the possibility of accidents.

2.28 For the purposes of applying the assessment, actual measurements have been used where available and where the whole site is to be included (i.e. only consists of playing pitches). For other sites, the NPFA space requirements in Figure 1.2 have

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been used and an additional 25% added to allow for run off areas etc in accordance with requirements detailed in 1.21. On the evidence of the site visits undertaken an additional margin of 55% would represent an unrealistic additional margin. An Assessment of provision against the NPFA standards is discussed later in this report and is attached as Appendix 8.

Accessibility for the General Population

- 2.29 To facilitate, and stimulate optimum use of sports pitch and court provision, facilities must be well-located and accessible. A balance needs to exist through the provision of community based facilities and those facilities (such as athletic stadia) which fulfil a district or regional function.

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Audit of Current Supply

Overview

3.1 Playing pitch provision in the Oxford City Council is made through a number of providers. These include:

- Oxford City Council
- Education Sites (Schools, Colleges and Universities)
- Private/Voluntary Sports Clubs (e.g. Oxford United FC)

3.2 Each of the individual providers of playing pitches can be defined in the following way:

- **Oxford City Council:** The main provider of playing pitches within public parks and open spaces within the City. The majority of these pitches are within informal recreational land and are only defined as playing pitches during the time at which they are booked for formal sporting fixtures. The rest of the time these pitches are designated as informal recreational space, and are available for use by any member of the public, including informal sports use, dog walking and formal event bookings such as fayres (e.g. Cutteslowe Park) and community events.
- **Education Sites:** School and Higher and Further Education playing fields are provided primarily for physical education and the enjoyment of young people attending school and College/University. These pitches are not always available to the local community to access on a formal and informal basis. The local management of schools has meant that some schools make their facilities available to the local community and others do not. This can result in significant playing pitch resources within local communities not being available for the local community to use.
- **Private/Voluntary Sports Clubs:** These are generally voluntary organisations, which lease or own their own ground and are the focus of that particular sport(s) within the local community. These private/voluntary clubs generally have open access policies and often link with key partners within the local community to offer coaching and development to the local community. Examples include 'Morris Motors'.

Quantity

3.3 The audit of pitches identified that there are **86** playing pitch sites and **210** playing pitches (Football 139, Cricket 25, Rugby Union 23, Grass Hockey 16, full size artificial turf pitch 7) within the Oxford City Council boundary. This pitch supply is made up of the following:

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Figure 3.1 – Playing Pitch Provision in Oxford City Council

Pitch Provider	Number of Sites	Number of Pitches
Oxford City Council	26	63
Education sites –Schools	24	37
Education Sites – Colleges, Universities	24	75
Parish	1	2
Private/Voluntary Sports Clubs	11	33
TOTAL PROVISION IDENTIFIED	86	210

*Education sites only includes formally marked pitch sites

- 3.4 Not all of the above pitches are available for community use. As identified above there are pitches within local schools, which are not available to the local community for formal or informal use. However, the methodology makes the assumption that all local authority pitches and Private/Voluntary Sports Club pitches are available to the local community to access on a formal and informal basis either through a formal hire agreement or through the sports clubs offering sports participation opportunities to the local community.
- 3.5 The following table identifies the number of accessible playing pitch facilities within the city boundary. This table excludes those Semi-Professional Sports Clubs and Educational sites, which do not have community use of their sports pitches.

Figure 3.2 - Playing Pitches with secured community use in Oxford City Council

Pitch Provider	Number of Sites	Number of Pitches
Oxford City Council	26	63
Education sites -Schools	8	16
Education Sites - Colleges	12	34
Parish	2	3
Private/Voluntary Sports Clubs	9	30
TOTAL PROVISION AVAILABLE	57	146

- 3.6 There is significant variance in types of pitch and ownership. Oxford City Council is the main provider of football pitches (54% of all football pitches) but cricket and rugby are predominantly provided via colleges and private/voluntary sports clubs (46% of all cricket and 50% of all Rugby is college provision).

Quality

- 3.7 The quality of playing pitches was also assessed through:
- Site visits and a non-technical turf pitch quality assessment (POA) of all pitches identified as having secured community use (based on a visual inspection)
 - Self ratings by schools of their own facilities
 - Self ratings by the colleges and Universities of their own facilities
 - Ratings by local clubs of the facilities they use

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Non-Technical Visual Assessments

- 3.8 For the non-technical turf quality pitch assessment, the scoring matrix devised as part of the Sport England Electronic Toolkit for undertaking pitch assessments was used. A copy of the site inspection proforma used, and completed assessments for each site visited are contained within the appendices to this report (Appendix 9). This will enable the results of the assessments within the Oxford City Council to be compared with other inspection results in other areas. The key criteria areas assessed comprised:
- Grass Cover
 - Length of Grass
 - Size of pitch (in relation to recommended dimensions)
 - Safety Margins
 - Slope of pitch
 - Evenness of pitch
 - Presence of common problems such as dog fouling and litter
 - Evidence of unofficial use
 - Evidence that the pitch is also used for training
 - Whether the pitch is served by changing accommodation
 - Condition/quality of equipment (e.g. Goalposts)
 - Condition/quality of line markings
 - Whether there are training areas on the site
- 3.9 Site inspections also rated the quality of changing and ancillary facilities for pitch site with community use, based on:
- Overall Quality
 - Evidence of vandalism
 - Whether there are showers
 - Whether there are toilet facilities
 - Whether the pitch site is served by car parking facilities
 - Links to public transport
 - Security
 - Whether there is segregated changing to allow male and female sport to be accommodated on the site at the same time
- 3.10 Site visits were made in the period November – December 2003. The timing of visits meant that in many cases football and rugby pitches were clearly marked and therefore easily identified in most instances.
- 3.11 Inspections were undertaken on a total of **129** pitches on **46** sites encompassing:
- **102** Football Pitches

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- 5 Cricket Pitches
- 14 Rugby Pitches
- 0 Synthetic Turf Pitches
- 8 Grass Hockey pitches were inspected.

3.12 All pitches were rated using the Sport England scoring matrix, which provides a numerical score for each pitch. The maximum score for any one pitch is 100%. The key findings of the non-technical visual inspections showed that:

- **Quality of all pitches** ranged greatly with ratings varying from 42% (“Below average”) through to 93% (“Excellent”). The average rating (mean) 79% Good. However, the quality varies greatly according to ownership, as shown in Figure 2a below

Figure 2a Pitch Quality by Ownership

Ownership	Score Range	Score Average	Number of Pitches
Private	81% - 93%	88%	23
College	76% - 93%	87%	30
LEA	55% - 85%	77%	13
Council	42% - 90%	74%	61
Parish	52% - 57%	55%	2

- **Mini football pitches** rated varied from a score of 42% to 93% with an average (mean) rating of 69% (in the “good” category)
- **Junior football pitches** rated varied from a score of 55% to 91% with an average rating (mean) of 77% (“good”)
- **Senior football pitches** rated varied greatly, with 52% being the lowest score and 93% being the highest. Although the average (mean) was 80% (“good”), this figure is skewed by good quality College pitches. When the local authority pitches are considered in isolation, the average (mean) rating drops to 77%
- **Cricket pitches** rated varied from a score of 72% through to 91%. The average (mean) pitch score was 85% (“Good”). The majority of pitches are in private/voluntary group ownership or management.
- **Rugby Union Pitches** rated varied from a score of 72% through to 93%.The majority of pitches inspected are in private ownership. The average score was 86% “Good”.
- **Grass Hockey pitches.** Are not part of the overall assessment as Hockey is now played on Artificial surfacing, However identified Grass pitch facilities were visited and the range varied from 76% (“Good”) to 93% (“excellent”). Comments made regarding general condition, size, floodlighting and refurbishment needs are made within the Hockey assessment section of this report.

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- 3.13 Appendix 11 contains a table with the complete listing for all assessed sports pitches and their appropriate quality rating, along with recommendations for their improvement.
- 3.14 These ratings provide a comprehensive guide to the varying quality across the City, but need to be treated with caution for the following reasons:
- The inspections were non-technical, based on a visual assessment only
 - The inspections were undertaken in the winter months when pitches are in peak demand and the quality may be suffering through extensive use.
 - The inspections are a snapshot view of provision – scores are recorded based on what is seen on site at one particular visit
 - The presence of changing room facilities also boosts the score for a pitch. Although a significant number of the senior football pitches scored were rated as "Good" this was largely due to the existence of changing rooms, which took the scores for many pitches from an average rating to good.
- 3.15 Ancillary facilities (changing rooms, car parking, toilets, and access to the site) were also rated at all facilities visited. The Sport England scoring matrix was used to score each pitch site out of 100%. The results include:
- The scores for ancillary facilities ranged from **15%** (sites with no changing, toilet or parking facilities, and poor access) through to **100%**. The average score for all sites was **66%** (which equates to a rating of "Good Facilities")
 - 18 different site changing facilities were assessed, 13 of which are on council sites. 4 sites car parks were rated poor and another 4 didn't have either shower or toilet facilities.
 - No ancillary facilities for Cricket or Rugby have been rated. However the presence of changing facilities on a site has been noted on the pitch assessment and the quality rating scored accordingly.
 - Ancillary facilities serving football pitches were rated the worst, with scores ranging from **15%** through to **93%**. The average for all mini pitch ancillary facilities was just **39%**, although it is accepted that for the majority of mini leagues changing room facilities are not a requirement. For junior and senior pitches though, good ancillary facilities are required but facility ratings only averaged **37%** and **71%** respectively. However it should be noted that these ratings are from 1 mini-soccer club and 2 Junior Clubs.

Consultation with Schools - Self-ratings of School Facilities

- 3.16 All 64 schools identified within the City were consulted about their pitch facilities, including a self-rating of the quality of pitches on site. 36 schools provided comments about the quality of their pitches. (11 schools do not have playing fields, 12 schools failed to respond) School and Club comments are attached as Appendix 10 and examples of the Questionnaires used are attached as Appendix 11.
- 3.17 The key findings included:

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- 11% of schools rated their pitches as "poor" or "very poor"
- 14% of schools rated their pitches as "average"
- 11% of schools rated their pitches as "good" or "very good"
- 14% of those schools with community use rated pitches as "poor" or "very poor"
- 6% of schools without community use rated their pitches as "poor" or "very poor"

Consultation with Colleges and Universities

- 3.18 All 49 Colleges and Universities identified within the City Council boundary were consulted about their pitch facilities, including a self-rating of the quality of pitches on site. 36 schools provided comments about the quality of their pitches.

Consultation with Sports Clubs – Ratings of facilities used

- 3.19 A consultation exercise was undertaken with all identified sports pitch clubs within the Oxford City Council boundary. The initial response rate to the survey was poor and was subsequently boosted through telephone surveys undertaken by Strategic Leisure. Unfortunately not all of the club contacts were available to respond to the survey and the final response rate to the club survey was still extremely low:

- 22% of all identified Football Clubs (based on the total returns/clubs contacted as a percentage of those on the mailing list)
- 36% of all identified Cricket Clubs
- 40% of all identified Rugby Union Clubs
- 25% of all identified Hockey Clubs

- 3.20 Clubs were asked to rate and comment on the quality of the facilities they use and to identify issues with facilities that have a negative impact on their club.

- 3.21 The key findings of this survey showed that:

- 24 % of respondents rated pitches as "very good"
- 30 % rated pitches "good"
- 29% rated pitches as "average"
- 13% rated pitches as "poor"
- 0% rated pitches as "very poor"

- 3.22 The results from responses given show that the majority of clubs see current pitch quality as being 'Average – Good'.

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Audit of Current Demand

- 3.23 The following numbers of clubs and teams have been identified as playing regular fixtures throughout the relevant season

Figure 3.3 – Numbers of Clubs & Teams

Sport	Number of clubs	Number of teams
Football	75	143
Cricket	7	29
Rugby Union	6	17
Hockey	4	43
Total	92	232

City Wide Assessment – Key Findings

- 3.24 The findings of the assessment of playing pitch provision undertaken are considered on a sport-by-sport basis, in relation to Football, Cricket, Rugby Union and Hockey. No Rugby League teams were identified. For other key sports e.g. Gaelic Football, American Football only one team was identified and they failed to return the questionnaire survey or return phone calls.

Football Assessment: City Wide Results

- 3.25 **Numbers of teams.** The study research has identified 75 football clubs generating 143 teams. The number of teams generated by each club varies significantly, from single team clubs to those with in excess of eight teams. These teams are detailed by the number within each identified “type” of team in Figure 3.4 below.

Figure 3.4 – Football Teams in the Oxford City Council area

Team Type	Number of teams
Mini Soccer (Under 7 – Under 10)	25
Junior Football - Boys (Under 11 – Under 16)	42
Junior Football – Girls (Under 11 – Under 16)	2
Senior Football – Men’s (Over 16)	69
Senior Football – Women’s (Over 16)	5
TOTAL NUMBER OF TEAMS	143

- 3.26 **Number of pitches.** The study research has identified 106 football pitches with secured public use, which are included in the assessment calculation.

Figure 3.5 – Pitches with secured public use in the Oxford City Council area

Pitch Type	Number of pitches
Mini Soccer Pitch	22
Junior Football Pitch	19
Senior Football Pitch	65
TOTAL NUMBER OF PITCHES IN SECURED PUBLIC USE	106

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Key Assessment Findings

- 3.27 The assessment of Football City wide has revealed a number of key findings relating to supply and demand. These are reported below.
- 3.28 **Pitch Ownership** – The audit has identified that Oxford City Council is the main provider of football pitches (54% of all football pitches). Other pitches are provided via Colleges 12%, LEA 11% Parish 3%, Private 20%.
- 3.29 **Pitches with no community use** – The audit has identified 34 pitches (8 mini, 10 junior and 16 senior) that do not have secured community use. The majority of these are on school sites (76%).
- 3.30 **Temporal Demand for Games.** The assessment reveals that there are approximately 70 matches per week. Most games are played on a Sunday (74% of all games). Demand for pitches for mini games is evenly split between Saturday (48%) and Sunday (52%). The majority of teams play in the Oxford Mail Boys League. Most Junior Football (95%) and Senior Football (69%) is played on Sundays.
- 3.31 **Mini Football** - The quantitative assessment has revealed that there is a surplus of 16 mini soccer pitches to meet peak demand. (Sunday)
- 3.32 **Junior Football** – The quantitative assessment has revealed that there is a deficiency of -1 junior football pitch provision to meet peak demand. There are a surplus number of pitches to meet demand at other times (18 Saturday).
- 3.33 **Senior Football** – The quantitative assessment has revealed that there is a surplus of 41 senior pitches to meet peak demand in senior football on Sunday and 55 pitches surplus against demand on Saturday
- 3.34 **Latent Demand** – The sports club questionnaire asked for clubs to raise issues about unmet demand. Although there is no clear indication of the number of potential teams who would play if there were more facilities, a number of clubs and teams currently have to access pitches outside of the City or their local area for their home games. Where identified, these teams have been included within the demand audit of the assessment.
- 3.35 **Future Demand** – Future demand for playing pitches is difficult to ascertain as there are many factors, which can contribute to a change in the demand for playing pitches, including the success of local teams, sports development initiatives and the quality/accessibility of local facilities and nature/scope of local leagues. Team Generation rates (TGR's) can be used as a guide, as can the consultation findings.
- 3.36 **Team Generation rates** are based on the number of teams identified earlier in Figure 3.4

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Figure 3.6 – Team Generation Rates for Football in Oxford City Council

Football Team Type	Age- Group Population	Current Population	Current number of teams	Current Team Generation Rate
Mini-Soccer (U7-U10)	6-9 year olds	5291	25	1:212
Junior Football: Boys	10-15 year olds	4785	42	1:114
Junior Football: Girls	10-15 year olds	4390	2	1:2195
Senior Football: Men	16-45 year olds	36197	69	1:525
Senior Football: Women	16-45 year olds	35664	5	1:7133

Population figures are estimated based on published figures.

Several Key sites that provide for teams from Oxford have not been included in the calculations as they are not within the City Boundaries.

3.37 TGR's for Oxford can be compared with those in the surrounding Boroughs and other areas within the South East where data is available. However that is affected by

- Differing timescales for the completion of other Playing Pitch Assessments in the region
- Additional categories within sports (e.g. Mini Soccer / Mini Rugby) which make it difficult to compare recent TGR's with those published some time ago
- Sport England, as part of the completion of Playing Pitch Assessments across the country, is compiling TGR's for all sports nationally. These will need to be reviewed when they become publicly available.

3.38 **Future population projections** available are based on 2001 population statistics. These indicate that there is likely to be an increase in 2003 followed by a slight decline by 2011 across the City. Figure 3.8 makes some assumptions about population growth and the impact on increasing numbers of teams.

Fig 3.8 – Population Scenarios

Football Team Type	Population	2003 estimate (6.04%)	Number of Additional Teams	2011 estimate (3.76%)	Number of Additional Teams
Mini Soccer	5291	5611	+1	5490	+1
Junior Boys	4785	5074	+3	4965	+2
Junior Girls	4390	4655	+2	4555	+2
Senior Men	36,197	38,383	+4	37,558	+3
Senior Women	35,664	37,818	0	37,005	0

3.39 Based on the population increases above, and on the assumption that current TGR's remain static, there will be some additional demand for additional pitches. A 6.04% increase in population (if subsequent teams generated play at peak time) would require:

- One additional pitch requirement for Mini Soccer

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- Four additional pitches for adult men
- Three additional junior pitches for boys and two for girl's football

3.40 **Consultation** undertaken with football clubs needs to be considered as many identify changes to their membership which will impact on supply and demand for pitches. The key findings revealed that:

- 39 football clubs responded to this question, of which 18 (46%) anticipated an increase in their membership over the next few years
- The remainder of clubs anticipated that their membership would remain stable (28%) or decline (5%) 21% of clubs failed to answer the question relating to future membership
- 37% of the football clubs responding to the survey rated the facilities they use as "average",
- One of the key issues raised by clubs is the quality of pitches in terms of pitch drainage especially on those sites prone to flooding e.g. Cowley Marsh. It should be stated that even though the clubs raised the issue as a concern they did not believe it to be any particular parties fault more the fact that the site is after all part of the floodplain. Comments made by clubs are contained within the appendices to the report. Some issues are covered in more depth in the Key Issues section of this report.

3.41 **Qualitative factors** - Figure 3.9 below identifies a summary of the qualitative assessment. Inspections were undertaken on 69% (72 out of 106) of football pitches identified for community use. The pitches identified were rated as follows:

Figure 3.9 - Summary of Quality and Quantity

Pitch Type	Number of community use pitches rated				
	Excellent	Good	Average	Below Average	Poor
Senior Football Pitch	7	34	3	1	0
Junior Football Pitch	0	7	4	0	0
Mini Soccer	2	8	3	3	0

3.42 **Impact of Quality on Capacity.** It is important to assess the impact of quality of pitches on capacity. If pitches are particularly poor then they may not be able to accommodate the number of games required to meet demand. This could increase any deficiency recorded or reduce surpluses. The results of the quality inspections can be used to show how quality might affect capacity. Figure 3.10 identifies assumptions that could be made on capacity.

Figure 3.10 – Carrying Capacity

Rating of Pitch	Carrying Capacity	Multiplication Factor
Excellent / Good	Three matches per week	1.5
Average	Two matches per week	1.0

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Rating of Pitch	Carrying Capacity	Multiplication Factor
Below average	One match per week	0.5
Poor	One match per fortnight	0.25

3.43 Using the results of the non-technical visual assessments, the following analysis can be used to determine the impact of quality on pitch supply.

Figure 3.11 – Mini Soccer Pitches – Quality and carrying capacity

Rating of Pitch	No. of pitches	Quality Factor	Score / No. of pitches
Excellent / Good	13	1.5	19.5
Average	4	1.0	4
Below average	4	0.5	2
Poor	0	0.25	0
TOTAL PITCHES	21		25.5

Figure 3.12 – Junior Football Pitches – Quality and carrying capacity

Rating of Pitch	No. of pitches	Quality Factor	Score / No. of pitches
Excellent / Good	13	1.5	19.5
Average	4	1.0	4
Below average	0	0.5	-
Poor	0	0.25	-
TOTAL PITCHES	17		23.5

Figure 3.13 – Senior Football Pitches – Quality and carrying capacity

Rating of Pitch	No. of pitches	Quality Factor	Score / No. of pitches
Excellent / Good	53	1.5	79.5
Average	3	1.0	3
Below average	1	0.5	0.5
Poor	0	0.25	-
TOTAL PITCHES	57		83

3.44 **Impact of quality** – The analysis in the above figures identifies that when quality of pitches is taken into account the following findings are apparent:

- The quality rating of pitches across all age ranges increases capacity in theory. However, in practice the majority of pitches rated as “good” had changing rooms which increase the quality score and their usability.
- The quality ratings for all pitch age ranges also impacts positively on the theoretical capacity of provision. When quality is factored into the supply, there is an equivalent of 25.5 mini, 23.5 Junior and 83 Senior pitches available at any one time. It should be noted that not all pitches available for community use have been quality assessed due to conflicting information. An assumption has therefore been made that these figures will ‘increase further’ if all pitches had been surveyed.

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- The audit also revealed that changing facilities on certain sites are a concern due to their poor quality ratings.

3.45 **Summary of key issues for football** - Based on the assessment undertaken the following key issues relate to football supply and demand in Oxford City Council:

- Overall quality of pitches is rated as “Good” with only 4 pitches being rated as “Poor”
- The quality of pitches equates to pitches available being capable, should demand warrant, to facilitate significantly more games
- Peak demand for football is Sunday morning with little demand being placed on pitches Sunday afternoon. The potential to stagger games is therefore an option for the Council should senior football demand increase.
- The assessment shows a surplus of pitches at all times with the exception of junior boys on Sunday when there is a deficit of pitch provision.
- The majority of Junior boys teams are affiliated to the Oxford Mail boys league
- Saturday is peak time for mini soccer
- There are a number of pitches on school sites currently not available for Community use that could be utilised through partnership working to meet potential issues with supply and demand.
- Changing Facilities need to be improved by having separate areas for males females and children to cater for the further development of Junior, Girls and Women’s football.
- A key concern is the lack of Council run floodlit training facilities. The majority of floodlit facilities are mainly provided on schools, college sites. There is an over reliance upon schools and colleges to provide such facilities such as the East Oxford Astroturf where it is believed that the school are now looking to build on the site of the artificial turf pitch.

Cricket Assessment: City Wide Results

3.46 **Numbers of teams.** The study research has identified 7 clubs generating 29 teams. As detailed in Section 2. A number of teams do not participate in league - based cricket and as such only play on a “friendly” basis utilising available grounds. The number of teams generated by each club varies significantly, from single team clubs to those with in excess of 10 teams. These teams are detailed by the number within each identified “type” of team in Figure 3.12 below.

Figure 3.12 – Cricket Teams in the Oxford City Council area

Team Type	Number of teams
Junior Boys Cricket (11-17 year olds)	12
Junior Girls Cricket (11-17 year olds)	1
Senior Men’s Cricket (18-55 year olds)	15
Senior Women’s Cricket (18-55 year olds)	1
TOTAL NUMBER OF CRICKET TEAMS	29

3.47 **Number of pitches.** The study research has identified 11 pitches with secured community use, which are included in the assessment calculation. These pitches all fit within the categories detailed in Section 2.

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Figure 3.13 – Pitches with secured public use in the Oxford City Council area

Pitch Type	Number of Pitches
Cricket Pitch*	11
TOTAL NUMBER OF CRICKET PITCHES	11

*No differentiation has been made between Junior and Senior pitches. Unlike football, pitches are not separate designated pitch areas. Junior fixtures make use of the same pitch (often a smaller area on the pitch) as senior teams. Key sites outside the City Council Boundaries have not been included in the Calculations

Key Assessment Findings

- 3.48 The assessment of cricket City wide has revealed the following:
- 3.49 **Pitch Ownership.** The majority (5 of 11) pitches available for use by local clubs are in College ownership (45%). The other pitches are provided on school sites (1), Council (2) or the private sector (3). It is important to note that the City Council provides additional pitches on sites that have not been included in the calculations as they fall outside the City Council Boundaries and are likely to attract teams from other areas not consulted in this assessment.
- 3.50 **Pitches with No Community Use.** The assessment has identified 6 cricket pitches without community use (all on college sites).
- 3.51 **Temporal Demand for Games.** The assessment reveals that there are approximately 15 games a week during the season. Of these games, the peak demand for cricket is Sunday (9 games 60%) The remainder of demand is spread between Saturday (3 games 20%) and midweek (3 games 20%).
- 3.52 **Surplus / Deficiencies.** Supply and demand analysis shows that there is a surplus of cricket pitches (+2) at peak times on a City wide basis due to the sporadic and adhoc system of playing friendly games.
- 3.53 **Latent Demand.** Clubs were asked to identify issues associated with the ability of facilities to accommodate teams demanding pitches. A number of concerns were raised by clubs related to Cowley Marsh being prone to flooding and the refusal of planning permission to Oxford + Horspath CC to develop a site at Headington releasing capital to fund a proposed development on Horspath Road. There are a number of teams that make use of pitches outside of the City. These teams have been included within the assessment calculation.
- 3.54 **Future demand.** Future demand for playing pitches is difficult to ascertain as there are many factors, which can contribute to a change in the demand for playing pitches, including the success of local teams, sports development initiatives and the quality/accessibility of local facilities and nature/scope of local leagues. 6 clubs (of the 7) responded to the question about anticipated membership changes in the near future of which 4 stated they anticipated an increase, 1 thought membership numbers would remain stable, 1 club anticipated a decrease. The Oxford and Horspath C.C predicted the largest growth of between 50 –75 members, depending on planning permission being granted for their proposed club development plan. Team Generation rates (TGR's) can be also used as a guide.

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- 3.55 **Team Generation rates** are based on the number of teams identified earlier in Figure 3.12. These figures show how many people within the given population are required to generate a team.

Figure 3.14 – Team Generation Rates for Cricket in the Oxford City Council area

Cricket Team Type	Age- Group Population	Current Population	Current number of teams	Current Team Generation Rate
Junior Boys Cricket	11-17 year olds	6277	12	1:523
Junior Girls Cricket	11-17 year olds	6032	1	0
Senior Cricket: Men	18-55 year olds	40582	15	1:2705
Senior Cricket: Women	18-55 year olds	40192	1	0

- 3.56 TGR's for Oxford can be compared with those in the surrounding Boroughs and other areas within the south east where data is available. A comprehensive comparison has not been possible as part of this study due to:

- Differing timescales for the completion of other Playing Pitch Assessments in the region
- Additional categories within sports (e.g Kwik Cricket) which make it difficult to compare recent TGR's with those published some time ago A comprehensive comparison could be undertaken with the other unitary authorities at a later date.
- Sport England, as part of the completion of Playing Pitch Assessment across the country, is compiling TGR's for all sports nationally.

Cricket Team Type	Population	2003 estimate (6.04%)	Number of Additional Teams	2011 estimate (3.76%)	Number of Additional teams
Junior Boys	6277	6,656	+1	6,513	0
Junior Girls	6032	6,396	0	6,259	0
Senior Men	40582	43,033	+1	42,108	+1
Senior Women	40192	42,620	0	41,703	0
total	93084		0		1

- 3.57 The population increases above, taken from the population estimates for those years and the assumption that current TGR's remain static, there will be limited additional demand for additional pitches. For the 2003 population estimate a 6.04% increase in population would require 1 additional pitch to meet demand. A 3.76% increase (for the 2011 population estimate) would require 1 additional wicket to be provided (and on the basis of additional teams playing at peak time). However as a number of teams only play friendly games, and do not participate in leagues, it is difficult to determine total demand.

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3.58 **Consultation** undertaken with cricket clubs and Regional Body needs to be considered. The findings revealed that:

- A number of clubs only play friendly games and will play on any available wicket as required
- The English County Cricket Board (E.C.B), have developed a County wide strategy which identifies Under13,15,17's as most important areas for the sports development.
- The E.C.B is supported by the City Council through the provision of Office Accommodation.
- The lack of sports development staff within the Council is seen as a key concern in the development of Cricket and participation within local communities.
- £9.4 Million worth of funding is available for Community Cricket Club development and none is going in to Oxford Clubs.
- The proposed development of Horspath Road would help develop the sport in Oxford.
- Clubs believe the Council Booking system has improved in 2003
- Cowley Marsh pitch is viewed as poor, due to unevenness and flooding.
- The E.C.B support the view that the clubs are in need of a quality training facility that is accessible for club development and training especially in the winter months.
- 1 Club would like to make greater use of the wicket at Cutteslowe Park for the development of youth Cricket if it was more cost effective than the two sites they currently use.
- A number of clubs believe that wicket maintenance would benefit from improvement.

3.59 **Pitch Quality & Ancillary Facilities** A number of key findings have emerged with regard to the quality of cricket provision. Visual Inspections and key ratings of 26% of the pitches available for community use have been undertaken. The key findings revealed that:

- Cricket pitches in private ownership were perceived to be of a higher quality than those in public parks/open spaces
- The majority of private pitches are served by adequate changing facilities

3.60 Figure 3.17 shows a breakdown of the number and quality of pitches included within the assessment:

Figure 3.17 - Summary of Quality and Quantity

Pitch Type	Number of community use pitches rated				
	Excellent	Good	Average	Below Average	Poor
Cricket Pitch	2	3	-	-	-

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- 3.61 **Impact of Quality on capacity.** It is important to assess the impact of quality of pitches on capacity. If pitches are particularly poor then they may not be able to accommodate the number of games required to meet demand. If pitches are of a high standard then they may be able to accommodate more matches. By factoring quality into the assessment, a truer picture of the adequacy of pitch provision can be gained. The results of the quality inspections can be used to show how quality might affect capacity on the basis of the assumptions detailed in Figure 3.18 :

Figure 3.18 – Carrying Capacity

Rating of Pitch	Carrying Capacity	Multiplication Factor
Excellent / Good	Three matches per week	1.5
Average	Two matches per week	1.0
Below average	One match per week	0.5
Poor	One match per fortnight	0.25

- 3.62 In the case of cricket, 5 pitches in use were rated as “Excellent” or “Good”. By using the results of the quality audit and above multiplication factors, the following assessment on carrying capacity for Cricket is shown below:

Figure 3.19 Cricket Pitches – Quality and Carrying Capacity

Rating of Pitch	No. of pitches	Quality Factor	Capacity. Of pitches
Excellent / Good	5	1.5	7.5
Average	-	1.0	-
Below average	-	0.5	-
Poor	-	0.25	-
TOTAL PITCHES	5		7

- 3.63 The above analysis provides an indication of the impact of quality on the results of the quantitative assessment. When factoring in assumptions on quality and the impact on carrying capacity of pitches, the analysis shows that given the high quality of pitches, although the survey has only considered 5 pitches the quality of those five equates to the equivalent of 7 wickets. Cricket is more than adequately catered for in terms of quality wicket provision.
- 3.64 **Planned Pitch Developments** – There is the known planned development between the Oxford and Horspath C.C (Headington Utd C.C) and Oxford Harlequins RFC, and the clubs are considering the next steps to creating what would be a high quality facility for sports development and sporting excellence within Oxford. There are no other known pitch developments planned for cricket, which will increase the current capacity.
- 3.65 **Key Issues for Cricket** – The key issues relating to supply and demand of cricket can be summarised as:
- Even with the small sample of quality assessments undertaken it is clear that there is over provision. However provision is not in any structured form, with

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most provision being in private ownership. This does not support good club development and is a City wide picture.

- It is important to note that the College provision could change and it is not good practice to be reliant upon private provision to meet demand.
- The majority of Cricket development appears to be undertaken by one club, Oxford and Horspath, where the majority of Juniors play, and they have a clear need for improved facilities and access to good training. The Horspath Road is an essential site for multi sport development and although it has not been included in the calculations for this study (as it is outside the City Council Boundaries) it plays a major part in the provision of sport for the people of Oxford.
- Future growth will be through such development as proposed by the larger clubs such as Oxford and Horspath (Headington Utd. C.C).
- The practise of playing “friendlies” by teams does not lead to wider opportunities for the development of cricket within Oxford.
- Due to most of the pitches being in the ownership or management of private clubs there may be issues over access to facilities for newly forming teams
- The lack of Sports development officers available to work with clubs and teams means Oxford is missing an opportunity to secure potentially available external funding.
- Concern has been expressed by clubs with regards to College facilities being withdrawn, and the fact that a number of teams have an almost over reliance on these sites being available in the future.
- Clubs are developing youth cricket in isolation to the City Council's Sports development
- Clubs are working closely with the E.C.B and the City Council would appear to have limited involvement
- Women's Cricket is slow to develop
- Clubs are developing links with Universities in isolation of the City Council
- The clubs have an aspiration to develop a ‘Centre of Excellence for Cricket within the City Boundaries, this aspiration could tie into wider social agendas currently being developed by the council in tackling issues of youth disorder, social inclusion and health improvement.
- The City Council needs to develop a Cricket development plan.

Rugby Union Assessment

3.66 **Numbers of clubs and teams.** The study research has identified **6** clubs based in the City generating **17** teams. These teams are detailed by the number within each identified “type” of team in Figure 3.20 below.

Figure 3.20 – Rugby Union Teams in the Oxford City Council Area

Team Type	Number of Teams
Mini Rugby Mixed (8-12 year olds)	6
Junior Ruby - Boys (13-17 year olds)	2
Junior Rugby - Girls (16-17 year olds)	0

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Team Type	Number of Teams
Senior Rugby - Men (18-45 year olds)	9
Senior Rugby - Women (18-45 year olds)	0
TOTAL NUMBER OF RUGBY UNION TEAMS	17

It is important to note that, Gosford and Oxford Rugby Club ground at Hinksey have not been included in the calculations and provide for an additional 20 teams.

- 3.67 **Number of pitches.** The study research has identified 14 pitches, which are included in the assessment calculation.

Figure 3.21– Pitches with secured public use in the Oxford City Council Area

Pitch Type	Number of pitches
Rugby Union Full size	14
TOTAL NUMBER OF PITCHES IN SECURED PUBLIC USE	14

Key Assessment Findings

- 3.68 The assessment and analysis of supply and demand has revealed the following key findings which are reported below:

Pitch Ownership.

- 3.69 **Pitches with no community use.** The assessment has revealed that there are 4 additional rugby union pitches, which are not currently available to the community. These are all located on school and college sites.
- 3.70 **Temporal Demand for Games.** The assessment has shown that peak demand for pitch use is Saturday for seniors and Sunday for mini and juniors.
- 3.71 **Identified Surplus / Deficiencies.** The results show that there is more than adequate pitch provision to meet demand at peak times. Demand is met on the basis of more than one mini team using a senior pitch at the same time and demand being spread more or less evenly across the weekend. The survey identifies a surplus of pitches at all times on a City wide basis (as indicated later in the report the research has identified a deficit of 1 Rugby pitch in the North East to meet peak Sunday demand).
- 3.72 **Future Demand.** Future demand for playing pitches is difficult to ascertain as there are many factors, which can contribute to a change in the demand for playing pitches, including the success of local teams, sports development initiatives and the quality/accessibility of local facilities and nature/scope of local leagues. Team Generation rates (TGRs) can be used as a guide to predicting future demand for pitches, based on using the TGR to predict the number of future teams in line with projected population growth or decline. Figure 3.22 shows the current TGRs for Rugby Union in the Oxford City Area.

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Figure 3.22 – Team Generation Rates for Rugby Union in the Oxford City Area

Rugby Team Type	Age- Group Population	Current Population	Current number of teams	Current Team Generation Rate
Mini-Rugby – Mxed	8-12 year olds	6796	6	1:1133
Junior Rugby – Boys	13-17 year olds	4808	2	1:2404
Junior Rugby - Girls	16-17 year olds	4734	0	0
Senior Rugby - Men	18-45 year olds	33971	9	1:3775
Senior Rugby - Women	18-45 year olds	33373	0	0

Future population projections available are based on 2001 population statistics. These indicate that there is likely to be a large increase towards 2003 followed by a slight decline by 2011 across the City. Figure 3.24 makes some assumptions about population growth and the impact on increasing numbers of teams.

Figure 3.24 – Population Scenarios

	Population	2003 estimate (6.04%)	Number of Additional Teams*	2011 estimate (3.76%)	Number of Additional teams
Mini-Rugby – Mixed	6796	7206	0	7052	0
Junior Rugby - Boys	4808	5098	0	4989	0
Junior Rugby - Girls	4734	5020	0	4912	0
Senior Rugby - Men	33971	36,023	+1	35,248	0
Senior Rugby - Women	33373	35,389	0	34,628	0

*rounded up to next whole number

3.73 Based on the population increases above, and on the assumption that current TGR's remain static, there will be limited additional demand for additional pitches. There would only be a requirement for 1 additional pitch for senior men based on the 2003 estimates in addition to those pitches already identified (and on the basis of additional teams playing at peak time).

3.74 **Consultation** undertaken with rugby clubs needs to be considered. The findings revealed that:

- The larger clubs within Oxford are predicting a significant increase in numbers (Oxford Harlequins 50+, Oxford Rugby Club 40+ however both of these major clubs use sites outside the City Council area).
- Most University Rugby has little or no access to the community.
- Oxford Harlequins are key partners with Oxford & Horspath C.C to develop a Centre of excellence for the future development of the sport at all levels on Horspath Road.
- Teams have a difficulty in retaining players due to lack of both player and floodlit training facilities.
- The site at Horspath suffers from over use due to the quality of the facilities.

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- The larger clubs recognise the value their sport can contribute to the social inclusion agenda; out of hours games and floodlighting for training are key to developing this initiative further.
- The Sports governing body are keen to develop a centre of excellence and to contribute to the wider agendas of health, access to good facilities, social inclusion.
- The RFU believe teams have problems accessing pitches.
- It appears that there is no provision made for casual users. Demand for casual use rugby facilities can not be determined.
- Teams travel out of the City boundaries to make use of facilities e.g. floodlit training venues, pitches in the Vale of White Horse.
- Clubs need a 25 year lease in order to access external funding that is currently available for the development of Rugby.
- Maintenance of pitches is an issue with the R.F.U as they believe pitches can deteriorate quickly.

3.75 **Pitch Quality & Ancillary Facilities** A number of key findings have emerged with regard to the quality of rugby provision. 8 Visual Inspections have been undertaken. The key findings revealed that:

- Rugby pitches in private ownership were perceived to be of a high quality (although training pitches were of a lesser standard)
- The majority of private pitches are served by adequate changing facilities

Figure 3.25 - Summary of Quality and Quantity – Rugby Union Pitches

Pitch Type	Number of community use pitches rated				
	Excellent	Good	Average	Below Average	Poor
Rugby Union Pitch	2	6	0	0	0

3.76 **Impact of Quality on capacity.** It is important to assess the impact of quality of pitches on capacity. If pitches are particularly poor then they may not be able to accommodate the number of games required to meet demand. This could increase any deficiency recorded or reduce surpluses. The results of the quality inspections can be used to show how quality might affect capacity. Figure 3.26 identifies assumptions that could be made on capacity.

Figure 3.26 – Carrying Capacity

Rating of Pitch	Carrying Capacity	Multiplication Factor
Excellent / Good	Three matches per week	1.5
Average	Two matches per week	1.0
Below average	One match per week	0.5
Poor	One match per fortnight	0.25

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- 3.77 In the case of rugby, all 8 pitches surveyed were rated as “Excellent” or “Good”. By using the results of the quality audit and above multiplication factors, the following assessment on carrying capacity for Rugby is shown below:

Figure 3.27 - Rugby Pitches – Quality and carrying capacity

Rating of Pitch	No. of pitches	Quality Factor	Score / No. of pitches
Excellent / Good	8	1.5	12
Average	0	1.0	0
Below average	0	0.5	0
Poor	0	0.25	0
TOTAL PITCHES	8		12

- 3.78 On this basis if it is assumed that all pitches can be used for three matches per week, the carrying capacity of rugby pitches is likely to be the equivalent of 12 pitches. This has a positive impact on the assessment results meaning that theoretical deficiencies could be overcome through pitches being able to accommodate more than one match on a day, especially for mini fixtures.

- 3.79 **Planned Pitch developments** – The Development at Horspath road has already been mentioned,(See Cricket)

- 3.80 **Key Issues for Rugby Union** – The assessment has identified a number of key issues relating to the demand for and supply of rugby union pitches. These are:

- Access to facilities for new teams may be an issue
- Access to structured provision is required
- Clubs feel they are not being supported by the City Council
- An over reliance on colleges could lead to potential future problems.
- The larger clubs within Oxford are predicting a significant increase in numbers (Oxford Harlequins 50+, Oxford Rugby Club 40+).
- Most University Rugby has little or no access to the community.
- Oxford Harlequins are key partners with Oxford & Horspath C.C to develop a Centre of excellence for the future development of the sport at all levels.
- Teams have a difficulty in retaining players due to lack of both playing and floodlit training facilities.
- The site at Horspath suffers from over use.
- The larger clubs recognise the value their sport can contribute to the social inclusion agenda; out of hours games and floodlighting for training are key to developing this initiative further.
- The Sports governing body are keen to develop a centre of excellence and to contribute to the wider agendas of health, access to good facilities, social inclusion.
- Access to floodlit pitches for training is an issue identified by the R.F.U and is seen as a County wide issue.
- The RFU believe teams have problems accessing pitches.

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- It appears that there is no provision made for casual users
- Teams travel out of the City boundaries to make use of facilities e.g. floodlit training venues, pitches in the Vale of White Horse.
- Clubs need a 25 year lease in order to access external funding that is currently available for the development of Rugby.
- Maintenance of pitches is an issue with the R.F.U as they believe pitches can deteriorate quickly.
- The Horspath Road site is a very important site for the future development of Rugby for the teams in Oxford.

Hockey Assessment

- 3.81 **Numbers of clubs and teams.** The study research has identified **4 clubs** generating **43 teams**. These teams are detailed by the number within each identified “type” of team in Figure 3.28

Figure 3.28 – Hockey Teams in the Oxford City area

Team Type	Number of Teams
Junior Hockey – Boys (11-16 year olds)	9
Junior Hockey – Girls (11-16 year olds)	6
Senior Hockey – Men (16-45 year olds)	16
Senior Hockey – women (16-45 year olds)	12
TOTAL NUMBER OF HOCKEY TEAMS	43

- 3.82 **Number of pitches.** The study research has identified **7** full size Artificial Turf pitches used for fixtures, which are included in the assessment calculation. The distribution of these pitches is shown in Map 4 within the appendices of the report.

Figure 3.29– Pitches with secured public use in the Oxford City area

Pitch Type	Number of pitches
Synthetic Turf Pitches (Full Size)	7
TOTAL NUMBER OF PITCHES IN SECURED PUBLIC USE	7

Key Assessment Findings

- 3.83 The assessment of hockey City wide has identified a number of key findings which are reported below:
- 3.84 **Pitch Ownership.** All pitches used by local teams are in the ownership of schools or colleges (4 pitches), private 2 pitches) and the council provides 1 pitch (East Oxford Astroturf).
- 3.85 **Pitches with no community use.** The assessment has identified no other STP's (full size) within the City Council boundary although 2 are located just outside the City boundaries.

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- 3.86 **Temporal demand for games.** The assessment reveals that there are approximately 22 games per week during the season. Of these games, the peak demand for hockey is on a Saturday with 65% of games played at this time. The other games (35%) are played Sunday.
- 3.87 **Surplus/deficiencies.** There is a theoretical surplus of 2 STP provision to meet peak demand for hockey. This surplus is based on the assumption that the STP's are accessible for hockey at the required times. It is also based on the assumption that STP's can be used for 4 fixtures per day. However it has to be noted that the provision of STP'S is mainly through schools and colleges and the danger is a change in need in schools and colleges could lead to a deficiency.
- 3.88 **Latent Demand.** Clubs were asked to identify issues associated with the ability of facilities to accommodate teams demanding pitches. No issues were raised by clubs specifically relating to facilities preventing known teams from playing.
- 3.89 **Future Demand.** Future demand for playing pitches is difficult to ascertain as there are many factors, which can contribute to a change in demand, such as the success of sports development programmes. Clubs were consulted about likely increases in club membership and team numbers and all those consulted stated they are likely to increase in future membership and subsequent rise in number of teams. These increases are judged by clubs to be in the region of 20-30 players over the next few years.
- 3.90 **Team Generation Rates.** These are based on the number of teams identified earlier in figure 3.28. These figures show how many people within the given population are required to generate a team.

Figure 3.30 – Team Generation Rates for Hockey in the Oxford City Area

Hockey Team Type	Age- Group Population	Current Population	Current number of teams	Current Team Generation Rate
Junior Hockey: Boys	11-15 year olds	4051	11	1:368
Junior Hockey: Girls	11-15 year olds	3741	4	1:935
Senior Hockey: Men	16-45 year olds	36197	19	1:1905
Senior Hockey: Women	16-45 year olds	35664	12	1:2972

Population figures are estimated based on published figures.

- 3.91 **Future population projections** available are based on 2001 population statistics. These indicate that there is likely to be a large increase towards 2003 followed by a slight decline by 2011 across the City. Figure 3.32 makes some assumptions about population growth and the impact on increasing numbers of teams.

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Figure 3.32 – Population Scenarios

Hockey Team Type	Population	2003 estimate (6.04%)	Number of Additional Teams*	2011 estimate (3.76%)	Number of Additional teams
Junior Boys Hockey	4051	4296	+1	4203	0
Junior Girls Hockey	3741	3967	0	3882	0
Senior Men Hockey	36,197	38,383	+1	37,558	+1
Senior Women Hockey	35,664	37,818	+1	37,005	0

*rounded up to next whole number

- 3.92 Based on the population increases above, and on the assumption that current TGR's remain static, there will be additional demand for one pitch based on the 2003 estimates.
- 3.93 **Consultation** undertaken with hockey clubs needs to be considered. The findings revealed that:
- Despite there being 7 STP's in the Oxford City Area, provision is viewed by the local club as being of concern as an over reliance on certain facilities could lead to problems in the future
 - Some teams make use of facilities outside the City.
- 3.94 **Pitch Quality & Ancillary Facilities** A number of key findings have emerged with regard to the quality of hockey provision. Visual Inspections and key ratings have not been applied to Synthetic Pitches in the same way as natural turf pitches for other sports. No teams playing league hockey were identified as using grass pitches.
- 3.95 **Impact of Quality on capacity.** It is important to assess the impact of quality of pitches on capacity. If pitches are particularly poor then they may not be able to accommodate the number of games required to meet demand, or the standard of league hockey played. In the case of hockey, supply was found to be more than adequate to meet current demand; however the following needs to be considered:
- 3.96 **Planned Pitch developments** – The assessment has not revealed any planned full size STP projects. Although there is a strong general consensus of opinion that further provision in the form of a multi functional facility is required. Training sites with floodlighting are in high demand.
- 3.97 **Key Issues for Hockey** – The assessment has identified a number of key issues relating to the demand for and supply of STP's. These are:
- Demand is currently met through a combination of low team generation and a high number of pitches
 - There are "fit for purpose" and quality issues with some of the current sites
 - The STP's are unevenly distributed across the City

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- Clubs using East Oxford Astro turf have expressed concern over the surface being worn.
- The East Oxford Astro turf's future is questionable as the school is considering options for the future of the site
- The city council need to develop a Hockey development plan
- Teams are travelling out of the Borough for training facilities in neighbouring authorities.
- The Council is reliant on other bodies to provide pitches and as such could fail to be meeting demand if facilities are withdrawn for whatever reason from Community use.

Assessment against the National Playing Fields Association “3 Acre” Standard

- 3.98 Based on the estimated Borough Population of 134,248 (2001 Census population) there is a requirement for **162,440 ha** of accessible pitch provision based on the NPFA recommended minimum of 1.21 ha (3 acres) per1000 population across the Borough. The assessment using the 3 acre standard needs to be judged with caution. The assessment is based on all the available pitch provision (no differentiation made between type) and general population (no specific focus on those age groups and sections of the population that are active in pitch sports). However the assessment can provide broad indicators about the general levels of provision within the Borough.

Figure 3.33 – Assessment against the NPFA Standard (3 Acre)

Area	Population	Required Hectares	Actual Hectares*	+ / -
Oxford City Council Wide	134,248	162,440	150.67	-11.77
Central, South and West	20,579	24.90	28.72	+3.82
South	16,502	19.97	30.03	+10.06
East	15,983	19.34	5.19	-14.15
North	22,755	27.53	37.96	+10.43
North East	34,554	41.81	31.04	-10.77
South East	23,876	28.89	17.73	-11.16

*based on estimates using NPFA space requirements with additional 25% allowance. The pitch dimensions used represent areas significantly larger than the actual playing surface to allow for movement of pitches from season to season etc.. The dimensions also differ from those detailed within the “Toward a Level Playing Field” publication. Note that a number of sites that are key to sports provision are outside the City Council Boundaries although managed by the City Council they have not been included in the calculation.

- 3.99 Measured against the NPFA minimum standard (3 acres) this shows that:
- Across the Borough there is a deficiency of accessible playing pitch provision when assessed using the 3 Acre Standard (NPFA)
 - Three of the six recognised areas have a deficiency of 10+ Hectares, the largest being the East Oxford Area which is to be expected as this is the main City Centre Area. The North East and South East Areas also have a deficiency of provision. The South East area is also one of the highest areas of deprivation in Oxford.

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- The remaining three areas have a surplus of provision varying from the smallest surplus in Central, South and West Area of +3.82 ha to +10.43 ha in the North Area.
- The City wide deficiency is equivalent to 14 senior football pitches
- This deficiency could result in the team generation rate being artificially low, as there are insufficient facilities to cater for all the people who want to take part in organised team sport.

3.99 Based on the NPFA method, Oxford has a deficiency of pitches. Based on the Sport England method, Oxford has a surplus of pitches. Whilst both methods are valid there are pros and cons to using either. The NPFA standards are the older method and use a single standard for the whole of the country. It does not allow for local variances in demographics or geography which is part of its weakness. The Sport England methodology is able to analyse on a more local basis however a flaw that we have noticed with this method is that it is very difficult for a deficiency to be shown.

3.100 The Sport England method is the newer model, designed to replace the NPFA standards and is the more valid version in a planning application. However any surplus or deficiency score should be treated with extreme caution. The problem with the Sport England methodology is the fact that it is a demand led model and as such generates standards based on demand for pitch units. A weakness in the methodology is that in setting a standard on a City wide basis it does not cater for the fact that local teams often want to play local. These findings need to be considered as part of the wider PPG17 AUDIT and subsequent greenspace strategy that has been produced, in so much as any surplus of one typology has to be considered against deficiencies of other typologies. Therefore you may have a surplus of pitches in one area, but against the new standards set within your open space strategy, deficiencies of natural and semi natural greenspace, for example, and therefore the surplus of pitches should be utilised to meet the deficiency of natural greenspace by change of use.

Hire Fees and Charges –Comparison

3.101 In addition to an assessment of quantity and quality it is important to consider other aspects of playing pitch provision. Access to facilities can be inhibited by a number of factors. These include the geographical positioning of facilities, location of key housing sites and the accessibility of public transport. Cost is also a critical factor. The assessment of playing pitch provision in Oxford has included a comparison of hire fees and charges for playing pitches. A comparison of football pitch hire charges (many authorities only provide football pitches) has been undertaken to determine how the cost of hire in Oxford performs against that of comparator neighbouring authorities. A comparison of charges has been undertaken with:

- Other Oxfordshire Local Authorities and surrounding authorities where data was made available. Many of these authorities are also part of the nearest neighbour list.

3.102 The results of the comparison exercise are shown in the figures below.

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Figure 3.34 - Comparison of Senior Football Pitch Hire Charges

Local Authority	Cost per Season		Cost per match*	
	Pitch & Changing	Pitch Only	Pitch & Changing	Pitch Only
Oxford City Council*	N/A	N/A	£39	£26
Cherwell	N/A	N/A	£36	£26
Vale of White Horse	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
South Oxfordshire	N/A	N/A	£39	£26
Northampton	N/A	N/A	£28.60	£22
Warwick	N/A	£298	N/A	£25

Vale of White Horse do not currently charge for use of their football pitches

Oxford have an additional charge if clubs want to make use of club rooms at those sites with the facility available.

Prices vary for midweek and weekend games in Oxfordshire reduced to £20 per game midweek

Oxford also offers 50% discount to under 17's and 75% discount to under 11's

Figure 3.35 – Comparison of Junior Football Pitch Hire Charges

Local Authority	Cost per Season		Cost per match*	
	Pitch & Changing	Pitch Only	Pitch & Changing	Pitch Only
Oxford City Council*	N/A	N/A	£19.50	£13
Cherwell	N/A	N/A	£18	£13
Vale of White Horse	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
South Oxfordshire	N/A	N/A	N/A	£26
Northampton	N/A	N/A	£8.80	£5.50
Warwick	N/A	£149	N/A	£12.50

Cherwell Junior discount charges set at under 16's whilst South Oxfordshire charge is set at under 17's.

Figure 3.36 – Comparison of Mini Soccer Pitch Hire Charges

Local Authority	Cost per Season		Cost per match*	
	Pitch & Changing	Pitch Only	Pitch & Changing	Pitch Only
Oxford City Council*	N/A	N/A	N/A	£7
Cherwell	N/A	N/A	N/A	£10.50
Vale of White Horse	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
South Oxfordshire	N/A	N/A	£6.75	£6.50
Northampton	N/A	N/A	£8.80	£5.50
Warwick	N/A	£149	N/A	£12.50

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Mini footballers mainly turn up changed and ready to play and will not generally make use of changing facilities.

Figure 3.37 - Comparison of Cricket Pitch Hire Charges

Local Authority	Cost per Season		Cost per match*	
	Pitch & Changing	Pitch Only	Pitch & Changing	Pitch Only
Oxford City Council*	N/A	N/A	N/A	£32
Cherwell	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vale of White Horse	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
South Oxfordshire	N/A	N/A	N/A	£25
Northampton	N/A	N/A	N/A	£25
Warwick	N/A	N/A	N/A	£44.50

Cherwell provide nets for practice at £34 per hour,

Oxford charge a lower rate of £25 for games played during Midweek

Northampton charge a lower rate of £22 for an evening match and charge £11 for a school match

Warwick charge a lower rate of £31 for a mid-week game

Figure 3.38 - Comparison of Synthetic Turf Pitch Charges

Local Authority	Cost per Season		Cost per match*	
	Pitch & Changing	Pitch Only	Pitch & Changing	Pitch Only
Oxford City Council*	N/A	N/A	£39	£26
Cherwell	N/A	N/A	£36	£26
Vale of White Horse	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
South Oxfordshire	N/A	N/A	£39	£26
Northampton	N/A	N/A	See below*	See below*
Warwick	N/A	N/A	See below**	See below**

Northampton charge £22 per adult Hockey match with an additional charge of £6.60 if changing is required. The rate is reduced to £11 for junior matches and an additional £3.30 if changing is required. (these rates are for redgra) They charge £28 per hour for a half pitch.

Warwick charge the following for STP hire- £33 per hr Peak time Senior, £22 per hr off Peak time Seniors, £22 per hr Peak time Juniors, £16.50 per hr off Peak time Juniors. For a half pitch £22 peak for seniors, £16.50 off peak seniors, £16.50 peak time for Juniors, £11.50 off peak time for Juniors these charges are per hour.

Figure 3.39 - Comparison of Rugby Pitch Hire Charges

Local Authority	Cost per Season		Cost per match*	
	Pitch & Changing	Pitch Only	Pitch & Changing	Pitch Only
Oxford City Council*	N/A	N/A	£39	£26
Cherwell	N/A	N/A	£36	£26
Vale of White Horse	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
South Oxfordshire	N/A	N/A	£39	£26
Northampton	N/A	N/A	N/A	£22
Warwick	N/A	£298	N/A	£25

Northampton offer no Vat charges if clubs book 10+ matches

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- 3.103 The following key findings can be drawn from the pricing comparison:
- Of the authorities compared, prices for individual hire and seasonal rental of pitches vary greatly. Not many authorities in the Oxford area offer seasonal hire of facilities; the preferred option is for pitch hire per game. Warwickshire, as a neighbouring County, offer seasonal rates.
 - The cost of hire for a game of cricket in Oxford is high when compared to South Oxfordshire. The majority of cricket in Oxford is mainly played at a 'friendly level' and the cost of hire may be a barrier to the formulation of a local cricket league.
 - STP charges vary greatly. Comparisons are based on the stated hire charges, however clubs will often negotiate their own terms.

- 3.104 The pricing comparison is only a guide to fees and charges per pitch hire. Other factors need to be considered namely:
- Where there is a significant difference in the price, teams may be encouraged to travel further to access cheaper facilities (both pitch and ancillary). In the case of Oxford it may be quality and access to referees at cheaper rates that may also affect team choice. All of which can greatly impact on supply and demand
 - Price comparisons are a guide only as quality of facilities (both pitch and ancillary) can vary greatly from site to site and between local authorities.
 - Hiring policies vary between authorities, Vale of White Horse for example do not charge local clubs for pitch hire.

Tennis Assessment

- 3.105 **Numbers of clubs.** The study research has identified **3 clubs**, all of which are private clubs that require a membership agreement to be taken out prior to use.

Figure 3.28 – Tennis Clubs in the Oxford City area

Club Type	Number of Teams
Private Club	3
TOTAL NUMBER OF TENNIS CLUBS	3

- 3.106 **Number of courts.** The study research has identified **22** full size Tennis Courts available for community use, which are included in the assessment calculation. These are situated over 6 different sites with a further 6 sites that are member club sites. The distribution of these sites is shown in Map 11 within the appendices of the report.

Figure 3.29– Courts with public access in the Oxford City area

Court Type	Number of pitches
Tarmac Courts	14
Hard Courts	8
TOTAL NUMBER OF COURTS IN PUBLIC USE	22

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Key Assessment Findings

- 3.107 The assessment of tennis City wide has identified a number of key findings which are reported below:
- 3.108 **Court Ownership.** All courts that had non-technical quality assessments undertaken are based in public parks and open spaces and available to the public to hire on a casual basis.
- 3.109 **Private Courts.** Other courts in the area that have not been assessed are located within the private clubs highlighted in 3.105. Analysis of responses to questionnaires shows that there is provision of grass, tarmac and synthetic turf courts.
- 3.110 **LTA Standards.** The LTA provision standards can be used as a framework for assessing quantity of provision. The standards are based on the assumption that 2% of the population regularly play tennis and demand court usage. On the basis of assumptions about frequency of use, the LTA advocates provision of 1 court per 45 players. Assessment against this standard reveals that there is a need for **60** courts. **22** courts with community access have been identified.
- 3.111 **Temporal demand for courts.** Formal tennis competitions and league fixtures take place within the private club's facilities. Other courts are used on an informal basis, so level of demand can only be taken from court booking sheets.
- 3.112 **Surplus/deficiencies.** As an accurate figure for demand of courts can not be gained, it is not possible to ascertain if there is a surplus or deficiency in the number of courts available.
- 3.113 **Latent Demand.** Clubs were asked to identify issues associated with the ability of facilities to accommodate teams demanding courts. No issues were raised by clubs specifically relating to facilities preventing known teams from playing.
- 3.114 **Future Demand.** Future demand for tennis courts is difficult to ascertain as there are many factors, which can contribute to a change in demand, such as the success of sports development programmes. Clubs were consulted about likely increases in club membership and team numbers. All those consulted stated they are likely to increase in future membership and subsequent rise in the number of players. These increases are judged by clubs to be in the region of 50-60 players over the next few years.

Bowls Assessment

- 3.115 **Numbers of clubs.** The study research has identified **13 clubs**. **8 clubs** responded to efforts made to gather information and views.

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Figure 3.28 – Bowls Clubs in the Oxford City area

Club Type	Known Clubs	Responded Clubs
Local Club	13	8
TOTAL NUMBER OF BOWLS CLUBS	13	8

- 3.116 **Number of greens.** The study research has identified **10** full size Bowling Greens available for community use, which are included in the assessment calculation. The distribution of these greens is shown in Map 12 within the appendices of the report.

Figure 3.29– Greens within the Oxford City area

Green Type	Number of greens
Public Flat Green	7
Private Flat Green	3
TOTAL NUMBER OF GREENS IN PUBLIC USE	10

Key Assessment Findings

- 3.117 The assessment of bowls City wide has identified a number of key findings which are reported below:
- 3.118 **Green Ownership.** All greens that had non-technical quality assessments undertaken are based in public parks and open spaces and available to the public to hire on a casual basis.
- 3.119 **Private Greens.** Other greens in the area that have not been assessed are located within the private club facilities. Analysis of responses to questionnaires shows that there is provision of extra facilities.
- 3.120 **National Standards.** There are no standards for provision set by any of the bowls national governing bodies. Bowls greens operate on demand led provision. This means that bowls greens are used where they already exist and due to the low level of wear inflicted on the surface during normal use most greens are able to cope with a slight increase in the number of users.
- 3.121 **Temporal demand for courts.** Formal bowls competitions and league fixtures take place upon the public green facilities. Due to the nature of competition formats an accurate assessment of demand is difficult to calculate.
- 3.122 **Surplus/deficiencies.** As an accurate figure for demand of greens can not be gained, it is not possible to ascertain if there is a surplus or deficiency in the number of greens available.
- 3.123 **Latent Demand.** Clubs were asked to identify issues associated with the ability of facilities to accommodate teams demanding courts. No issues were raised by clubs specifically relating to facilities preventing known teams from playing.

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- 3.124 **Future Demand.** Future demand for bowling greens is difficult to ascertain as there are many factors, which can contribute to a change in demand, such as the success of sports development programmes. Clubs were consulted about likely increases in club membership and team numbers and most of those consulted stated they are likely to increase in future membership and subsequent rise in the number of players. These increases are judged by clubs to be in the region of 5-10 players over the next few years.

Netball Assessment

- 3.125 Although no assessment has been carried out in relation to netball, consultation with Oxfordshire County Netball Association has revealed that they feel a lack of good quality outdoor facilities in the local area is having a detrimental effect on the development of the sport. It is suggested that further research into this would be needed before an accurate statement could be made relating to the number or quality of any facilities for netball.

SECTION IV – OXFORD CITY COUNCIL – AREA ASSESSMENTS

Area Committees – Local Area Assessments

- 4.1 The Council has appointed six area committees and local area assessments have been undertaken on the basis of these geographical areas. Individual assessments are based on the pitches available in the committee area and the number of teams originating from the locality. The area based assessments identify where surpluses and deficiencies within the borough are most pronounced. Team Generation Rates for each area have also been established and show how sports participation varies across the borough.
- 4.2 Six local area assessments have been undertaken on the basis of these Committee areas.
- 4.3 A summary of the key quantitative statistics for the areas are detailed in Figure 4.1 below:

Figure 4.1 – Numbers of sports pitches/ sports teams by District Committee Area

District Committee Area	Number of sports pitches with community use	Total number of sports pitches	Number of sports teams
Central	26	43	12
Cowley	26	29	59
East	5	8	13
North	40	47	32
North East	30	54	86
South East	18	30	30
BOROUGH TOTAL	145	211	232

Central Committee Area

- 4.4 The Central South and West area comprises the wards of Carfax, Hinksey Park, Holywell and Jericho and Osney. The area has a collective population of approximately 20579 (based on ONS 2001 Census figures and Oxford City Council estimates). The results of the Central, South and West assessment are shown below:

Overview

- 4.5 The assessment has revealed that:
- There are 26 sports pitches available for community use. The distribution of these pitches is shown in Map 5 (within the appendices).
 - The study has identified a total of 7 sports clubs generating 12 teams in the area.

Football

- 4.6 The assessment has revealed the following:

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- There are **9** senior, **3** junior and **3** mini soccer pitches within the area with community use
- These pitches represent **15%** of all available pitches within the Borough
- There are **6** football clubs in the area generating **6** senior teams, **2** junior teams and **3** mini teams
- These teams represent **7.9%** of all football teams within the Borough.
- Peak demand for football in the area is on a Sunday with **71%** of all games played on this day.
- Based on local supply and demand figures there is a **surplus of senior pitches (+8)** on Saturday and on Sunday **(+7)**, a **surplus of junior pitches (+3)** on Saturday and on Sunday **(+2)** and a **surplus of mini pitches (+2)** within the Committee area.
- There are **3** pitches (**2** senior, **1** mini) within the area without secured community use. The existing surplus in pitches means it is unnecessary to bring these pitches into community use.
- **Pitch Quality.** Quality scores for the areas football pitches ranged from **55%** (Average) through to **93%** (Excellent). The average score for football pitches was **77%** (Good).
- **Ancillary Facilities.** No changing facilities were rated for this area, it is worth noting that many of the sites for this area are college owned. This implies that they are high quality facilities; however it is not always easy to gain access to them.

Cricket

4.7 The assessment has revealed the following findings:

- There are **5** pitches available for community use. The pitches identified for community use represent **50%** of the total cricket provision across the Borough.
- There is **1** club within the area generating **1 senior cricket team**
- This team represents **3.7%** of all cricket teams within the Borough.
- Peak demand for cricket in the area is on a Sunday (**100%**)
- Based on local supply and demand figures there is a **surplus of pitches (+4)** within the Committee area.
- There are **7** cricket pitches in the area with no Community Use. It is not deemed necessary to consider bringing these pitches into community use.
- Pitch quality is not an issue.

Rugby Union

4.8 The assessment has revealed the following findings:

- There are **3** pitches available for community use. The pitches identified for community use represent **27%** of the total Rugby provision across the borough.
- There are no clubs within the area.
- The average rating for a pitch is **89%**. (Good) Quality ratings ranged from **85%** (good) to **93%**. (excellent)

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- **Ancillary Facilities.** No changing facilities were rated for this area, it is worth noting that many of the sites for this area are college owned. This implies that they are high quality facilities; however it is not always easy to gain access to them.

Hockey

4.9 The assessment has revealed the following findings:

- There are no identified Hockey clubs originating from the area. However it is accepted that the catchment for local hockey clubs may well extend beyond local areas given the relatively small number of clubs.
- The area has **no** synthetic turf pitches, but 3 grass hockey pitches.

Team Generation Rates

4.10 Team Generation Rates (TGR's) have been calculated for the local area. These give an indication of the level of participation within the local area and can be compared with the Borough wide rates and those recorded in the other committee areas.

Figure 4.2 – Team Generation Rates in Central, South and West

Team Type	Age- Group Population	Current Population	Current number of teams	Current TGR
Mini-Soccer (U7-U10)	6-9 year olds	435	3	1:145
Junior Football: Boys	10-15 year olds	564	2	1:282
Junior Football: Girls	10-15 year olds	486	0	0
Senior Football: Men	16-45 year olds	7710	5	1:1542
Senior Football: Women	16-45 year olds	6596	1	1:6596
Junior Boys Cricket	11-17 year olds	1167	0	0
Junior Girls Cricket	11-17 year olds	964	0	0
Senior Cricket: Men	18-55 year olds	7785	1	1:7785
Senior Cricket: Women	18-55 year olds	6752	0	0
Mini-Rugby – Mixed	8-12 year olds	496	0	0
Junior Rugby - Boys	13-17 year olds	1072	0	0
Junior Rugby - Girls	16-17 year olds	874	0	0
Senior Rugby - Men	18-45 year olds	7059	0	0
Senior Rugby - Women	18-45 year olds	6074	0	0
Junior Hockey: Boys	11-15 year olds	517	0	0
Junior Hockey: Girls	11-15 year olds	441	0	0
Senior Hockey: Men	16-45 year olds	7710	0	0
Senior Hockey: Women	16-45 year olds	6596	0	0

Key Issues for the Central Committee Area

4.11 The following key issues are evident in the Central area:

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- There is a surplus of pitches of all types in Central South and West Area Committee, other than STPs of which there is none. However, there are no hockey teams in this area.
- A large amount of pitches in this area are owned by University Colleges, therefore are likely to be of very high quality.
- High numbers of the population are students. This will impact by increasing the population in the 18-25 age bracket; however it is unlikely that these people will be members of local sports clubs. The impact this will have on the figures must be considered.
- Cricket pitches were difficult to obtain ratings for as they were not marked out at the time of year of the site surveys.
- Ancillary facilities were also difficult to gain access to in the Colleges; however these are usually of a very high quality.

South Area Committee

4.12 The South area comprises the wards of Cowley, Cowley Marsh and Lye Valley. The area has a collective population of approximately 16,503 (based on ONS 2001 Census figures and Oxford City Council estimates). The results of the South area assessment are shown below:

Overview

4.13 The assessment has revealed that:

- There are **26** sports pitches available for community use. The distribution of these pitches is shown in Map 6 (within the appendices).
- The study has identified a total of **28** sports clubs generating **59** teams in the area.

Football

4.14 The assessment has revealed the following:

- There are **13** senior, **2** junior and **3** mini soccer pitches within the area with community use
- These pitches represent **17%** of all available pitches within the Borough
- There are 23 football clubs in the area generating 22 senior teams, 6 junior teams and 7 mini teams
- These teams represent **25%** of all football teams within the Borough.
- Peak demand for football in the area is on a Sunday with 74% of all games played on this day.
- Based on local supply and demand figures there is a **surplus of senior (+4) and mini pitches (+1)** and a **deficit of junior pitches (-1)** at peak demand. Any future growth in mini soccer may lead to a deficiency in mini soccer pitch provision.
- There is one junior pitch in the area without community use, it is not considered necessary to bring this pitch into community use owing to the

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surplus number of adult pitches that could be used to cater for Junior pitch deficiencies.

- **Pitch Quality.** Quality scores for the areas football pitches ranged from 60% (Average) through to 87% (Good). The average score for football pitches was 79% (Good).
- **Ancillary Facilities.** Quality scores for the ancillary facilities ranged from 56% (average) to 90% (Excellent). The average rating was 77% (good). 4 sites were identified with changing facilities.

Cricket

4.15 The assessment has revealed the following findings:

- There are **3** pitches identified with community use. (NB. Only 2 of these pitches were rated as one was not visible at Rover Sports Ground – it is assumed that this pitch was not marked out during the out of season period.)
- This represents **27%** of cricket provision in the borough.
- There are **4** clubs within the area generating **10 senior and 10 junior cricket teams**
- These teams represent **69%** of all cricket teams within the Borough.
- Peak demand for cricket in the area is on a Sunday (75%)
- Based on local supply and demand figures there is a **deficiency of pitches. (-5)** in the Committee area.
- There are no cricket pitches in the area without community use.
- The average pitch quality is 82%. (based on only 2 ratings)
- The pitches at Horspath road have not been included in the calculations as they are outside the City Council Area. The site is very important to Cricket development not only in Cowley also on a citywide basis.

Rugby Union

4.16 The assessment has revealed the following findings:

- There are **4** pitches available for community use. The pitches identified for community use represent 29% of the total Rugby provision across the borough.
- One club has been identified in the area, generating 4 teams.
- Peak demand is on a Saturday and there is a **surplus of 2 pitches.**
- The average rating for a pitch is 85%. (Good) Quality ratings ranged from 82% (good) to 88%. (good)
- **Ancillary Facilities.** No changing facilities were rated for these sites.

Hockey

4.17 The assessment has revealed the following findings:

- There are no identified Hockey clubs originating from the area. However it is accepted that the catchment for local hockey clubs may well extend beyond local areas given the relatively small number of clubs.
- The area has **no** synthetic turf pitches but 1 grass hockey pitch.

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Team Generation Rates

- 4.18 Team Generation Rates (TGR's) have been calculated for the local area. These give an indication of the level of participation within the local area and can be compared with the Borough wide rates and those recorded in the other committee areas.

Figure 4.2 – Team Generation Rates in South

Team Type	Age- Group Population	Current Population	Current number of teams	Current TGR
Mini-Soccer (U7-U10)	6-9 year olds	668	7	1:95
Junior Football: Boys	10-15 year olds	519	6	1:87
Junior Football: Girls	10-15 year olds	522	0	0
Senior Football: Men	16-45 year olds	4265	21	1:203
Senior Football: Women	16-45 year olds	4244	1	1:4244
Junior Boys Cricket	11-17 year olds	653	9	1:73
Junior Girls Cricket	11-17 year olds	656	1	1:656
Senior Cricket: Men	18-55 year olds	4890	9	1:543
Senior Cricket: Women	18-55 year olds	4875	1	1:4875
Mini-Rugby – Mixed	8-12 year olds	828	0	0
Junior Rugby - Boys	13-17 year olds	489	0	0
Junior Rugby - Girls	16-17 year olds	491	0	0
Senior Rugby - Men	18-45 year olds	4048	4	1:1012
Senior Rugby - Women	18-45 year olds	4027	0	0
Junior Hockey: Boys	11-15 year olds	437	0	0
Junior Hockey: Girls	11-15 year olds	439	0	0
Senior Hockey: Men	16-45 year olds	4265	0	0
Senior Hockey: Women	16-45 year olds	4027	0	0

Key Issues for the South Committee Area

- 4.19 The following key issues are evident in the South area:
- There is a surplus of senior and mini pitches in the South area; there is a deficit of 1 junior football pitch.
 - The deficiency of cricket pitches is largely due to the existence of one club, Oxford and Horspath C.C. Whilst 2 of their teams play in Lye Valley ward, the remainder of the teams were listed only as playing at "various venues", therefore for the purposes of analysis it was assumed that all other teams play in this ward. It is this assumption that has created the deficiency, and this must be taken into consideration.

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East Area

4.20 The East area committee comprises the wards of St Clement's, St Mary's and Iffley Fields. The area has a collective population of approximately 15966 (based on ONS 2001 Census figures and Oxford City Council estimates). The results of the East assessment are shown below:

Overview

4.21 The assessment has revealed that:

- There are **5** sports pitches available for community use. The distribution of these pitches is shown in Map 7 (within the appendices).
- The study has identified a total of **3** sports clubs generating **13** teams in the area.

Football

4.22 The assessment has revealed the following:

- There are **3** senior, **0** junior and **0** mini soccer pitches within the area with community use
- These pitches represent **3%** of all available pitches within the Borough
- There are **0** football clubs in the area
- There is one junior pitch in the area without community use, however the lack of teams means it is not considered necessary to bring this pitch into community use.
- **Pitch Quality.** There were problems with obtaining quality scores for this area. It is noted that Meadow Lane Rec and South Park, whilst both considered to have pitches, had no marked out pitches when the sites were visited. Only one pitch with Community Use was rated, this was rated at 91% (Excellent)
- **Ancillary Facilities.** Ancillary facilities at the above site were rated at 73% (Good)

Cricket

4.23 The assessment has revealed the following findings:

- There are **0** pitches identified with community use.
- There are **0 clubs** within this area.
- There are **0** pitches identified without community use.

Rugby Union

4.24 The assessment has revealed the following findings:

- There are **0** pitches available for community use.
- There is **1** club within the area generating **1** team. It is worth noting that this team is from Oxford University, who play in a league as well in University fixtures.

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- This generates a deficiency of 1 pitch.
- **Ancillary Facilities.** No changing facilities were rated for these sites.

Hockey

4.25 The assessment has revealed the following findings:

- There are 2 identified Hockey clubs originating from the area generating 12 teams.
- The area has 2 synthetic turf pitches.

Team Generation Rates

4.26 Team Generation Rates (TGR's) have been calculated for the local area. These give an indication of the level of participation within the local area and can be compared with the Borough wide rates and those recorded in the other committee areas.

Figure 4.2 – Team Generation Rates in East

Team Type	Age- Group Population	Current Population	Current number of teams	Current TGR
Mini-Soccer (U7-U10)	6-9 year olds	443	0	0
Junior Football: Boys	10-15 year olds	400	0	0
Junior Football: Girls	10-15 year olds	421	0	0
Senior Football: Men	16-45 year olds	5129	0	0
Senior Football: Women	16-45 year olds	5423	0	0
Junior Boys Cricket	11-17 year olds	569	0	0
Junior Girls Cricket	11-17 year olds	600	0	0
Senior Cricket: Men	18-55 year olds	5575	0	0
Senior Cricket: Women	18-55 year olds	5901	0	0
Mini-Rugby – Mixed	8-12 year olds	574	0	0
Junior Rugby – Boys	13-17 year olds	454	0	0
Junior Rugby – Girls	16-17 year olds	480	0	0
Senior Rugby – Men	18-45 year olds	4902	1	1:4902
Senior Rugby – Women	18-45 year olds	5193	0	0
Junior Hockey: Boys	11-15 year olds	343	3	1:86
Junior Hockey: Girls	11-15 year olds	361	3	1:120
Senior Hockey: Men	16-45 year olds	5129	2.5	1:2502
Senior Hockey: Women	16-45 year olds	4027	2.5	1:2173

Key Issues for the East Area

4.27 The following key issues are evident in the East area:

- Many of the residents are likely to be University Students who will participate in University Sport as opposed to local club sport.
- It is likely that the hockey clubs will travel outside the area committee to play.
- The East area is primarily built up and as such has little provision of outdoor sports facilities.

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North Area Committee

4.28 The North area comprises the wards of North, St. Margaret's, Summertown and Wolvercote. The area has a collective population of approximately 22755 (based on ONS 2001 Census figures and Oxford City Council estimates). The results of the North assessment are shown below:

Overview

4.29 The assessment has revealed that:

- There are **40** sports pitches available for community use. The distribution of these pitches is shown in Map 8 (within the appendices).
- The study has identified a total of **16** sports clubs generating **32** teams in the area.

Football

4.30 The assessment has revealed the following:

- There are **15** senior, **5** junior and **7** mini soccer pitches within the area with community use
- These pitches represent **27%** of all available pitches within the Borough
- There are **9** football clubs in the area generating **7** senior teams, **1** junior team and **1** mini team.
- These teams represent **6.5%** of all football teams within the Borough.
- Peak demand for football in the area is on a Sunday with **71%** of all games played on this day.
- Based on local supply and demand figures there is a **surplus of senior pitches (+14)**, a **surplus of junior pitches (+7)** and a **surplus of mini pitches (+6)** within the Committee area.
- There are **2** pitches (**1** junior, **1** mini) within the area without secured community use. The existing surplus in pitches means it is unnecessary to bring these pitches into community use. It is worth noting that all these pitches are private.
- **Pitch Quality.** Quality scores for the areas football pitches ranged from **46%** (Below Average) through to **93%** (Excellent). The average score for football pitches was **84%** (Good).
- **Ancillary Facilities.** Quality scores for the ancillary facilities ranged from **51%** (Average) and **100%** (Excellent) The average score for ancillary facilities was **79%**. (Good)

Cricket

4.31 The assessment has revealed the following findings:

- There are **2** pitches available for community use. The pitches identified for community use represent **20%** of the total cricket provision across the Borough.

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- There are 5 clubs within the area generating 5 senior and 3 junior cricket teams
- These teams represent 29.6% of all cricket teams within the Borough.
- Peak demand for cricket in the area is Mid-Week (50%)
- Based on local supply and demand figures there is a sufficiency of pitches within the Committee area.
- There are 0 cricket pitches in the area with no Community Use.
- The two pitches were rated 81% and 91%, giving an average of 86%. (Good)

Rugby Union

4.32 The assessment has revealed the following findings:

- There are 4 pitches available for community use. The pitches identified for community use represent 36% of the total Rugby provision across the borough.
- There are no clubs within the area.
- The average rating for a pitch is 88%. (Good) Quality ratings ranged from 87% (good) to 91%. (excellent)
- **Ancillary Facilities.** No changing facilities were rated for Rugby Pitches for this area.

Hockey

4.33 The assessment has revealed the following findings:

- There are 2 identified Hockey clubs originating from the area generating 15 teams.
- The area has 3 synthetic turf pitches and 4 grass hockey pitches.
- This represents 42.8% of STP provision in the borough.
- Peak demand is on Saturday (62.5%)
- Based on local supply and demand figures there is a surplus of pitch provision in the area.
- There are no STPs in the area without community use.

Team Generation Rates

4.34 Team Generation Rates (TGR's) have been calculated for the local area. These give an indication of the level of participation within the local area and can be compared with the Borough wide rates and those recorded in the other committee areas.

Figure 4.2 – Team Generation Rates in North

Team Type	Age- Group Population	Current Population	Current number of teams	Current TGR
Mini-Soccer (U7-U10)	6-9 year olds	886	1	1:886
Junior Football: Boys	10-15 year olds	951	1	1:951
Junior Football: Girls	10-15 year olds	981	0	0
Senior Football: Men	16-45 year olds	5581	7	1:797

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Team Type	Age- Group Population	Current Population	Current number of teams	Current TGR
Senior Football: Women	16-45 year olds	5731	0	0
Junior Boys Cricket	11-17 year olds	1197	3	1:399
Junior Girls Cricket	11-17 year olds	1234	0	0
Senior Cricket: Men	18-55 year olds	6455	4.5	1:1434
Senior Cricket: Women	18-55 year olds	6644	0.5	0
Mini-Rugby – Mixed	8-12 year olds	1360	0	0
Junior Rugby - Boys	13-17 year olds	897	0	0
Junior Rugby - Girls	16-17 year olds	923	0	0
Senior Rugby - Men	18-45 year olds	5183	0	0
Senior Rugby - Women	18-45 year olds	5323	0	0
Junior Hockey: Boys	11-15 year olds	800	4	1:200
Junior Hockey: Girls	11-15 year olds	826	1	1:826
Senior Hockey: Men	16-45 year olds	5581	6	1:930
Senior Hockey: Women	16-45 year olds	5731	4	1:1433

Key Issues for the North Area

4.35 The following key issues are evident in the North area:

- There is a surplus of football and cricket pitches and an over reliance on non council provision of STPs.
- Of the hockey teams in the area, the vast majority of them are from the North Oxford Hockey Club.
- Pitch quality is generally very high.

North East Area Committee

4.36 The North East area comprises the wards of Barton and Sandhills, Churchill, Headington, Headington Hill and Northway, Marston and Quarry and Risinghurst. The area has a collective population of approximately 34,554 (based on ONS 2001 Census figures and Oxford City Council estimates). The results of the North East assessment are shown below:

Overview

4.37 The assessment has revealed that:

- There are **30** sports pitches available for community use. The distribution of these pitches is shown in Map 9 (within the appendices).
- The study has identified a total of **31** sports clubs generating **86** teams in the area.

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Football

4.38 The assessment has revealed the following:

- There are **14** senior, **6** junior and **5** mini soccer pitches within the area with community use
- These pitches represent **30%** of all available pitches within the Borough
- There are 25 football clubs in the area generating 29 senior teams, 23 junior teams and 7 mini teams.
- These teams represent **42.7%** of all football teams within the Borough.
- Peak demand for football in the area is on a Sunday with 71% of all games played on this day.
- Based on local supply and demand figures there is a **surplus of senior pitches (+9)**, a **deficiency of junior pitches (-5)** and a **surplus of mini pitches (+3)** within the Committee area.
- There are 7 pitches (3 mini, 2 junior, 2 senior) within the area without secured community use. The existing deficiency in junior pitches is only small and would be better addressed by converting some of the existing surplus Senior or Mini provision into Junior provision.
- **Pitch Quality.** Quality scores for the areas football pitches ranged from 42% (Below Average) through to 82% (Good). The average score for football pitches was 71% (Good).
- **Ancillary Facilities.** Quality scores for the ancillary facilities ranged from 15% (Poor) and 85% (Good). The average score for ancillary facilities was 44% (Good).

Cricket

4.39 The assessment has revealed the following findings:

- There is **1** pitch available for community use. The pitches identified for community use represent **10%** of the total cricket provision across the Borough.
- There are **0** clubs within the area.
- There is 1 cricket pitch in the area with no Community Use.
- The one pitch was unable to be rated as it was not marked out during the out of season period.

Rugby Union

4.40 The assessment has revealed the following findings:

- There are 2 pitches available for community use. The pitches identified for community use represent 18% of the total Rugby provision across the borough.
- There are 4 clubs within the area generating 11 teams.
- Peak demand for the pitches in on Sunday (**66.7%**).
- The overall assessment shows a deficiency in supply of –1 pitch at peak times Sunday.
- One pitch was rated and was rated at 81%. (Good)
- **Ancillary Facilities.** No changing facilities were rated for Rugby Pitches for this area.

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Hockey

4.41 The assessment has revealed the following findings:

- There are 2 identified Hockey clubs originating from the area generating 16 teams.
- The area has 2 synthetic turf pitches.
- This represents 28.6% of STP provision in the borough.
- Peak demand is on Saturday (77.7%)
- Based on local supply and demand figures there is a deficiency of pitches (-5) in the area.
- There are no STPs in the area without community use.

Team Generation Rates

4.42 Team Generation Rates (TGR's) have been calculated for the local area. These give an indication of the level of participation within the local area and can be compared with the Borough wide rates and those recorded in the other committee areas.

Figure 4.2 – Team Generation Rates in North East

Team Type	Age- Group Population	Current Population	Current number of teams	Current TGR
Mini-Soccer (U7-U10)	6-9 year olds	1404	7	1:201
Junior Football: Boys	10-15 year olds	1146	19	1:60
Junior Football: Girls	10-15 year olds	1270	4	1:318
Senior Football: Men	16-45 year olds	7793	28	1:278
Senior Football: Women	16-45 year olds	8652	1	1:8652
Junior Boys Cricket	11-17 year olds	1476	0	0
Junior Girls Cricket	11-17 year olds	1640	0	0
Senior Cricket: Men	18-55 year olds	9137	0	0
Senior Cricket: Women	18-55 year olds	10137	0	0
Mini-Rugby – Mixed	8-12 year olds	1829	6	1:305
Junior Rugby - Boys	13-17 year olds	1119	2	1:559
Junior Rugby - Girls	16-17 year olds	1245	0	0
Senior Rugby - Men	18-45 year olds	7285	3	1:2428
Senior Rugby - Women	18-45 year olds	8086	0	0
Junior Hockey: Boys	11-15 year olds	968	8	1:121
Junior Hockey: Girls	11-15 year olds	1073	5	1:215
Senior Hockey: Men	16-45 year olds	7793	1	1:7793
Senior Hockey: Women	16-45 year olds	8652	2	1:4326

Key Issues for the North East Area

4.43 The following key issues are evident in the North East area:

- There is a deficiency of Junior Pitches, but this could be addressed by re-assigning some of the surplus senior and mini pitches.

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- There is a deficiency of rugby pitches this could be met through the surplus provision of senior football pitches.
- Whilst there is a deficiency of hockey pitches it is worth noting that there are only 2 clubs, therefore arrangements to accommodate all the teams over these 2 pitches are probably done easier internally, or some teams travel outside the area.

South East Area Committee

4.44 The South East area comprises the wards of Blackbird Leys, Littlemore, Northfield Brook, Rose Hill and Iffley. The area has a collective population of approximately 23,874 (based on ONS 2001 Census figures and Oxford City Council estimates). The results of the South East assessment are shown below:

Overview

4.45 The assessment has revealed that:

- There are **18** sports pitches available for community use. The distribution of these pitches is shown in Map 10 (within the appendices).
- The study has identified a total of **17** sports clubs generating **46** teams in the area.

Football

4.46 The assessment has revealed the following:

- There are **10** senior, **3** junior and **4** mini soccer pitches within the area with community use
- These pitches represent **17%** of all available pitches within the Borough
- There are 13 football clubs in the area generating 10 senior teams, 12 junior teams and 7 mini team.
- These teams represent **21%** of all football teams within the Borough.
- Peak demand for football in the area is on a Sunday with 73% of all games played on this day.
- Based on local supply and demand figures there is a **surplus of senior pitches (+8)**, a **deficiency of junior pitches (-3)** and a **surplus of mini pitches (+2)** within the Committee area.
- The surplus of Senior and Mini pitches mean that these could be converted to address existing deficiency in Junior pitches.
- There are 11 pitches (4 senior, 4 junior, 3 mini) within the area without secured community use. If three of the junior pitches could be brought into community use this could also address the deficiency in junior pitch provision.
- **Pitch Quality.** Quality scores for the areas football pitches ranged from 55% (Average) through to 87% (Good). The average score for football pitches was 73% (Good).
- **Ancillary Facilities.** Quality scores for the ancillary facilities ranged from 20% (Poor) and 71% (Good). The average score for ancillary facilities was 50% (Good).

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Cricket

4.47 The assessment has revealed the following findings:

- There are **0** pitches available for community use.
- There are **0** clubs based in the area.
- There are **0** pitches in the area without Community Use.

Rugby Union

4.48 The assessment has revealed the following findings:

- There is 1 pitch available for community use.
- There is 1 club based in the area generating 1 team.
- Peak time is Saturday with 100% of games being played.
- Based on local supply and demand figures there is a **sufficiency** of pitches.
- **Ancillary Facilities.** No changing facilities were rated for Rugby Pitches for this area.

Hockey

4.49 The assessment has revealed the following findings:

- There are **0** identified Hockey clubs originating from the area.
- The area has **0** synthetic turf pitches.
- There are no STPs in the area without community use.

Team Generation Rates

4.50 Team Generation Rates (TGR's) have been calculated for the local area. These give an indication of the level of participation within the local area and can be compared with the Borough wide rates and those recorded in the other committee areas.

Figure 4.2 – Team Generation Rates in South East

Team Type	Age- Group Population	Current Population	Current number of teams	Current TGR
Mini-Soccer (U7-U10)	6-9 year olds	1454	7	1:208
Junior Football: Boys	10-15 year olds	937	12	1:78
Junior Football: Girls	10-15 year olds	978	0	0
Senior Football: Men	16-45 year olds	5263	10	1:526
Senior Football: Women	16-45 year olds	5693	0	0
Junior Boys Cricket	11-17 year olds	1054	0	0
Junior Girls Cricket	11-17 year olds	1099	0	0
Senior Cricket: Men	18-55 year olds	6154	0	0
Senior Cricket: Women	18-55 year olds	6617	0	0
Mini-Rugby – Mixed	8-12 year olds	1707	0	0
Junior Rugby – Boys	13-17 year olds	734	0	0
Junior Rugby – Girls	16-17 year olds	766	0	0
Senior Rugby – Men	18-45 year olds	4987	1	1:4987

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Team Type	Age- Group Population	Current Population	Current number of teams	Current TGR
Senior Rugby – Women	18-45 year olds	5405	0	0
Junior Hockey: Boys	11-15 year olds	777	0	0
Junior Hockey: Girls	11-15 year olds	811	0	0
Senior Hockey: Men	16-45 year olds	5263	0	0
Senior Hockey: Women	16-45 year olds	5693	0	0

Key Issues for the South East Area

4.51 The following key issues are evident in the South East area:

- There is a surplus of adult and mini football pitches in the South East area.
- There is a deficiency of Junior pitches to meet demand, but there is the option to convert the surplus senior pitches into Junior Pitches to meet demand or alternatively seek community usage from the schools in the area that do not provide community use of their facilities.
- There is no provision of Cricket or Hockey in the area
- One Rugby club exists and plays on the single pitch within the area boundary this pitch is provided by a local school.

Summary Table of Key Findings

4.52 The following tables summarise some of the key facts and figures reported in the borough wide and local area assessments

4.53 Figure 4.3 illustrates the differences in pitch quantity provision across the six committee areas of the Borough.

Figure 4.3 Pitch Quantity across the Committee areas

INDICATOR	Oxford City	North Area	North East Area	South Area	South East Area	East Area	Central Area
Pitches per head	1:1032	1:569	1:1,151	1:717	1:1,404	1:3,196	1:791
Pitches per sports team		1:1.34	1:0.4	1:0.5	1:0.9	1:0.6	1:3.0

4.54 The analysis above shows that the East Area has the lowest number of pitches per head of population with 1 accessible sports pitch per 3,196 residents. The North Area, South Area and Central Area all have comparatively more pitches per Head of Population than the City Wide average.

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- 4.55 When comparing the number of sports pitches per sports team the rate varies across the City Council Area.

Pitch Quality Ratings across the Committee areas (All Pitches)

- 4.56 Figure 4.4 illustrates the variance in the quality of all pitches by area Citywide.

Figure 4.4 – Pitch Quality Ratings across the Committee Areas (all pitches)

Quality Rating	Oxford City	North-Area	North East Area	South Area	South East Area	East Area	Central Area
Highest Score	93%	93%	82%	90%	87%	91%	93%
Lowest Score	42%	46%	42%	56%	55%	N/ A	55%
Average Rating	77%	84%	71%	77%	73%	N/A	77%

Site surveys for the Eastern Area experienced problems in identifying pitches and as such only one pitch was rated this was in excellent condition (Pitches reported to be marked out at Meadow Lane Rec and South Park where not marked out at the time of the site visits and as such could not be rated for quality)

Figure 4.5 Team Generation Rates across the Committee areas

Team Generation Rate	Oxford City	North-Area	North East Area	South Area	South East Area	East Area	Central Area
Mini-Soccer (U7-10)	1:160	1:886	1:201	1:95	1:208	0	1:145
Junior Football Boys	1:85	1:951	1:60	1:87	1:78	0	1:282
Junior Football Girls	1:2195	0	1:318	0	0	0	0
Senior Football Men	1:431	1:797	1:278	1:267	1:526	0	1:1542
Senior Football Women	1:5944	0	1:8652	1:4244	0	0	1:6596
Junior Boys Cricket	1: 523	1:399	0	1:73	0	0	0
Junior Girls Cricket	N/A	0	0	1:656	0	0	0
Senior Cricket Men	1:2136	1:1434	0	1:699	0	0	1:7785
Senior Cricket	N/A	0	0	1:4875	0	0	0

SECTION IV – OXFORD CITY COUNCIL – AREA ASSESSMENTS

Team Generation Rate	Oxford City	North-Area	North East Area	South Area	South East Area	East Area	Central Area
Women							
Mini – Rugby Mixed	1:566	0	1:305	0	0	0	0
Junior Rugby Boys	1:601	0	1:559	0	0	0	0
Junior Rugby Girls	1:2367	0	0	0	0	0	0
Senior Rugby Men	1:2427	0	1:2428	0	1:4987	1:4902	0
Senior Rugby Women	N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0
Junior Hockey Boys	1:368	1:200	1:121	0	0	1:86	0
Junior Hockey Girls	1:935	1:826	1:215	0	0	1:120	0
Senior Hockey Men	1:1905	1:930	1:7793	0	0	1:2502	0
Senior Hockey Women	1:2972	1:1433	1:4326	0	0	1:2173	0

SECTION V – KEY ISSUES

Key Issues

- 5.1 A number of issues arising from the sport by sport and area assessments have been reported in Sections III and IV of the report. A number of general issues have also emerged throughout the course of the study. These are summarised below and where possible addressed through the strategy recommendations in Section VI of the report.

Displaced Demand

- 5.2 The sports club consultation undertaken has revealed that some clubs play on pitches away from the area from which they originate. In some cases, particularly where a club has a large number of teams, clubs have to make use of several sites, sometimes miles apart to accommodate demand. This could be due to poor quality of local pitches and associated facilities or a localised deficiency, where demand is greater than in other areas of the city. Where this is the case, there could be negative implications on future team development and generation and access for potential players. Viewing sport more holistically, and with reference to the value of sport in community cohesion, a local team playing home fixtures away from their “home” will limit the ability of local clubs to contribute to community pride.

Example of Displaced Demand
Athletico Cowley team play at Tilsey Park in the Vale of White Horse. The City of Oxford Hockey club Play at Oxford Brookes ground and Radley College; both sites are outside the City boundary,

Over demand for pitches

- 5.3 A review of the Council’s pitch booking records reveals that there is significant use of some sites and relatively little or no demand for other facilities. Whilst this is due in part to local teams demanding local facilities, there are some sites that attract teams from further a field. Over demand for some sites is also as a result of many pitches not being served by adequate changing room facilities.

Example of over demand
Peak demand for senior football is Sunday Morning, there is little demand for senior football pitches Sunday Afternoon.

Limited Purpose Built Changing Room Facilities

- 5.4 The assessment results have revealed that there are a number of sites not served by adequate changing rooms. Only 12 of the Oxford City Council playing pitch sites are served by changing room accommodation. Of the changing room facilities that do exist, many are not fit for purpose and are not capable of meeting expected provision for men’s and women’s, adult and junior dual use. This limits their value and in some cases raises access issues, either through lack of segregation (preventing male and female teams from using at the same time) or through wider issues such as failure to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act.

SECTION V – KEY ISSUES

Example of poor changing room facilities

Cuttleslowe Park, Quarry Road Recreation Ground and New Marston are generally in need of improvement if they are to meet teams needs and be fully accessible.

Mismatch between Pitch and Ancillary Facilities

- 5.5 There are some issues with a mismatch in facilities at some of the playing pitch sites across the borough. Although not a widespread issue due to the absence of changing facilities on a number of sites, there are a number of examples of where pitch and ancillary facilities are “mis-matched”. These include:

Examples of “mis-match” of facilities

Sandy Lane where the pitches are deemed to be some of the best provided whilst the changing is poor and lets the site down, Rosehill changing is seen to be reasonable yet the pitches are perceived as being underused.

Negative Responses of Clubs and Leagues

- 5.6 Consultation with Local football league secretaries would suggest that the low initial response to the football club questionnaire was partly down to clubs not believing that any improvements to facilities would result out of participating in the study. Comments received from clubs are summarised in the appendices to the report. Examples of some of the comments received are provided overleaf:

Examples of negative comments

“...Facilities are too small for more than one team at once.”
“Sometimes the changing rooms are locked”
“ The pavilion lacks any social facilities, this is a constant problem as is the lack of promptness by staff”
“Changing facilities are still dirty from the teams using them on a Saturday.”
“Car Parking is only adequate for 6 cars, the changing facilities need to be improved.”

Multi functional recreation space

- 5.7 The majority of playing pitches are in publicly accessible parks or on open access recreation grounds. This in essence means that a playing pitch is not just a sports facility, but part of the fabric of the open space environment. As a result, a playing pitch will receive a range of use in addition to formal matches. Informal games, dog walking and in some cases special events will impact in the quality of facilities.

Example of other uses of playing pitches

Cuttleslowe Park, is one such multi-pitch site, informal games take place on the pitches and are often unchecked if these take place during particularly wet periods or during pitch reinstatement *the pitch never recovers from the damage, even though it is re-seeded in problem areas...the grass never has enough time to recover from the damage”*

SECTION V – KEY ISSUES

Site inspections of playing pitches in parks found that where informal kick about areas had been provided, the grass was worn – there is a danger that these facilities will become less attractive to young people who may then play their games on formal pitches.

Provision by the Universities and Colleges

- 5.8 On the whole the facilities provided by Colleges and Universities across the city wide area are of a high standard. The City has to be cautious in an over reliance upon the Colleges and Universities as key providers of outdoor sports facilities, as the needs of the colleges and Universities may change and the community use may not be permanently available.

SECTION VI – STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Strategic Recommendations

- 6.1 The following strategic recommendations have been identified from the assessment of pitch sports in the borough. There are a number of solutions that need to be considered in relation to issues identified. These can broadly be described as:
- Changing the use of existing pitches
 - Dual-use facilities and greater use of school pitches
 - Enhancing carrying capacity through improving the quality of facilities
 - Management options, particularly for single pitch sites
 - Development of new pitches
- 6.2 The following recommendations are made with consideration to the above policy options. Recommendations have been categorised as relating to City-wide **strategic planning, facility development, and sports development**. Recommendations are also made on an Area Basis.

Strategic Planning Recommendations

Strategic Planning – Recommendation 1

The City Council should consider the development of a Hierarchy of Provision to serve the communities within the 6 committee areas, at the top level major sites should be developed to cater for all the sporting needs of clubs and teams in terms of adequate and appropriate changing, floodlit all weather training and multi sports provision, sites that would lend themselves to this level of provision are Cutteslowe Park(North), Court Place Farm(North East), Cowley Marsh(Cowley)Horspath(East) and Rose Hill (South East).Central area would be served by Court Place Farm, Horspath or any of the other key sites dependent upon where teams are located. Sites of Middle order significance would be a combination of existing Council Sites or School/College sites. Sites of lower order significance are the sites used for informal kickabout, have no changing facilities and are primarily used by local teams.

Strategic Planning – Recommendation 2

Promote the overall value and benefits of playing pitch provision, and its contribution to open space in the local area. Ensure that the “dual” function of playing pitches and their value as part of the City’s stock of greenspace is considered through a wider Greenspace Strategy for the Borough as part of the Council’s response to Planning Policy Note 17 (PPG17). An overarching Greenspace Strategy is vital in assessing the role and value of all greenspace across the Borough. In some cases assessment of informal open space may identify potential sites for formal playing pitch development.

Strategic Planning – Recommendation 3

Seek to use the planning policy process to prioritise facility development and future provision in line with the identified priorities in this strategy. e.g. Use priorities for investment identified as a guide for Section 106 funding.

SECTION VI – STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Strategic Planning – Recommendation 4

The Playing Pitch Assessment data should be updated on an annual basis and a repeat of the strategy development undertaken every 5 years. Annual updating should include repeating quality inspections to monitor changes to quality of pitches

Strategic Planning – Recommendation 5

Seek to develop the overall use of education pitches for community use, and in so doing, develop appropriate support to facilitate access and use especially for junior teams.

Strategic Planning – Recommendation 6

The Council should develop a Football Forum, and local sports development groups established for Rugby, Cricket and Hockey to identify issues with facilities. In the case of each sport, the forum should be used to investigate the key areas for improvement and the development of proactive club development.

Strategic Planning – Recommendation 7

Through the South East Sports Board, liaise with neighbouring authorities regarding new pitch developments in areas close to the Oxford City Council's border to assess the likely impact in supply and demand

Strategic Planning – Recommendation 8

Through the South East Sports Board, liaise with neighbouring authorities regarding pitch hire charges to ensure that fees and charges are comparable.

Strategic Planning – Recommendation 9

Investigate, in consultation with the Sports Forum's the introduction of pitch hire charges that reflect the quality of pitches, charging less for provision rated lower.

Strategic Planning – Recommendation 10

The current surplus and deficiencies highlighted in the study should be treated with caution. They should not be seen as an opportunity to dispose of pitches. They should be seen as an opportunity and a need to generate greater interest in sport at all levels through proactive sports development, supporting existing clubs, developing networks to create opportunity for participation across the city area and providing a hierarchy of quality provision.

SECTION VI – STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Facility Development

Facility Development – Recommendation 1

Seek to improve the overall quality and quantity of existing and new ancillary accommodation with particular emphasis on the need to provide adequately for juniors and women, girls and disabled users. This needs to be done in accordance with the identified surplus and deficiencies of areas and in line with the priorities of appendix 11. In line with Child Protection Guidance, it is important to ensure that facilities can also be segregated to accommodate male and female, junior and senior sports teams. Appendix 11 shows a table of all pitches visited with their appropriate quality rating. The final column states what areas on each site need to be improved.

Facility Development – Recommendation 2

Prioritise investment in ancillary facilities on key multi pitch sites as a more economical use of resources, particularly in relation to ancillary facilities

Facility Development - Recommendation 3

Ensure that where provided, informal kick about areas (5-a-side pitches) are maintained and adequately provide for informal play – this is to ensure that informal use of formal pitches is kept to a minimum in order to sustain quality

Facility Development – Recommendation 4

Linked to the review of leisure facilities, ensure that there is adequate access to floodlit training facilities to support the overall development of pitch sports at local level. The City Council needs to consider a hierarchy of provision with local communities having equal access to good changing, multi purpose sports facilities and floodlit training areas that people can access easily from any of the 6 committee areas.

Facility Development – Recommendation 5

The Council should increase the current level of investment in pitch renovation and improvements to ancillary facilities. Guidelines as to what aspects need to be improved on individual sites can be found in appendix 11

Facility Development – Recommendation 6

The Council has an over reliance on other providers especially of STP's and should look to develop its own future provision.

SECTION VI – STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Sports Development

Sports Development – Recommendation 1

The Council should consider the need for the re-introduction of a proactive sports development team to be a focal point for the future development of sport across the City Area. The team would link into the work of the Regional bodies and promote the City Council as a proactive body willing to work in partnership with local clubs and individuals at all levels to improve access and the image of sport in the City.

Sports Development – Recommendation 2

Team Generation Rates (TGR's) should be used as a benchmark for future measurement and monitoring of sports participation within the borough, and within the 6 committee areas. They should be used to prioritise sports development focus

Sports Development - Recommendation 3

Through the South East Regional Sports Board, team generation rates (TGR's) in Oxford City should be compared with those surrounding boroughs to provide an indication of levels of participation. This comparison can be used to develop county wide priorities for future sports development initiatives and external investment

Sports Development - Recommendation 4

The City Council should form active partnerships with the schools that provide community use, as these schools are often key in the provision of community accessible sport.

Area Priorities

Recommendation 1

Committee Areas with surplus football pitches [dependent upon type] should be re-designated to cater for deficiencies in other sports or alternatively provided as a venue for a specific sport e.g. Women's / Girls Football.

Recommendation 2

All pitches provided should be brought up to a recognised level of "good". Guidelines as to what aspects need to be improved on individual sites can be found in appendix 11.

Recommendation 3

Improvement to the quality of ancillary facilities is a priority in the area. It is recommended that current changing facilities are improved on multi-pitch sites where there is existing provision – some of these are on school sites. Guidelines as to what aspects need to be improved on individual sites can be found in appendix 11.

Recommendation 4

Work with local schools, and clubs using pitches at schools to improve facilities

SECTION VI – STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

e.g. If they have been identified as being below average.

Recommendation 5

Investigate the potential future use of facilities at schools where there is currently no secured community use in those areas of deficiency in supply.

Recommendation 6

The areas with the lowest recorded TGR's need to have a focussed approach by Sports Development, working with schools and clubs to provide opportunities for teams to develop.

Recommendation 7

Develop opportunities for all areas to be provided with access to the four main sports and a network of support for team and club development.

Recommendation 8

Cricket demand should be monitored in partnership with local clubs, local club development should be supported, and the development of local cricket leagues pursued. At present a great deal of cricket is played on a friendly basis. This is not ideal for the sports development

Recommendation 9

Rugby demand should be monitored in partnership with local Clubs – Local clubs should be supported and work with local schools should be further developed to promote Rugby across the City.

- 6.3 The above recommendations are made with the guidance that priority should be given to sites with multiple pitches, sites with severe problems and sites where there would be low cost implications associated with the changes (i.e. better quality line markings).

Local Standards for Oxford City Council

- 6.4 The following local standards are recommended for Oxford City Council in respect of Playing Pitch provision. These standards must be reviewed when provision is reassessed. The number of pitches available for community use refers to the number of pitches currently required to meet the proposed standard. Pitches per 1,000 people standards are based on the population of sport playing age for the specific sport, as used to calculate Team Generation Rates. Standards of provision do not refer specifically to direct provision – they refer to all community use pitches. However, it should be noted that these standards must correspond to the increase in quality standards for playing pitch provision across the borough. That is pitches must be able to accommodate at least two fixtures per weekend throughout the season.

Playing Pitch Local Standards – Quantitative

- 6.5 Future growth in the number of sports is difficult to accurately predict. However, a number of indicators can be used, including:
- The results of the sports club survey

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- Future population projections and current TGR's
- Comparison of TGR's with other areas – this may give an indication of whether there is "scope" for increasing team numbers in the future

6.6 The following projections for growth have been used in recommending local standards of provision.

6.7 **Football.** The local junior leagues have experienced significant growth in recent years particularly within the mini soccer age groups. The majority of clubs also felt that their membership was likely to increase in the next few years. TGR's also compare favourably with those in other areas with particularly good generation in mini soccer. Despite a recent decline in the number of senior teams playing in local leagues, it is hoped that a significant increase in junior teams will facilitate a reversal of this trend in future years. With these factors considered an increase of 10% in the number of teams (playing at peak time) has been used.

6.8 **Cricket.** Consultation with local clubs reveals that half (of those responding) anticipated a growth in their membership over the next few years. The Regional English County Cricket Officer also predicted a rise in the number of teams, facilities permitting. Given that local population is not likely to rise significantly, and TGR's (for Junior Boys and Men's Cricket), a modest increase of 10% in the number of teams has been used.

6.9 **Rugby Union.** Consultation with the clubs showed that a large number of teams are University or College based. The Community based teams/ clubs anticipated an increase in the number of their teams over the next few years. However, local clubs and the Regional RFU are working with schools to increase participation in Rugby. With these factors in mind a modest increase of 10% in the number of teams has been used.

6.10 **Hockey.** Several clubs anticipated an increase in their members. However, there is likely to be some increase with the sport being a Year 2 Active Sport. Consultation with the Governing Body suggests that although not significant, there is some development work in the region. With these factors in mind, an increase of 10% in the number of teams has been used, although this could well be larger.

6.11 The local standards proposed are based on the number of pitches that need to be available to meet current and future demand – these pitches can be provided by providers other than the Council. There are a number of ways of meeting standards, including accessing pitches that are not currently available for community use.

Football

6.12 All standards are based on the number of pitches per 1,000 population (of football playing age). For example, Mini Soccer pitch standards have been based on the population of the Under 7 – Under 10 age group as the age of resident who will demand this type of provision (as identified in the calculation of Team Generation Rates).

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- 6.13 The **Mini Pitch** Standard is set at a level to accommodate known current demand and accommodation of a 10% increase in mini soccer teams playing at peak time. The numbers of pitches required for community use represents the number needed to meet the recommended pitches per person of mini soccer playing age.

Figure 5.1 – Recommended Standard for Mini Soccer Pitches

Quantity Standards for Mini Soccer	
Current Mini Soccer playing population	5,291
Current available provision of designated mini pitches	22
Current Provision (pitches per people*)	1:241
Current Provision adequate?	Yes
Recommended standards of provision (per people)	1:661
Number of pitches required for community use to meet this standard (based on current population)	8

*Of Mini Soccer playing age

- 6.14 The **Junior Pitch** Standard is set at a level to accommodate known deficiencies in pitch provision and accommodation of a 10% increase in junior football teams playing at peak time. The number of pitches required for community use represents the number needed to meet the recommended pitches per persons of junior football playing age.

Figure 5.2 – Recommended Standard for Junior Football Pitches

Quantity Standards for Junior Football Pitches	
Current Junior football playing population	9175
Current available provision of designated junior pitches	19
Current Provision (pitches per people)	1:483
Current Provision adequate?	NO
Recommended standards of provision (per people)	1:382
Number of pitches required for community use to meet this standard (based on current population)	24

*Of Junior Football playing age

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- 6.15 The **Senior Pitch** Standard is set at a level to accommodate current demand and a 10% growth in the number of teams playing at the peak period. The numbers of pitches required for community use represents the number needed to meet the recommended pitches per persons of senior football playing age. Current pitch provision exceeds demand. However the anticipated growth of junior football is likely to increase the need for senior pitches in future years. The proposed standard equates to less senior pitches than are currently available. These pitches **should not** be disposed of, but realigned to address deficiencies in mini and junior provision. Nationally (on the basis of the *General Household Survey* and *Sport England National Survey of Young People and Sport in England*) and locally in Oxford there is likely to be a short-term reduction in the need for adult pitches but a possible resurgence in the medium-long term.

Figure 5.3– Recommended Standard for Senior Football Pitches

Quantity Standards for Senior Football Pitches	
Current senior football playing population	71,861
Current available provision of senior football pitches	65
Current Provision (pitches per people)	1: 1106
Current Provision adequate?	YES
Recommended standards of provision (per people)	1:2662
Number of pitches required for community use to meet this standard (based on current population)	29

*Of Senior Football Playing Age

It is important to note that through proactive sports development pitch demand will increase.

Surplus in provision should not be seen as a means of disposing of pitches rather as an opportunity to develop greater demand through proactive sports development and community engagement.

Surplus in provision creates the opportunity to rest pitches on a cyclical basis to ensure the quality remains to a 'good' standard.

On an area basis the surplus in provision is negligible in some areas.

Cricket

- 6.16 The **Senior Pitch** Standard is set at a level to accommodate current demand and a 10% growth in the number of teams playing. In this case the cricket playing population is 11-55 year olds. A number of factors need to be taken into consideration such as:

- Pitch quality is generally high across the borough and capable of accommodating a significant number of games per week

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Figure 5.4 - Recommended Standard for Cricket Pitches

Quantity Standards for Cricket Pitches	
Current cricket playing population	93,083
Current available provision of cricket pitches	11
Current Provision (pitches per people*)	1:8462
Current Provision adequate?	YES
Recommended standards of provision (people)	1:9308
Number of pitches required for community use to meet this standard (based on current population)	10

* Of Cricket Playing Age

** Although a quantitative deficiency the quality of pitches and games spread across the week mean that current supply copes with demand

- 6.17 The cricket pitch standard is based on numbers of pitches needed to meet current demand at peak time and a 10% increase in teams playing at this time. The number of pitches required would imply no additional pitches are required, the council should not see this as an opportunity to potentially reduce the supply should demand fall. Cricket wickets take several years to become established to a good quality. The sport is likely to increase as clubs e.g. Oxford Cricket Club develops the sport on sites such as Horspath Road.

Rugby Union

- 6.18 The current available number of pitches is adequate to meet current demand. The standards proposed are based on current assessment results. The recommended standard is based on the current demand and a 10% increase at peak time.

Figure 5.5 – Recommended Standard for Rugby Union Pitches

Quantity Standards for Rugby Union Pitches	
Current Rugby Union playing population	83682
Current available provision of rugby union pitches	14
Current Provision (pitches per people)	1:5977
Current Provision adequate?	Yes
Recommended standards of provision (per people)	1:20,920
Number of pitches required for community use to meet this standard (based on current population)	5

Rugby clubs are keen to develop the sport as a means of contributing to the Council's social inclusion agenda.

SECTION VI – STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Surplus and deficiencies should be treated with caution and the results of consultation carried out as part of this study should be taken into consideration.

Low Team Generation Rates are often seen as a result of poor or inadequate sports development programmes. The Council has an over reliance upon schools and colleges to provide facilities for the community.

- 6.19 As with cricket, rugby pitches are generally of a high standard – the need for additional pitches needs to be considered in relation to the type of teams. Additional specific mini pitches are currently being developed by one of the clubs.

Full Size Synthetic Pitches (for Hockey)

- 6.20 The Playing Pitch Strategy methodology guidance states that the best way of assessing adequacy is on the basis of the Facilities Planning Model which is based on general population. The standards for this model are currently being reviewed. Based on the previous standard of 1 pitch per 60,000 population, the City has sufficient provision. The standard needs to be reviewed when new guidance becomes available. It is recommended that the City Council considers the future provision of STPs as at present it is almost totally reliant upon external bodies to cater for provision.

Playing Pitch Local Standards – Qualitative Standards

- 6.21 The following qualitative standards are proposed as a result of the findings from consultation undertaken with sports clubs and the results of the visual inspections completed. These quality measures are not intended as absolute measures but represent reasonable aspirations and benchmarks against which to measure the quality of existing provision in order to determine future needs for enhancement. They are also proposed as a means to monitor improvements to pitches over time as part of the Best Value process, and to aid pitch providers to bring facilities up to a consistent standard across the Borough. The standards proposed in Figure 5.6 are easily measurable and are made in consideration to the quantitative standards.

Figure 5.6 – Quality Standards

Qualitative Standards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All key multi-pitch sites will be served by adequate changing room, toilet and car parking facilities (in accordance with Sport England Guidance).
Football Pitches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All pitches available for community use will be of an acceptable standard to be able to accommodate at least two matches per week throughout the season. (ie appropriate drainage etc.). All pitches available for community use will have adequate safety margins (as prescribed by governing bodies and NPFA) All pitches available for community use will have no less than 75% grass cover at all times (can be measured through the non-technical visual inspection proforma) All pitches in community use will be rated as Good or average

SECTION VI – STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Qualitative Standards
<p>Cricket Pitches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All pitches available for community use will be of an acceptable standard to accommodate at least three matches per week throughout the season• All pitches available for community use will have adequate safety margins (as prescribed by governing bodies and NPFA)• All pitches available for community use will have no less than 80% grass cover at all times (times can be measured through the non-technical visual inspection proforma)
<p>Rugby Union Pitches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All pitches available for community use will be of an acceptable standard to accommodate at least two matches per week throughout the season• All pitches available for community use will have adequate safety margins (as prescribed by governing bodies and NPFA)• All pitches available for community use will have no less than 70% grass cover at all times
<p>Full Size Synthetic Pitches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All pitches available for community use will have adequate lighting lux levels to accommodate league hockey and provide training venues for local clubs

- 6.22 The application, monitoring and achievement of these standards can affect the need for future development of facilities. As a general policy, these standards advocate the improvement of current provision to enable capacity to be increased.
- 6.23 It is difficult to accurately determine the number of current pitches that would meet these proposed standards, as quality ratings were based on consultation with clubs and visual inspections. Not all pitches within the borough were rated. Other factors, such as the existence and effectiveness of drainage systems also need to be considered.