



QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

**Knight, Kavanagh & Page Ltd**

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# STOKE-ON-TRENT CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

## ASSESSMENT REPORT SEPTEMBER 2023 UPDATE

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# STOKE-ON-TRENT CITY COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

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## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

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### GLOSSARY

3G	Third Generation (artificial turf)
AGP	Artificial Grass Pitch
ANOG	Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guide
BC	Bowls Club
BAFA	British American Football Association
BAFANL	British American Football Association National League
BUCS	British Universities & Colleges Sport
CC	Cricket Club
ECB	England & Wales Cricket Board
EH	England Hockey
ETA	England Touch Association
FA	Football Association
FC	Football Club
FF	Football Foundation
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
FIT	Fédération of International Touch
GIS	Geographical Information System
GMA	Grounds Maintenance Association
HC	Hockey Club
IOG	Institute of Groundmanship
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh & Page

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LFFP	Local Football Facilities Plan
LMS	Last Man Stands
LTA	Lawn Tennis Association
MUGA	Multi use games area
NGB	National Governing Body
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NTS	National Touch Series
PDSL	Potteries & District Sunday League
PGA	Professional Golfers Association
PJYL	Potteries Junior Youth League
PPS	Playing Pitch Strategy
PQS	Performance Quality Standard
RFL	Rugby Football League
RFU	Rugby Football Union
RUFC	Rugby Union Football Club
SCCB	Staffordshire County Cricket Board
SFA	Staffordshire Football Association
TC	Tennis Club
TTR	Try Tag Rugby
U	Under
UKU	UK Ultimate

### **PART 1: INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **1.1: Introduction**

This is the Assessment Report element of an update to the Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) for Stoke-on-Trent, originally completed in 2021. It provides an assessment of outdoor sport facilities across the authority to assist in strategically planning for the future and has been produced by Knight Kavanagh & Page (KKP) following commission by the Council.

The original PPS presents a supply and demand analysis of playing pitch facilities in accordance with Sport England's PPS Guidance: An approach to developing and delivering a PPS. The guidance details a stepped approach to developing a PPS, separated into five distinct sections:

- ◀ Stage A: Prepare and tailor the approach
- ◀ Stage B: Gather information and views on the supply of and demand for provision
- ◀ Stage C: Assess the supply and demand information and views
- ◀ Stage D: Develop the strategy
- ◀ Stage E: Deliver the strategy and keep it robust and up to date

Stages A to C are covered in this report, with Stage D covered in the strategy document and Stage E ongoing.

For "non -pitch" sports, Sport England's 'Assessing Needs & Opportunities Guide (ANOG) is followed. This has a similar staged approach:

- ◀ Stage A: Prepare and tailor the approach
- ◀ Stage B: Gather information on supply and demand
- ◀ Stage C: Assessment – bringing the information together
- ◀ Application: Application of an assessment

For this update, a combination of desk-based research as well as high level consultation with the Council, Sport England and relevant NGBs has been carried out. This is in order to update the supply and demand data whilst validating and adding new context to reflect key changes since the original study was undertaken. Both the Assessment Report and the Strategy have then been updated for the Council to use moving forward.

#### **1.2: Why the strategy is being developed (updated)**

The Council's previous study was completed in 2017, using 2015/16 affiliation data and was therefore considered to be out of date before the 2021 study was completed. This is because there had been a number of changes to the sporting landscape, demand for provision, and priorities from within the local authority regarding health and wellbeing.

In addition, the new PPS sought to:

- ◀ Help inform determination of relevant planning applications.
- ◀ Be an evidence base that will support funding applications for sports and physical activity across the City.
- ◀ Inform the Council's internal and capital spending.
- ◀ Identify the role of the education sector in supporting the delivery of community sports.
- ◀ Identify the role of high quality sports and recreational facilities in overcoming health inequalities and community cohesion.

The Council also wanted the new PPS documents to provide guidance and identify if there is a need for hub sites (3G pitches) in certain areas of the City following the chosen analysis areas of North, Central and South. This is due to football being the prominent sport with the Authority. The initial suggestion for hub sites, one in each of the three analysis areas, is based on findings/recommendations from the previous PPS and the 2018 Local Football Facilities Plan (LFFP).

It should also be noted that during the production of the PPS, the decision was made to no longer commence with the Joint Local Plan with Newcastle-under-Lyme. The Council is now conducting its own local plan with more details regarding this outlined below. An aim of the PPS was to assist the Council to inform the policies within the new Local Plan.

It is important that there is regular monitoring and review against the actions identified in the original PPS. As a guide, if no review or update has been carried out within three years of the work being signed off, Sport England and National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs) will consider it to be out of date. If the PPS is used as a 'live' document and kept up to date, which this update seeks to provide, its lifespan can be extended until the picture has changed significantly enough to warrant a new study being undertaken.

### **1.3: Stage A: Prepare and tailor the approach**

#### **Agreed scope**

The Assessment Report provides detail in respect of what provision exists, its condition, distribution and overall quality. It also considers the demand for facilities based on population distribution and planned growth.

The following types of outdoor sports facilities are included in the PPS:

- ◀ Football pitches (including 3G pitches)
- ◀ Cricket pitches
- ◀ Rugby union pitches (including 3G pitches)
- ◀ Rugby league pitches (including 3G pitches)
- ◀ Hockey pitches (sand/water based AGPs)
- ◀ Cycling facilities
- ◀ Golf facilities
- ◀ Tennis courts
- ◀ Bowling greens

Pitch sports (i.e., football, rugby, hockey and cricket) are assessed using Sport England's PPS Guidance. In addition, any other grass pitch sports identified during the project have also been included, such as American football and Ultimate (frisbee).

For the non-pitch sports included within the scope of this study (i.e., tennis, bowls, golf and cycling), the supply and demand principles of ANOG are followed.

### **Study area**

The study area comprises of the full local authority area, with analysis areas (or sub areas) also used to allow for a more localised analysis in addition to the analysis for Stoke-on-Trent as a whole. These are based on collection of wards and are outlined in the table below.



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Table 1.1: Summary of analysis areas to be used for the Stoke-on-Trent PPS

Analysis area	Ward
Central	Abbey Hulton
	Basford & Hartshill
	Bentilee, Ubberley & Townsend
	Birches Head & Northwood
	Boothen
	Bucknall & Eaton Park
	Etruria & Hanley
	Fenton East
	Fenton West & Mount Pleasant
	Hanley Park, Joiner's Square & Shelton
	Hartshill Park & Stoke
	Meir Hay North, Parkhall & Weston Coyney
	Penkhull & Springfields
	Sandford Hill
Trent Vale & Oak Hill	
North	Baddeley, Milton & Norton
	Bradeley & Chell Heath
	Burslem
	Burslem Park
	Ford Green & Smallthorne
	Goldenhill & Sandyford
	Great Chell & Packmoor
	Little Chell & Stanfield
	Moorcroft & Sneyd Green
	Tunstall
South	Blurton
	Dresden & Florence
	Hanford, Newstead & Trentham
	Hollybush
	Lightwood North & Normacot
	Longton & Meir Hay South
	Meir North
	Meir Park
	Meir South

In addition, cross-boundary movement is also recognised, most commonly between neighbouring local authorities such as Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire Moorlands and Stafford. A map of the identified study area and relevant analysis areas can be seen overleaf in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1: Summary of analysis areas to be used for the Stoke-on-Trent PPS



### Management arrangements

A Project Team from the Council has and continues to work with KKP to ensure that all relevant information is readily available and to support the consultants as necessary to ensure that project stages and milestones are delivered on time, within

the cost envelope and to the required quality standard to meet Sport England guidance.

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

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

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

### ***National context***

One of the core planning principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs. Section eight of the NPPF deals specifically with the topic of healthy communities, with Paragraph 98 stating that "planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate."

Paragraph 99 sets three criterion that ensures existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

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

Paragraphs 101, 102, and 103 set the parameters for the designation of Local Green Space. Such spaces may include playing fields and outdoor sport facilities.

### ***Local context***

#### *The Local Plan*

Stoke-on-Trent City Council is currently producing a new Local Plan which will cover the plan period 2020 to 2040. Consultation on the Issues and Options consultation was undertaken June 2021 which sets out key issues affecting the area and potential options for addressing those issues over the plan period. This includes the potential levels of growth and distribution. The Council is currently working towards the draft Local Plan.

#### *Physical Activity Plan (2019-2033)*

The vision of the City Council's Physical Activity Facilities Plan is to create accessible, high quality and sustainable physical activity facilities which offer inclusive services for all. This will enable the inactive to become active, increase participation in targeted groups and help improve the health and wellbeing of local residents. One of the ways the plan sets out to do this is by developing a fit-for-purpose network of better-quality physical activity facilities in strategic locations to meet the sport and physical activity needs of communities in Stoke-on-Trent. This can be strongly justified and supported by the implementation of a robust and up-to-date PPS.

*Notwithstanding the above, the Physical Activity Plan has not been updated since production in 2018. A refresh is therefore required.*

*Together Active formerly Sport Across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent (SASSOT)*

Together Active is the county active partnership. Its team provides services to partners involved with the delivery of sport, physical education and active recreation. The following is a brief overview of its stated services and programmes:

- ◀ Engaging with and supporting partners to develop their sport, PE and active recreation plans and programmes.
- ◀ Supporting volunteers and coaches.
- ◀ Supporting club development.
- ◀ Providing local insight/evidence of need for development of programmes and facilities.
- ◀ Supporting the promotion of community sport and active recreation programmes.
- ◀ Advice on Safeguarding young people and vulnerable adults in sport.
- ◀ Equity and disability sport.
- ◀ Management of Satellite Clubs, Aiming High Inspire Multi Sport Club programmes.
- ◀ Supporting the development and delivery of Level 3 School Games Sports Festivals, Primary School PE and Sport premium.

Together Active indicates the rationale for the PPS, which will help to deliver on the broader agenda to increase physical activity levels which is critical to improving a range of health and wellbeing outcomes, such as rising obesity levels and poor mental health.

### *Step Up Strategy (2021-2025)*

Together Active's current strategy, Step Up, sets out a four-year plan outlining how it will support local communities to use physical activity and sport as a tool to improve their physical and mental wellbeing. It sets out four aims:

- ◀ To drive system leadership that results in physical activity and sport becoming a core feature in policy.
- ◀ To work with health partners to advocate physical activity and sport as a tool to prevent and manage health conditions.
- ◀ In partnership tackle systematic inequalities in physical activity and sport participation.
- ◀ To support individuals to add healthy years to their lives through positive physical activity behaviours.

### *Stoke-on-Trent Health and Wellbeing Board*

The Health and Wellbeing Board is a statutory partnership which brings together senior leaders from Stoke-on-Trent City Council, NHS commissioners and health service providers, Healthwatch, voluntary sector organisations, education providers and emergency services.

The strategy is the City's plan for reducing health inequalities and improving health and wellbeing for residents of all ages. Using the local needs identified in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment the board has developed local evidence-based priorities for the commissioning of local services. The strategy will be used by local health and care partners to inform plans for commissioning services and shape how we work together to meet health and social care needs and address the social determinants of health - these are the conditions in the places where people live, learn, work and play that affect their health and quality of life.

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

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

### ***Gather supply information and views***

The PPS guidance uses the following definitions of a playing pitch and playing field. These definitions are set out by the Government in the 2015 'Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order'.<sup>1</sup>

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

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

As far as possible the assessment report aims to capture all of the outdoor sports facilities within Stoke-on-Trent. However, there may be instances, for example, on school sites, where access was not possible and has led to omissions within the report (although facilities at sites not accessed are still included within the PPS where provision is known to exist from other data sources). Where pitches have not been

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

recorded within the report they remain as pitches and for planning purposes continue to be so. Furthermore, exclusions of a pitch does not mean that it is not required from a supply and demand point of view.

### *Quantity*

Where known, all outdoor sports facilities are included irrespective of ownership, management and use. Sites were initially identified using Sport England's Active Places web-based database, with the Council and NGBs supporting the process by checking and updating this initial data. In 2021, this was also verified against club information supplied by local leagues.

For each site, the following details were recorded in the project database:

- ◀ Site name, address (including postcode) and location
- ◀ Ownership and management type
- ◀ Security of tenure
- ◀ Community availability
- ◀ Total number, type and quality of provision
- ◀ Usage levels

### *Accessibility*

Not all outdoor sports facilities offer the same level of access to the community. The ownership and accessibility of provision also influences actual availability for community use.

Each site is assigned a level of community use as follows:



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

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

### *Quality*

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

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

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

For the purposes of quality assessments, the PPS refers to playing facilities and ancillary facilities separately as being of 'good', 'standard' or 'poor' quality. However, some good quality sites may have poor quality elements and vice versa (e.g., a good quality pitch may be serviced by poor quality changing facilities).

Good quality refers to facilities with, for example, good grass cover, even surfaces and that are free from vandalism and litter. For ancillary facilities, it refers to access for disabled people, sufficient provision for referees, juniors/women/girls and appropriate showers, toilets and car parking. Facility age can also have a significant bearing on the overall quality rating.

Standard quality refers to playing provision that has, for example, adequate grass cover, minimal signs of wear and tear and goalposts that may be secure but in need of minor repair. In terms of ancillary facilities, standard quality refers to adequately sized changing rooms, storage provision and the provision of toilets, although some level of improvement/ modernisation may be required.

Poor quality refers to playing provision with, for example, inadequate grass cover, uneven surfaces and waterlogging issues, whilst for ancillary facilities it may relate to changing rooms with no showers (or communal showers), no running water and old, dated interiors. They are often unsuitable for mixed gender use.

In addition to undertaking non-technical assessments across 2020 and 2021 (using the templates provided within the guidance and as determined by NGBs), partners and local stakeholders have also been consulted on the quality and in some instances the quality rating was adjusted to reflect this. For this update, where quality is known to have changed since the non-technical assessments, or where maintenance regimes have significantly altered, quality ratings have again been adjusted.

Furthermore, technical assessments have also been provided, where undertaken, such as those carried out by the Grounds Maintenance Association (GMA), which now provides technical assessments across football, rugby and cricket (known as PitchPower reports). PitchPower reports where carried out have informed the quality assessments for the PPS to ensure the findings align (unless there is a clear reason for a differential e.g., recent improvements).

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

Presenting an accurate picture of current demand for playing pitches and outdoor sport facilities (i.e., recording how and when provision is used) is important when undertaking a supply and demand assessment. To that end, demand for provision in Stoke-on-Trent tends to fall within the following categories:

- ◀ Organised competitive play
- ◀ Organised training
- ◀ Informal play
- ◀ Unofficial use

Current and future demand for provision is presented on a sport-by-sport basis within the relevant sections of this report. In addition, unmet, latent, imported and exported demand for provision is also identified within each section (unless no such demand has been identified).

Unmet demand is existing demand that is not getting access to provision. It is usually expressed, for example, when a team is in training but is unable to access a match pitch, or when a club has a waiting list due to a lack of provision, which in turn is hindering the growth of the competition. In comparison, latent demand is defined as the number of additional teams (or members) that could be accommodated if access to a sufficient number of outdoor sports facilities (and ancillary provision) was available.

Exported and imported demand refers to those that are playing outside of their local authority area of choice. This therefore includes Stoke-on-Trent based demand that travels outside of the City to access provision (exported demand), as well as demand from nearby authorities that travel into the City (imported demand). This can often be linked to capacity and/or quality issues within an authority, although nationally some leagues and competitions operate a central venue system that can necessitate the displacement.

A variety of consultation methods were used to collate such demand information across 2020 and 2021. Firstly, face to face consultation was carried out with key clubs from each sport, thus allowing for the collection of detailed demand information and an exploration of key issues to be interrogated and more accurately assessed. For all remaining clubs, an online survey (converted to postal if required) was utilised.

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

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

Some follow-up consultation was carried out with selected clubs as part of this update. These were clubs/schools identified as experiencing the most changes since the original PPS, or where recent key issues or development plans have become evident. They were identified by the relevant NGBs or by the Council.

### ***Future demand***

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

Other information sources used to help identify future demand include:

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

Where clubs expressed future demand when consulted across 2020 and 2021, this has remained as future demand unless it is known through NGB consultation and affiliation data to have been achieved or to no longer be an aspiration.

Additional future demand has also been added for this update, where appropriate, based on consultation with the NGBs. For example, some now have initiatives that are likely to result in added growth, such as for women's and girls' activity.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*Table 1.2: Capacity of playing pitches*

Sport	Pitch type	No. of match equivalent sessions		
		Good	Standard	Poor
Football	Adult pitches	3 per week	2 per week	1 per week
	Youth pitches	4 per week	2 per week	1 per week
	Mini pitches	6 per week	4 per week	2 per week
Rugby union*	Natural Inadequate (D0)	2 per week	1.5 per week	0.5 per week
	Natural Adequate (D1)	3 per week	2 per week	1.5 per week
	Pipe Drained (D2)	3.25 per week	2.5 per week	1.75 per week
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	3.5 per week	3 per week	2 per week
Cricket	One grass wicket	5 per season	4 per season	0 per season
	One synthetic wicket	60 per season	60 per season	60 per season
Rugby league	Senior pitches	3 per week	2 per week	1 per week
	Junior pitches	3 per week	2 per week	1 per week
	Mini pitches	3 per week	2 per week	1 per week

The above does not apply to hockey as there is no limit to how often an AGP can be used, with capacity instead limited by availability and current usage levels. A pitch with sports lighting and without any capacity restrictions can generally be accessed for four matches during one day.

For other grass pitch sports (e.g., American football and lacrosse) no guidelines are set by the NGBs although it can be assumed that similar principles should be followed.

For tennis, the capacity of courts is determined by membership levels rather than through matches. The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) suggests that a non-lit hard court can accommodate 40 members whereas a sports-lit hard court can accommodate 60 members. For air domed courts, membership of 100 is considered applicable and permanent indoor courts (although not covered in full by this study) can accommodate 200 members.

For bowls, a green is considered to be sustainable if it has less than 80 members (at which point capacity pressures may exist) but more than 20 (at which point its long-term viability could be in doubt).

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

### ***Develop the current picture of provision***

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

Although spare capacity may be identified at some sites and in some areas, it does not necessarily mean that there is surplus provision. For example, spare capacity may not be available when it is needed (actual spare capacity) or a site may be retained in a 'strategic reserve' to enable rotation and to reduce wear and tear. There may also be a need to discount some capacity, for example at poor quality sites that should not be used until they are improved or at unsecure sites where long-term access cannot be guaranteed.

Conversely, where a shortfall of capacity is identified, this does not necessarily mean there is a need for increased provision via new facilities. Instead, it may be possible for deficits to be overcome through better utilisation of the existing stock, such as via quality improvements or through improving community access.

Once current capacity is determined, future capacity can be calculated via incorporating the future demand identified plus any unmet, latent and exported demand.

### ***Identify the key findings and issues***

The Assessment Report, which is this document, is drafted and presented on a sport-by-sport basis, with data analysis undertaken on both a Council-wide and sub-area basis. This focuses on reporting research findings, consultation, site audit information and data analysis supported by detailed GIS mapping. It is agreed and 'signed off' prior to moving on to the strategy and action plan development stages.

Each included section (from Part 2 onwards) summarises the local administration of the included sport (or facility type). Each provides a summary of the supply of and demand for provision, with key issues identified and an overall supply and demand analysis undertaken.

### **1.6: Develop the strategy (Stage D)**



The Strategy follows the production of this Assessment Report. It features:

- ◀ Headline findings
- ◀ An overall vision and associated aims for the PPS
- ◀ Sport-by-sport recommendations and scenarios
- ◀ Strategic recommendations
- ◀ A site-by-site and area-by-area action plan
- ◀ Housing growth scenarios

Additionally, it will provide detail as to how to deliver the PPS and keep it robust and up-to-date (Stage E).

### PART 2: FOOTBALL

#### 2.1: Introduction

Staffordshire FA (SFA) is the primary organisation overseeing the development (and some elements of administration) of football in Stoke-on-Trent. It is responsible for growing participation, promoting diversity and regulating the sport for everyone to enjoy.

Facility development for football is largely the responsibility of the Football Foundation (FF), which is a charity, linked to and funded by the Premier League, The FA and the Government (via Sport England), that helps communities improve their local football facilities through grant funding. It is committed to improving the experience of playing football for everyone involved in the game. The FF also acts on behalf of The FA as the strategic NGB for football in supporting development of the PPS.

This section of the report focuses on the supply and demand for grass football pitches, where formal demand is generally defined through five formats of play and five pitch types, linked to the age of teams and players. Please refer to the table below for more detail relating to this.

*Table 2.1: Football grass pitch formats*

Format/pitch type	Age range	Recommended pitch size (metres)	Recommended pitch size including runoff (metres)
Adult	U17s+	100 x 64	106 x 70
Youth 11v11	U15s-U16s	91 x 55	97 x 61
	U13s-U14s	82 x 50	88 x 56
Youth 9v9	U11s-U12s	73 x 46	79 x 52
Mini 7v7	U9s-U10s	55 x 37	61 x 43
Mini 5v5	U7s-U8s	37 x 27	43 x 33

Part 3 of this report captures supply and demand for third generation pitches (3G pitches), which is the preferred artificial surface type for football. Full size 3G pitches are defined as those which meet FA minimum dimension criteria for adult football (90 x 45 metres), albeit pitches have generally been constructed to 100 x 64m as per recommended adult dimensions, where possible.

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

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

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

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

The LFFP for Stoke-on-Trent was produced in 2018; however, it is a 'live' document and therefore is to be updated. This can be informed by the PPS as an up-to-date supply and demand assessment may present findings and recommendations that need to be incorporated for investment purposes. LFFPs identify key projects to be delivered and act as an investment portfolio for projects that require potential funding through the FF.

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

### ***Consultation***

In addition to online consultation with key football clubs, an electronic survey was sent to all clubs playing within Stoke-on-Trent during the 2020/21 season. Contact details were provided by Staffordshire County FA and the invitation to complete the survey was distributed via email.

Through both online meetings and survey responses, a total of 49 of 94 clubs responded, equating to a 52% club response rate and a 78% team response rate (248 out of 316). Most key clubs responded to consultation with the majority of those not responding being one or two team clubs.

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Key online consultation was carried out with the following large clubs:

- ◀ Abbey Hulton United FC
- ◀ Blurton Reds FC
- ◀ Blythe Bridge JFC
- ◀ Bradwell FC
- ◀ Eastwood Hanley FC
- ◀ Foley Meir FC
- ◀ FC Hanley
- ◀ Kidsgrove Athletic Youth FC
- ◀ Milton United FC

It should also be noted that in order to provide additional evidence, consultation was carried out with other key stakeholders for football in Stoke-on-Trent including Stoke City FC Community Trust, Port Vale FC Foundation, Trubshaw Cross Lads & Dads, Blurton Lads & Dads, North Staffs Junior/Youth Football League, Potteries Junior Football League and Potteries & District Sunday League.

As part of the 2023 update, additional consultation was carried out with the Council, SFA and the FF. In addition, Stoke City FC Community Trust and Port Vale FC Foundation have been re-contacted to get an update in regards to their facility plans and usage.

### **2.2: Supply**

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The updated audit (2023) identifies a total of 180 grass football pitches within Stoke-on-Trent across 86 sites. Of the pitches, 142 are available, at some level, for community use across 59 sites. All unavailable pitches are either located at schools or at elite stadiums (i.e., Stoke City FC and Port Vale FC).

As can be seen below, most of the community available pitches in the City are in the North Analysis Area with 62 pitches (44%). This is then followed by the Central Analysis Area with 44 pitches (31%) and the South Analysis Area with 36 pitches (25%).

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

Analysis area	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Totals
<b>2021</b>						
Central	22	5	6	8	3	<b>44</b>
North	28	10	6	9	7	<b>60</b>
South	14	7	7	5	2	<b>35</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>139</b>
<b>2023</b>						
Central	21	6	6	8	3	<b>44</b>
North	28	12	6	8	8	<b>62</b>
South	15	7	7	5	2	<b>36</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>142</b>

Most available pitches across Stoke-on-Trent are adult size (64 pitches), whereas the fewest are mini 5v5 pitches (13 pitches). This coincides with high demand for adult football within the City, although youth 11v11 demand is actually higher. Many youth 11v11 teams are using adult pitches as a result, which is not ideal for youth players at U13-U16 level and is not in line with the FA Youth Review. Just 25 available pitches in Stoke-on-Trent are youth 11v11 size, representing 18% of the available supply in comparison to the proportion of youth 11v11 teams which equates to 31% of all demand.

As also seen in Table 2.2, compared to 2021 there are three more pitches in existence all of which are available for community use. The main reason for this is slight pitch

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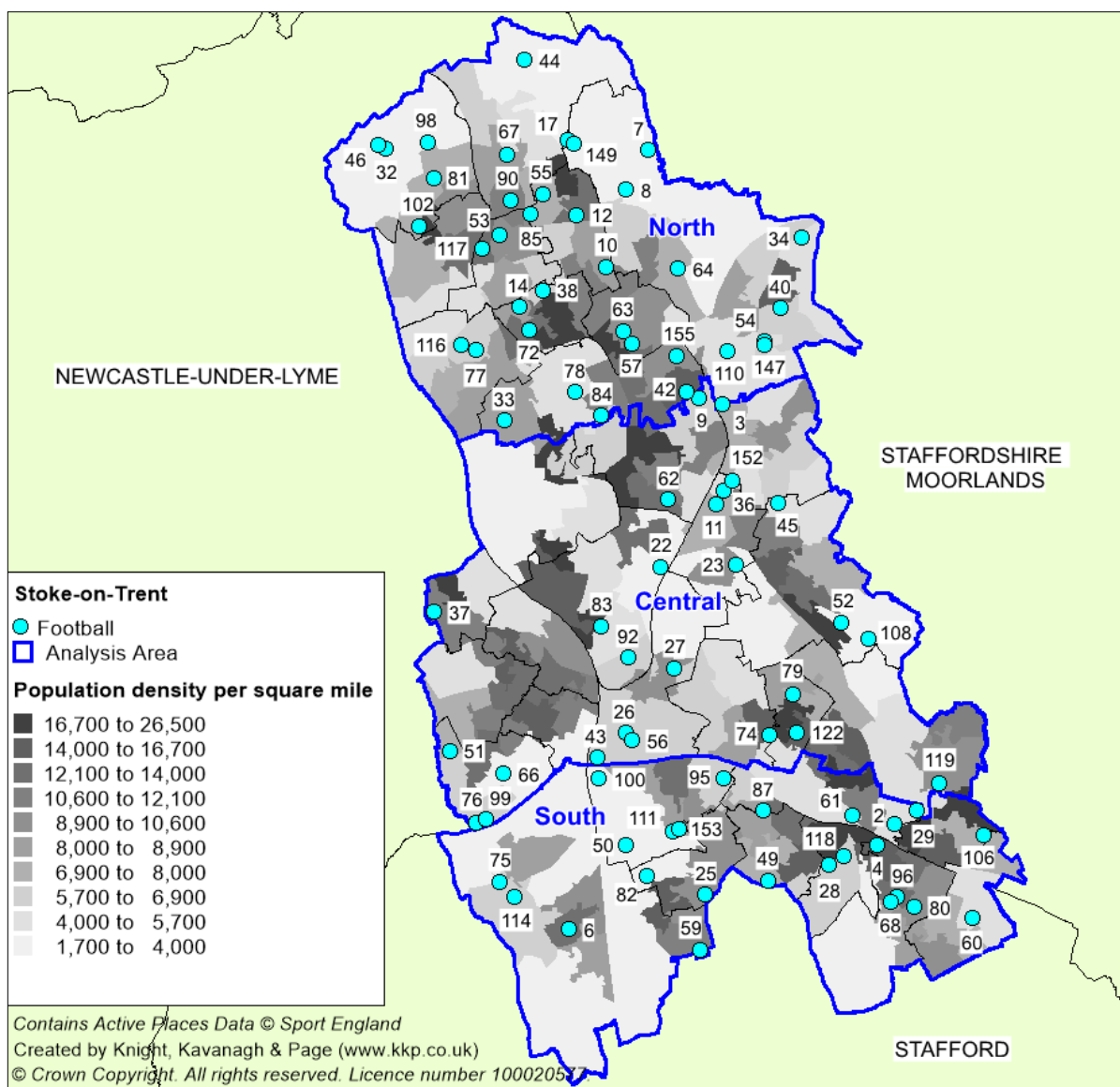
configuration changes as well as additional pitches being marked out. Changes on a site-by-site basis are summarised below.

*Table 2.3: Summary of pitch quantity changes*

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Comments
10	Bradeley Football Centre	North	Two youth 11v11 pitches are now provided (in addition to existing adult pitches).
63	Norton Cricket Club & Miners Welfare Institute	North	One mini 7v7 pitch has been converted to an additional mini 5v5 pitch.
76	Riverside Road	Central	A youth 11v11 pitch has been added (in addition to an existing adult pitch).

The location of all pitches is shown in Figure 2.1 overleaf. For a key to the map, please see Table 2.17.

Figure 2.1: Location of all football pitches in Stoke-on-Trent



### Disused supply

Playing fields which have previously accommodated formal pitch provision but no longer do so are categorised as being disused. A disused site is a playing field which is not being used at all by any users and is not available for community hire either.



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In Stoke-on-Trent, seven sites are identified as being disused. These are:

- ◀ Anchor Road
- ◀ Berry Hill High School
- ◀ Edensor Technology College
- ◀ Mitchell High School (Business & Enterprise College)
- ◀ Norwich Road
- ◀ The Croft Sports Ground & Pavilion (now leased to Thistley Hough Academy)
- ◀ Woodhead Road Playing Fields

Since the production of the original PPS in 2021, a separate Mitigation Strategy has been commissioned on behalf of the Council regarding the potential disposal of the abovementioned former school sites (Edensor Technology College, Berry Hill High School and Mitchell High School). This is currently under development and will seek to present a comprehensive overview as to how the playing pitch and outdoor sports provision at the sites can be collectively and adequately mitigated to meet planning policy and how a positive strategy for sports investment can be developed as a result.

Edensor Technology College closed in 2013 with the school building being demolished shortly afterwards. The accompanying playing fields, which accommodated two adult football pitches, one senior rugby union pitch, four tennis courts and an NTP, have been left unused since and are now disused.

The old site of Berryhill High School closed in 2011 and previously accommodated three youth 11v11 football pitches as well as three tennis courts, an artificial cricket wicket (NTP), and one rugby union pitch. Similarly, the former site of Mitchell High School (Business & Enterprise College) also closed in 2011 and accommodated two adult pitches as well as one NTP, and one mini 5v5 pitch.

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Norwich Road was last marked for football *circa* 2018 and had been marked with a variety of pitch sizes. The site can accommodate two adult and one youth 9v9 pitch.

Anchor Road still has posts up for one adult and one youth 11v11 pitch but has not actively been used for the last few seasons. Similarly, Woodhead Road Playing Fields was last actively used for football *circa* 2003 and accommodated one adult and one youth 11v11 pitch.

It is unknown when The Croft Sports Ground & Pavilion was last formally used, although based on satellite imagery this was around 2007. It contained two youth 11v11 and one mini 5v5 pitch. The site is now leased to Thistley Hough Academy and should therefore, in future versions of this study, be referred to under the name of the School.

PitchPower assessments have recently been commissioned (2023) for Norwich Road, The Croft Sports Ground & Pavilion, Woodhead Road Playing Fields and Anchor Road to understand their quality for potential reinstatement. This is summarised in the table below, with further details featured within the quality section.

*Table 2.4: Summary of disused sites quality rating (Based on PitchPower reports)*

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Comments
5	Anchor Road	Central	One adult and one youth 11v11 both of which are poor quality
65	Norwich Road	Central	One adult is standard quality with one adult and one youth 9v9 pitch poor quality
107	The Croft Sports Ground & Pavilion	Central	Two youth 11v11 and one mini 5v5 which are all poor quality.
123	Woodhead Road Playing Fields	Central	One adult and one youth 11v11 both of which are standard quality.

Previously, Foley Meir FC reported interest in acquiring and developing Whitcombe Road Playing Fields, whilst Blurton Reds FC contacted the Council concerning a long-term lease at Anchor Road.

### ***Future developments***

A new high school (Florence MacWilliams Academy) is planned to be built on land at Whitcombe Road Playing Fields, with this set to come online in 2024 if approved, although this will entail the loss of playing field land. Initial plans include a full size 3G pitch with four dedicated grass football pitches and there are also plans to collaborate the development with Foley Meir FC to provide the Club with additional capacity for growth. The site previously accommodated a youth 9v9 pitch and an adult pitch as late as 2012, although the site is a considerable size and could accommodate several more pitches if required. It is still being used for formal training activity and is therefore not considered to be disused.

Milton United FC (40 teams) has recently completed a development plan for the Hardman Centre. This includes installing sports lighting on one of its adult pitches (to make it compliant for football within the National League System), creating a full size 3G pitch on site and enlarging its clubhouse provision to establish a larger social/function room in order to generate additional income. The full size 3G pitch plans which result in the replacement of one of its grass adult pitches, although it is open to discussions in regard to which pitch this might be.

Port Vale Foundation aspires to bring the two disused youth 11v11 pitches at Bradeley Football Centre back into use and to extend and modernise the ancillary provision as well as establishing a full size 3G pitch. Recently, it has provided a press release regarding its ambition to create a community sports campus which will link this development with Dimensions Leisure Centre / Sproson Park. The aim is to develop an exciting set of proposals to benefit the community and residents across the City as well as to pave the way for the Club to develop its own training pitches and facilities and further develop training pitches that are nearby in for community use. Public engagement and consultation will take place as the plans emerge.

FC Hanley reports that it needs additional pitch provision and states that it has aspirations to take on one or more sites, referencing Hulton Abbey Park as a potential option.

Similarly, Abbey Hulton United FC is in the process of acquiring a lease/licence agreement for Former Milton United Ground. It also expresses an aspiration to acquire a long-term agreement for land adjacent to its current site and/or formalising a community use agreement for the use of the pitches at nearby school, Birches Head Academy.

### *PlayZones Programme*

The Football Foundation, using investment from the Premier League, the FA and the Government via Sport England has released a new capital investment programme called the PlayZones Programme. This is a targeted programme that aims to engage with local communities across the Country to create outstanding sports and activity spaces with a focus on tackling inequalities in participation. The priority groups for the funding are:

- ◀ Lower socio-economic groups
- ◀ Women and girls
- ◀ Disabled people with people with long term health conditions
- ◀ Ethnically diverse communities

Despite the investment being football-led, the Football Foundation wants other sports to benefit, including basketball, netball, rugby, hockey and cricket. The aim is therefore to deliver new or refurbished outdoor areas designed for multiple activities that will allow the priority groups to be more active. As such, whilst the facilities provided will likely be classified as MUGAs, they will be innovative in design and bespoke to the areas where they will be located.

The Football Foundation notes that community engagement is at the heart of the programme and is critical to successful delivery, with facilities to be designed around the unique needs identified. It has learnt that the best community sport and physical activity spaces are designed and delivered in partnership with local people; communities are more likely to use facilities if they have been included within their planning and development.

In total, the Football Foundation aims to deliver 330 PlayZones across the Country by 2025 via a phased approach over the next three years. Birmingham has been included as a pilot authority, with an aim to establish a number of innovative areas through the programme in the near future. The Football Foundation's Programmes Team has indicated that there will be a portfolio of sites in Birmingham submitted, with these to all undergo a feasibility study.

In Stoke-on-Trent, the Football Foundation is currently in discussions with the Council regarding the development of PlayZones and potential sites.

### ***Pitch quality***

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

- ◀ Good
- ◀ Standard
- ◀ Poor

Pitch quality was originally determined in 2020/2021, with quality ratings revisited as part of the 2023 update via consultation with the Council, SFA and FF and through

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utilising more recent PitchPower reports. Please see Appendix 2 for the full assessment criteria.

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

The table below summarises the quality of pitches that are available for community use in Stoke-on-Trent. In total, 41 pitches are assessed as good quality, 45 as standard quality and 56 as poor quality.

Table 2.5: Pitch quality assessments (community use pitches)

Analysis area	Adult pitches			Youth pitches			Mini pitches		
	Good	Standard	Poor	Good	Standard	Poor	Good	Standard	Poor
<b>2021</b>									
Central	2	5	14	4	5	2	1	5	5
North	1	9	18	-	12	4	4	10	2
South	2	9	4	1	5	8	-	5	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>2023</b>									
Central	10	6	5	1	5	6	-	3	8
North	10	6	12	7	6	5	-	9	7
South	4	6	5	6	2	6	3	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>17</b>

Since 2021, there has been an apparent improvement in quality. Overall, there are now 41 good quality pitches compared to 15 in 2021, whilst there are fewer poor quality pitches with 56 now compared to 59. The changes are mainly based upon recent PitchPower report findings which have been commissioned by the Council and clubs.

The biggest change in terms of improvements is identified on adult pitches in both the Central Analysis Area and the North Analysis Area. For the former, this is due to pitches at sites such as Fenton Park, Mount Pleasant Park, Priors Field, Riverside Road and Wood Street Reclamation now being assessed as good, whilst for the latter it is a consequence of good quality pitches now being provided at Bucknall Park, Bycars Park, Chatterley Whitfield, Springbank Sports Ground and Sandbach Road.

Notwithstanding the above, some key sites have seen quality worsen, such as Kidsgrove Athletics Development Centre and FC Hanley, which are both now rated as poor. The remaining community available poor quality pitches are located at:

- ◀ Abbey Hulton United Football Club
- ◀ Ball Green
- ◀ Barkersfield/Poplar Drive
- ◀ Birches Head Academy
- ◀ Bradeley Football Centre
- ◀ Bucknall Park
- ◀ Burnwood Community School
- ◀ Eastwood Hanley Football Club
- ◀ Fegg Hayes Pitch
- ◀ Goldenhill Primary Academy
- ◀ Haywood Academy
- ◀ Latebrook Recreation Ground
- ◀ Longton Park
- ◀ Monks Neil
- ◀ Lysander Road
- ◀ Priory C of E Primary School
- ◀ Sandon Primary Academy
- ◀ St Joseph Catholic Academy
- ◀ Trentham Community Sports Centre
- ◀ Trubshaw Cross Lads & Dads (mini 5v5 pitches only)
- ◀ Weston Junior Academy

These all also provided poor quality pitches in 2021.

### *Pitch improvement*

The FA has a Pitch Improvement Programme aimed at improving the standard of grass pitches across the Country. For provision included in the programme, clubs can utilise the services of the FF's PitchPower web app to carry out a free on-site assessment of their pitches. This then provides the Grounds Management Association (GMA) with the detail needed to create a personalised, informative report to advise on how improvements can be made. Clubs then receive bespoke advice and support to help with any future actions, funding applications and equipment, with clubs getting access to discounted rates for machinery and consumables through local partnerships.

The web app is open to access by all providers, including clubs, schools and local authorities. Following a PitchPower report, organisations can work towards the recommended dedicated maintenance regime identified to improve the quality of their pitches. Applicants are also required to submit a PitchPower assessment for each of their pitches as a condition of any grant funding application for FF grass pitch investment, such as the Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund (detailed later in this section).

PitchPower is less restricted by the seasonal window of in-season play than the non-technical assessments within the PPS guidance, instead being able to be undertaken within a 10-month period, with assessments completed and submitted within one of three windows: September - October, November – March or April – June. Organisations must carry out two assessments a year, with at least one in the November – March window.

As well as the completion of other supporting information such as detail of volunteer training and what maintenance equipment is available, the assessment requires the taking of images and a single soil sample at each assessment site. There are three assessment sites for adult and youth pitches at each goal area and the centre circle, whilst for mini pitches there are two sites at the centre circle and one goal area.



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The PitchPower assessments use a new five step Performance Quality Standard (PQS) rating system developed by the GMA, with the FF and Sport England agreeing alignment with the capacity guidance within the existing PPS Guidance. This alignment is shown in the table below.

*Table 2.6: Agreed equivalent PPOSS quality rating for PQS ratings.*

PQS Rating	PPPOS Quality Rating
Poor	Poor
Basic	Standard
Good	Good
Advanced	Good
High	Good

In Stoke-on-Trent, 22 sites have received Pitch Power reports, with the results of these feeding into the quality ratings referenced above. These have all been commissioned since 2021, meaning such detail was not captured within the original study. The findings at each site and the impact it has had on the PPS ratings are summarised in the following table.

*Table 2.7: Summary of quality changes based on recent Pitch Power reports*

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Comments
11	Bucknall Park	Central	One of two adult pitches improved from poor to good quality
14	Bycars Park	North	One adult pitch improved from poor to good quality
17	Chatterley Whitfield	North	One adult pitch improved from poor to good quality
25	Fallowfield	South	One adult pitch improved from standard to good quality
27	Fenton Park	Central	Three adult pitches improve from poor to good quality and one adult pitch improved from poor to standard quality.
33	Grange Park	North	One adult pitch improved from poor to good quality

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Comments
44	Kidsgrove Athletic FC Development Centre	North	All provision has gone from standard to poor quality
46	Latebrook Recreation	North	One adult pitch improved from poor to good quality
51	Lymevale Road	Central	Two adult pitches improve from poor to standard quality
56	Mount Pleasant Park	Central	One adult pitch improved from standard to good
61	Normacot Recreation Ground	South	One adult pitch improved from standard to good quality
63	Norton Cricket Club & Miners Welfare Institute	North	One adult, one youth 11v11 and two mini pitches have improved from standard to good quality
74	Priors Fields	Central	One adult pitch improved from poor to good quality
76	Riverside Road	Central	One adult pitch improved from poor to good quality
78	Sandbach Road	North	One adult and one youth 11v11 improved from poor to good quality
85	Sprinkbank Sports Ground	North	Two adult and one youth 11v11 improved from poor to good quality
111	The Meadows Primary Academy	South	All provision except one mini 7v7 improved from standard to good quality.
116	Trubshaw Cross Ladsanddads	North	Mini 5v5 provision has worsened from good to poor, mini 7v7 provision has worsened from good to poor, one adult and one youth has improved from poor to good with three further youth pitches improving from standard to good quality
117	Tunstall Park	North	One adult pitch improved from poor to good quality
118	Watery Lane Playing Fields	South	One youth 11v11 and one youth 9v9 improved from poor to good quality
122	Wood Street Reclamation	Central	One adult pitch improved from poor to good quality
152	FC Hanley	Central	All pitch provision reduced to poor quality

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

The FF and the FA have also recently developed a new Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund (GPMF) that allows clubs and sports organisations to apply for funding for maintenance assistance, consumables and/or equipment. Whilst local authorities are

currently ineligible applicants through this fund, clubs, leagues and/or charitable organisations using local authority sites can apply provided they have evidenced landlord permission.

Funding is awarded over a six-year period, with this including up to 100% of the total cost for years one and two and 66% of the cost from year three. Although a six-year fund, the grant terms and conditions cover a 10-year period to instil commitment from the recipient clubs.

### ***Ancillary facilities***

As with pitches, the quality of ancillary facilities servicing football sites across Stoke-on-Trent was assessed for the 2021 study (and updated for this iteration) on the basis of identifying good, standard and poor quality provision. To that end, ancillary facility ratings are primarily influenced by the type and quality of amenities which are available on a site, such as a clubhouse, changing rooms, car parking and boundary fencing (the full site assessment criteria is shown in Appendix 2).

Across the City, of the 38 sites that are actively used for community football, nine (23%) are accompanied by good quality ancillary facilities, 11 (29%) by standard quality ancillary facilities and three (8%) by poor quality ancillary facilities. The remaining 16 sites are not serviced by any clubhouse/changing room provision (although most do have toilets).

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Table 2.8: Summary of community available ancillary facility quality at active football sites

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Ancillary facility quality <sup>2</sup>
3	Abbey Hulton United Football Club	North	Poor
7	Ball Green	North	N/A
9	Birches Head Academy	Central	Standard
10	Bradeley Football Centre	North	Standard
11	Bucknall Park	Central	N/A
12	Burnwood Community School	North	N/A
21	Dimensions Leisure Centre	North	Good
22	Eastwood Hanley Football Club	Central	Standard
26	Fenton Cricket Club	Central	N/A
27	Fenton Park	Central	Standard
28	Florence Colliery Social Welfare Centre	South	Good
29	Foley Football Club (Whitcombe Road)	South	Standard
36	Hanley Town Football Club	Central	Good
43	Kemball Avenue	Central	N/A
44	Kidsgrove Athletic FC Development Centre	North	Good
46	Latebrook Recreation	North	N/A
50	Longton Rugby Club	South	Good
51	Lymevale Road	Central	N/A
54	Milton Hill Primary Academy	North	N/A
61	Normacot Recreation Ground	South	N/A
62	Northwood Stadium	Central	Good
63	Norton Cricket Club & Miners Welfare Institute	North	Standard
78	Sandbach Road	North	N/A
80	Sandon Primary Academy	South	N/A
81	Sandyford Cricket Club	North	Standard
82	Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy	South	Good
85	Springbank Sports Ground	North	Poor
92	St Peters Academy	Central	Good
95	St Thomas More Catholic Academy	South	N/A
108	The Discovery Academy	Central	Standard
110	The Hardman Centre	North	Good
111	The Meadows Primary Academy	South	N/A
114	Trentham Community Sports Centre	South	Standard
116	Trubshaw Cross Lads & Dads	North	Standard

<sup>2</sup> N/A indicates that there is no clubhouse/changing room provision on the site.

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Ancillary facility quality <sup>2</sup>
117	Tunstall Park	North	N/A
118	Watery Lane Playing Fields	South	Poor
122	Wood Street Reclamation	Central	N/A
152	FC Hanley	Central	N/A
153	Barkersfield/Poplar Drive	South	Standard

It should be noted that there is no ancillary provision available at The Meadows Primary School; however, users of this site have access to facilities at Barkersfield/Poplar Drive.

The two sites serviced by poor quality facilities are Abbey Hulton United Football Club and Springbank Sports Ground. At the former, the Club indicates that the provision is in need of major refurbishment, identifying that this is impacting upon growth, particularly for women's and girls' football. Furthermore, it suggests that if it were to be promoted its facilities would not meet Step 5 requirements with dated changing facilities, limited water supply and disability access considered to be the most pressing issues. The Club has long term ambitions to completely rebuild the clubhouse.

The facilities at Springbank Sports Ground are identified by several clubs as being poor quality during consultation. For example, Hazlehurst FC reports that the provision needs better showers, more changing rooms and general modernisation. It goes on to say that the facilities are often vandalised as they are not secure.

Elsewhere, Foley Meir FC has planning permission to build a new clubhouse and to erect sports lighting on its first team pitch, with works nearly complete. The funds for the clubhouse have been granted by the Council whereas funds for the lighting are from the FF. Both grants are supported by funds gathered by the Club through fundraising and sponsorship.

Stoke City Womens FC & RTC reports that the ancillary provision at Norton Cricket Club & Miners Welfare Institute would benefit from being enhanced both in quality and size. Furthermore, it references a need for a dedicated female official changing rooms.

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

Tenure of sites in Stoke-on-Trent is generally secure, i.e., through a long-term lease or a guarantee that pitches will continue to be provided over the next three years.

Across the City there is a proactive approach of leasing/licencing sites to prominent clubs. These agreements offer clubs long term use of a site for which it is responsible for all maintenance and upkeep, except for where the Council retains a commitment for basic grass cutting. There is also potential for clubs to apply for certain levels of funding to improve their facility once a long-term agreement is in situ.

The table below identifies current arrangements within the City.

*Table 2.9: Summary of lease and licence agreements in Stoke-on-Trent*

<b>Site ID</b>	<b>Site name</b>	<b>Analysis area</b>	<b>Club name</b>	<b>Licenser/leaser</b>
3	Abbey Hulton United Football Club	North	Abbey Hulton United	County Council
22	Eastwood Hanley Football Club	Central	Eastwood Hanley FC	City Council
29	Foley Football Club (Whitcombe Road)	South	Foley Meir FC	City Council
36	Hanley Town Football Club	Central	Hanley Town FC (Potteries Park)	City Council

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Club name	Licensor/leaser
108	The Discovery Academy	Central	Bentilee Lads & Dads	The Discovery Academy
110	The Hardman Centre	North	Milton United FC	City Council
116	Trubshaw Cross	North	Trubshaw Cross Lads & Dads	City Council
152	FC Hanley	Central	FC Hanley	City Council
153	Barkersfield/Poplar Drive	South	Blurton Lads & Dads	City Council

Included within the above are five key strategic sites in Stoke-on-Trent which are managed through local branches of the Staffordshire Lads & Dads organisation, namely Bentilee Lads & Dads (The Discovery Academy), Milton United FC/Milton Lads & Dads (The Hardman Centre), Trubshaw Cross Lads & Dads (Trubshaw Cross), FC Hanley/ Stoke Lads & Dads (FC Hanley) and Blurton Lads & Dads (Barkersfield/Poplar Drive). These sites support a large percentage of supply and demand across Stoke-on-Trent are deemed strategic for the North Staffs Junior Football League.

Further to those listed above, there are clubs as of 2023 which are currently negotiating new lease/licence agreements or have referenced aspirations to take on a long-term agreement during consultation. These have all been outlined in greater detail elsewhere, but the sites are also summarised below:

- ◀ Anchor Road
- ◀ Ball Green Playing Fields
- ◀ Former Milton United Ground (site off Leek Road).
- ◀ Hulton Abbey Park
- ◀ Lymevale Road
- ◀ Leek Road
- ◀ Whitcombe Road Playing Fields
- ◀ Woodhead Road Playing Fields

Further to the above, the Council reports that Kidsgrove Youth FC is in the process of taking on a lease for the pavilion and car park at Kidsgrove Athletic FC Development

Centre. However, at this time, the Club cannot take on the pitches as they are designated public open space.

Florence FC reports its main site, Florence Colliery Social Welfare Centre, is operating close to capacity at peak time. The Club indicates strong aspirations to increase levels of demand and wants to enter into a dialogue with the Council to understand if there are any potential sites in its locality it may be able to lease or licence.

The majority (81%) of community available sites which are classified as having unsecure tenure are schools. This is due to schools and academies being able to state their own policies and therefore more likely to restrict levels of community use. This may be due to schools wanting to protect pitch quality for curricular or extracurricular activities or not having the resources available to open up their site for community access. No schools through consultation indicate that they have a community use agreement currently in place.

### **2.3: Demand**

Demand through the audit and assessment identifies that 318 teams currently play in Stoke-on-Trent (2022/2023 season), which is a marginal increase from 2021 where 316 teams were identified. However, there has been a relatively significant increase in demand in the North Analysis Area, with the offsetting reductions in the Central and South analysis areas.

The breakdown is 66 adult men's, nine adult women's, 137 youth boys', 22 youth girls' and 84 mini teams. Youth 11v11 football is the most prominent format of play, whilst mini 5v5 football is the least common.

*Table 2.10: Summary of number of competitive teams currently playing in Stoke-on-Trent*



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Analysis area	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
<b>2021</b>						
Central	25	25	15	16	6	<b>87</b>
North	45	45	29	27	13	<b>159</b>
South	14	17	17	14	8	<b>70</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>316</b>
<b>2023</b>						
Central	20	21	13	8	11	<b>73</b>
North	43	56	34	26	23	<b>182</b>
South	12	23	12	10	6	<b>63</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>318</b>

Football in the City is played predominately in the North Analysis Area, which corresponds with this area also accommodating the most amount of provision. In comparison, the South Analysis Area services the fewest number of teams.

Youth 11v11 football is the most represented (100 teams), followed by adult football (75 teams). In contrast, there are fewer mini 5v5 teams when compared to each other format (40 teams).

### ***League demand***

#### *Staffordshire Lads & Dads (North Staffs Junior/Youth Football Leagues)*

Staffordshire Lads & Dads is a registered charity that is a prominent across the area and particularly in Stoke-on-Trent where it provides organised football for children. The overarching entity has several localised branches servicing teams across five local authorities:

- ◀ Stoke Lads & Dads (Stoke-on-Trent)
- ◀ Blurton Lads & Dads (Stoke-on-Trent / Stafford)

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- ◀ Bentilee Lads & Dads (Stoke-on-Trent / Stafford)
- ◀ Kidsgrove Lads & Dads (Newcastle-under-Lyme)
- ◀ Biddulph Lads & Dads (Staffordshire Moorlands)
- ◀ Milton Lads & Dads (Stoke-on-Trent)
- ◀ Trubshaw Cross Lads & Dads (Stoke-on-Trent)
- ◀ Leek Lads & Dads (Staffordshire Moorlands)
- ◀ Newcastle-under-Lyme Lads & Dads (Newcastle-under-Lyme)

In 2003, it changed its structure meaning teams and clubs affiliated separately rather than to any of the individual branches or Staffordshire Lads & Dads. This in turn led to the formation of the North Staffs Junior Football League (for 6-15 year olds) and the North Staffs Youth League (for 16-18 year olds). This provided a competitive structure and ensured football participation growth on an annual basis.

In order to provide the leagues with suitable provision the individual branches or the main clubs associated with the branches (Milton United FC, Hanley Academy FC and Beniltee FC) have long term leases, or aspirations to take on long term agreements, for sites within Stoke-on-Trent, as referenced in greater detail above.

For growth to continue, the League indicates that there is a need for further investment into the key sites of Trubshaw Cross Lads & Dads, Blurton Lads & Dads and The Meadows Primary Academy. Furthermore, there is also a need to assist in aspirations outlined from clubs directly linked to the organisation.

### *Potteries and District Sunday League (PDSL)*

The PDSL operates two divisions and an over 35s section, totalling 33 teams. The League indicates that pitch quality across the City has generally improved recently due to levels of investment from SFA and the FF. This being said, it also suggests there is a need for additional grass pitches in the south of the City.

### *Potteries Junior Youth League (PJYL)*

The PJYL accommodates development fixtures for U7s through to U10s for a total of 11 clubs. Similar to the PDSL, it indicates that pitch quality has improved within the City, especially at the multi-pitch sites. However, it also states there is a lack of available 3G pitches especially during the winter months for both training and match play.

### ***Professional demand***

#### *Stoke City FC and Port Vale FC foundations*

Across the City there are two professional clubs, Stoke City FC and Port Vale FC, each of which operate their own community trusts. Both run several different programmes within the community including holiday camps, player pathways, walking football, Friday football, Kicks and educational schemes.

Stoke City FC's Community Trust utilises provision at Clayton Wood and Stoke City FC Academy Dome to meet its competitive, training and community demand (the former is geographically located in the neighbouring authority of Newcastle-under-Lyme but is located on the boundary and does not prove problematic). In order to better accommodate its demand, it plans to refurbish its indoor 3G pitch and carry out general repairs to the Academy Dome facility. Furthermore, it aspires to create a new full size indoor 3G pitch and an adult grass pitch, although to do this it would require additional land. The Trust indicates that it is looking to take on any land close to the Academy Dome site on a long-term agreement in order to progress the project.

As mentioned above, Port Vale Foundation has ambitions to bring back into use two disused youth 11v11 pitches at the Bradeley Football Centre as well as to create a full size 3G pitch and expand and improve the quality of the onsite ancillary provision.

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

The football pyramid is a series of interconnected leagues for adult men's football clubs in England. It is known as the National League System (NLS) and begins below the football league (the National League) and comprises of six steps, with various leagues at each level and more leagues lower down the pyramid than at the top. These are then supported by regional feeder leagues, which were previously at Step 7 of the pyramid but are now not included.

The system has a hierarchical format with promotion and relegation between the levels, allowing even the smallest club the theoretical possibility of rising to the top. Clubs within the step system must adhere to ground requirements set out by the FA; the higher the level of football being played the higher the requirements and clubs cannot progress into the league above if the ground requirements do not meet the correct specifications. Ground grading assesses grounds from A to H, with 'A' being the requirement for Step 1 clubs and H being the requirement for Step 6 clubs.

The general principle for clubs in the football pyramid is that they must achieve the appropriate grade by March 31<sup>st</sup> of their first season after promotion, which therefore allows a short grace period for facilities to be brought up to standard. This, however, does not apply to clubs seeking promotion to Step 6 (as they must meet requirements by the end of March in the season they wish to apply for promotion).

The two professional clubs in Stoke-on-Trent play above the National League System with, Stoke City FC in the Championship and Port Vale FC in League Two. Below this, there are a two clubs which play within the system and four that play in regional feeder leagues, as seen in following table.

*Table 2.11: Summary of teams playing within the football pyramid structure*

<b>Team</b>	<b>League</b>	<b>Level</b>
Hanley Town FC	North West Counties Football League – Premier Division	Step 5

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Team	League	Level
Abbey Hulton FC	North West Counties Football League – First Division South	Step 6
Abbey Hulton FC (Reserves)	Staffordshire County Senior League – Premier Division	Regional feeder league
Eastwood Hanley FC	Staffordshire County Senior League – Premier Division	Regional feeder league
Foley Meir FC	Staffordshire County Senior League – Premier Division	Regional feeder league
Hanley Town FC (Reserves)	Staffordshire County Senior League – Premier Division	Regional feeder league

Foley Meir FC and Abbey Hulton United FC each have aspiration to improve their clubhouse provision, related to their position within the pyramid. More details regarding this were referenced in the ancillary facilities section.

### ***Women's National League System***

Correspondingly there is a Women's National League System similar to the adult men's which provides structure to the women's game. This ranges from Tier 1 to Tier 6 with each Tier requiring differing ground grading requirements.

Although women's clubs still required to meet ground requirements set out by the FA these differ from the men's National League System. Ratings range from grade A to C each with differing minimum requirements. Tier 1 and 2 in the Women's National League System is akin to Tier 3 and four of the men's National League System, although not exactly the same. The system is also hierarchical format with promotion and relegation between the levels, allowing even the smallest club the theoretical possibility of rising to the top of the system.

*Table 2.12: Summary of ground grading for women's football*

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

Stoke City FC and Port Vale FC are the clubs that field teams within Stoke-on-Trent that play in the Women's National League System. Bradwell FC and FC Hanley also both have teams that aspire to join the league structure.

### ***Imported demand***

Imported demand refers to any demand from neighbouring local authorities that accesses facilities within the Stoke-on-Trent study area, normally due to a lack of available facilities in other local authorities where such team or club is based. There are three clubs which are currently identified as importing demand into the City. These are:

- ◀ Chesterton AFC
- ◀ Butt Lane White Star FC
- ◀ Kidsgrove Athletic FC.

Chesterton AFC and Butt Lane White Star FC import teams from Newcastle-under-Lyme. The former uses The Excel Academy for one of its youth teams, whereas the latter imports some mini and youth demand to the Stanley Matthews Academy. Neither club reports this to be problematic due to their proximity to the City.

Kidsgrove Athletic FC has a total of 24 youth and mini teams that import demand to Kidsgrove Athletic FC Development Centre (Packmoor Development Centre), also from Newcastle-under-Lyme. The site is located approximately four miles (13 minutes) away from its main site and it therefore has no issue with this arrangement and has

no immediate plans to return this demand. The majority of players utilising the site emanate from within Stoke-on-Trent.

### ***Exported demand***

Exported demand refers to teams that are currently accessing pitches for home fixtures outside of Stoke-on-Trent, despite being registered to the City.

Stoke City FC exports its youth academy and regional talent centre demand to its training ground at Clayton Wood in Newcastle-under-Lyme, totalling four mini and ten youth teams. There is however no issue with this arrangement as the training ground is near to Stoke-on-Trent and secure tenure is provided.

City of Stoke FC is a newly formed club, stemming from Norton Wanderers FC, which was based at a Norton Miners Welfare facility, in Smallthorne. Due to issues with its landlord, and in order to safeguard its longevity, the Club looked to move to a new site and managed to secure a 15-year lease at North Staffs Sports Ground in Newcastle-under-Lyme. It now considers this site to be its home venue, despite technically representing exported demand.

### ***Latent/unmet demand***

During the 2020/2021 consultation process, 20 clubs in Stoke-on-Trent reported some form of unmet/latent demand, which is significant. Relevant clubs and the reasons provided can be seen in the table below.

*Table 2.13: Clubs that report latent demand and the reasons provided*

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Club	Need for more match pitches	Need for more/better training facilities	Need for better/more appropriate changing provision
Abbey Hulton FC	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adderley Green FC	Yes	-	-
Ball Green Academy	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bentilee FC	Yes	Yes	-
Birches Head FC	-	Yes	Yes
Bradwell FC	-	Yes	Yes
Blurton Reds FC	Yes	Yes	Yes
Blythe Bridge JFC	-	Yes	-
FC41	Yes	Yes	-
Foley Meir FC	Yes	Yes	Yes
FC Hanley	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hazlehurst FC	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kidsgrove Athletic Youth FC	Yes	Yes	Yes
Linley Tavern FC	-	Yes	-
Meir Mustangs FC	-	Yes	Yes
Port Vale FC / Port Vale Foundation	Yes	Yes	Yes
Six Towns FC	-	Yes	-
Stoke City Women's & Girls RTC	Yes	Yes	Yes
Stoke Spartans FC	-	Yes	-
Stoke Town FC	Yes	Yes	Yes

The demand has been revisited for this update, although it is clear that none of the clubs have experienced any significant growth. As such, it is reasonable to assume that the majority of the unmet/latent demand remains, if not all of it.

An equal number of clubs (13) indicate they could accommodate additional teams if they had access to more match pitches or had access to better/more changing provision.

In addition, 19 clubs that express latent demand indicate they would be able to increase the number of teams if they have access to more or better training provision including the use of sports-lit 3G pitches. This is further detailed in Part 3 of this report.



### *Future demand*

Future demand can be defined via several ways, including through participation increases and by using population forecasts. In addition, the proceeding Strategy & Action Plan document will contain housing growth scenarios that will estimate additional demand that could arise from housing developments across Stoke-on-Trent.

### *Participation increases*

During the 2020/2021 consultation process, a number of clubs reported aspirations to increase the number of teams they provide. These figures have been revisited for this update to determine if any initial demand has been realised, or where additional future demand is known to now exist. However, no changes have been deemed necessary.

The table below summarises the future demand identified. In total, it features 12 clubs and a predicted growth of 44 teams.

*Table 2.14: Future demand identified by clubs*

Club	Analysis area	Future demand	Pitch size	Match equivalent sessions <sup>3</sup>
Abbey Hulton FC	North	1 x men's	Adult	0.5
		1 x youth girls	9v9	0.5
Ball Green Academy	North	1 x youth boys	11v11	0.5
		1 x youth girls	11v11	0.5
		2 x mini	5v5	1
Bentilee FC (Bentilee Lads & Dads)	Central	2 x youth boys	11v11	1
		3 x mini	5v5	1.5

<sup>3</sup> Two teams require one pitch to account for playing on a home and away basis; therefore, 0.5 pitches can therefore be seen in the table where there is latent demand for one team.

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Club	Analysis area	Future demand	Pitch size	Match equivalent sessions <sup>3</sup>
Blurton Reds FC	South	1 x men's	Adult	0.5
		1 x women's	Adult	0.5
		1 x youth girls	9v9	0.5
		1 x youth girls	9v9	0.5
		1 x youth boys	11v11	0.5
		2 x mini	5v5	1
Blythe Bridge JFC	South	1 x youth girls	11v11	0.5
FC41	Central	2 x youth boys	11v11	1
		2 x mini	5v5	1
Florence FC	South	1 x men's	Adult	0.5
		1 x women's	Adult	0.5
		1 x youth girls	9v9	0.5
		2 x mini	5v5	1
Foley Meir FC	South	1 x youth boys	11v11	0.5
		1 x youth girls	9v9	0.5
		1 x mini	5v5	0.5
Kidsgrove Athletic Youth FC	North	1 x youth boys	11v11	0.5
		1 x mini	5v5	0.5
Meir Mustangs FC	South	1 x youth girls	9v9	0.5
Port Vale FC / Port Vale Foundation	North	1 x men's	Adult	0.5
		1 x women's	Adult	0.5
		1 x youth girls	11v11	0.5
		1 x youth girls	9v9	0.5
		2 x mini	5v5	1
Stoke City Women's and Girls RTC	North	1 x youth girls	9v9	0.5
		1 x mini	5v5	0.5
<b>Total</b>				<b>21</b>

The total future demand expressed by clubs amounts to 21 match equivalent sessions, with eight match equivalent sessions expressed in the North Analysis Area, 8.5 match equivalent sessions in the South Analysis Area and the rest in Central Analysis Area (4.5 match equivalent sessions). Broken down by pitch type and it equates to 3.5 match equivalent sessions on adult pitches, 5.5 match equivalent sessions on youth 11v11 pitches, four match equivalent session on youth 9v9 pitches and eight match equivalent sessions on mini pitches.

### *Population increases*

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Team generation rates are used below to calculate the number of teams likely to be generated in the future (2040) based on population growth. On this basis, it is predicted that there will be an increase of eight senior men's, two youth 11v11 boys' teams and one youth 11v11 girls' teams team across Stoke-on-Trent as a whole.

*Table 2.15: City-wide team generation rates and future demand for football*

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams <sup>4</sup>	Team Generation Rate	Future population within age group	Predicted future number of teams (2040)	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population
Senior Men (18-45)	48,750	75	1:650	54,066	83	8
Senior Women (18-45)	45,583	9	1:5,065	46,860	9	0
Youth Boys (12-17)	8,873	75	1:118	9,111	77	2
Youth Girls (12-17)	8,384	11	1:762	8,737	12	1
Youth Boys (10-11)	3,279	56	1:59	3,040	52	0
Youth Girls (10-11)	3,254	5	1:651	2,968	5	0
Mini-Soccer Mixed (8-9)	6,662	57	1:117	6,148	53	0
Mini-Soccer Mixed (6-7)	7,132	27	1:264	6,279	24	0

When this future growth is dissipated to individual analysis areas rather than as a whole, the potential future growth is anticipated to be eight adult men's and one youth boys 11v11 team. The reduction in teams is due to demand dissipating between each of the analysis areas.

<sup>4</sup> Age group team numbers differ from Table 2.6 as forecasts are based on age rather than playing format. U17 and U18 teams affiliate to their respective County FA as juniors, however, are generally considered to play on and require adult pitches and are considered by age boundaries to be in the adult age group.

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Table 2.16: Analysis area future demand

Age group	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population to 2040 (by analysis area)			
	Central	North	South	Total
Senior Men (18-45)	4	2	2	8
Senior Women (18-45)	0	0	0	-
Youth Boys (12-17)	1	0	0	1
Youth Girls (12-17)	0	0	0	-
Youth Boys (10-11)	0	0	0	-
Youth Girls (10-11)	0	0	0	-
Mini-Soccer Mixed (8-9)	0	0	0	-
Mini-Soccer Mixed (6-7)	0	0	0	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>

The growth of nine teams equates to 4.5 match equivalent sessions per week. This is 2.5 match equivalent sessions in the Central Analysis Area and one match equivalent session in each of the North and South analysis areas. When analysed by playing format, it equates to four match equivalent sessions for adult football and 0.5 match equivalent sessions for youth 11v11 football.

### *Future demand summary*

Taking both participation and population increases into consideration, a total of 6.5 match equivalent sessions on adult pitches, six match equivalent sessions on youth 11v11 pitches, 8.5 match equivalent session on youth 9v9 pitches and seven match equivalent sessions on mini pitches will be brought through to the supply and demand analysis below. It is considered feasible that both future demand expressed by clubs and that identified via population growth could be realised (rather than one absorbing the other).

## 2.4: Capacity analysis

The capacity for pitches to regularly provide for competitive play, training and other activity over a season is most often determined by quality. As a minimum, the quality

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and therefore the capacity of a pitch affect the playing experience and people's enjoyment. In extreme circumstances, it can result in the inability of a pitch to cater for all or certain types of play during peak and off peak times.

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

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

Table 2.17 overleaf applies the above pitch ratings against the actual level of weekly play recorded to determine a capacity rating as follows:

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

### ***Match equivalent sessions***

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

### ***Education sites***

To account for curricular/extra-curricular use of education pitches it is likely that the carrying capacity at such sites will need to be adjusted. The only time this would not happen is when a school does not use its pitches at all and the sole use is community use. The adjustment is typically dependent on the amount of play carried out, the number of pitches on site and whether there is access to an on-site AGP.

In some cases, where there is no identified community use, there is little capacity to accommodate further play. Internal usage often exceeds recommended pitch capacity, which is further exacerbated by basic maintenance regimes that may not extend beyond grass cutting and line marking.

Table 2.17 shows community usage of available pitches. Where not overplayed as a result of community use, school sites are considered to have no spare capacity to accommodate further usage based on assumed curricular and extracurricular activity.

For school sites which are available for community use but that currently do not have any external hirers, one match equivalent session per week, per pitch has been accredited to indicate use for curricular and extracurricular activity as opposed to them being completely unused.

As mentioned earlier, all education sites are classified as having unsecure tenure as no schools through consultation report having a community use agreement in place.

### ***Peak time***

Spare capacity can only be considered as actual spare capacity if pitches are available at peak time. In Stoke-on-Trent, peak time is considered to be Sunday AM for all pitches, as the majority of teams across all age groups play at this time.

In the table overleaf, please note that, on occasions, spare capacity in the peak period is identified despite the pitch being played to capacity or overplayed or more spare capacity is identified in the peak period than what exists overall. This is because the majority of use on those particular pitches occurs outside of the peak period, therefore the identified spare capacity at peak time should not be utilised over and above overall capacity unless quality improvements are made that increases overall capacity.

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

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

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

The actual spare capacity is represented in Table 2.17 as follows:

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Spare capacity in peak period (examples)	Explanation of spare capacity
1	If the cell is highlighted in green with a number, it means that the pitches have actual spare capacity at peak time.
-	If the cell has a dash in it, this means that the pitch is unavailable in the peak period. If it was to be made available, actual spare capacity could exist.
1	If the cell has a number in it but is not highlighted, it means the pitch has spare capacity in the peak period; however, this is discounted. This is most commonly due to unsecure tenure and/or poor pitch quality or if the pitch is already played to capacity or overplayed.



Table 2.17: Football pitch capacity analysis

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use availability	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Agreed quality rating	Current play <sup>5</sup>	Site capacity <sup>6</sup>	Capacity balance <sup>7</sup>	Potential capacity in peak period	Comments
2	Abbey Hill School & College	South	No	Education	Unsecure	Adult	-	1	Standard	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity not available as pitch is unavailable for community use.
2	Abbey Hill School & College	South	No	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Standard	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity not available as pitch is unavailable for community use.
3	Abbey Hulton United Football Club	North	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Adult	-	1	Standard	1.5	2	0.5	0.5	Spare capacity discounted to protect Step pitch quality.
4	Alexandra Junior School	South	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity not available as pitch is unavailable for community use.
6	Ash Green Primary School	South	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity not available as pitch is unavailable for community use.
6	Ash Green Primary School	South	No	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	1	1	1	1	Spare capacity not available as pitch is unavailable for community use.
7	Ball Green	North	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	-	2	Poor	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
7	Ball Green	North	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	0	2	2	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
8	Ball Green Primary School	North	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity not available as pitch is unavailable for community use.
8	Ball Green Primary School	North	No	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	1	1	0	1	Pitch is considered played to capacity through curricular and extra curricular demand.
9	Birches Head Academy	Central	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult	-	2	Poor	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
10	Bradeley Football Centre	North	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	-	2	Poor	3	2	1	0	Overplayed by one match equivalent session.
10	Bradeley Football Centre	North	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	2	Poor	2	2	0	2	Played to capacity.
11	Bucknall Park	Central	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	-	1	Good	0.5	3	2.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
11	Bucknall Park	Central	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	-	1	Poor	0	1	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
12	Burnwood Community School	North	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult	-	1	Poor	1	1	0	1	Pitch is considered played to capacity through curricular and extra curricular demand.
14	Bycars Park	North	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	-	1	Good	0	3	3	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
17	Chatterley Whitfield	North	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	-	1	Good	0	3	3	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
22	Eastwood Hanley Football Club	Central	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Adult	-	1	Poor	2	1	1	-	Overplayed by one match equivalent session.
22	Eastwood Hanley Football Club	Central	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	2	Poor	0.5	4	3.5	1.5	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.

<sup>5</sup> Match equivalent sessions

<sup>6</sup> Match equivalent sessions; based on pitch quality - the FA recommends a maximum number of match equivalent sessions to be accommodate per pitch type. Please refer to Section 2.4 for the full breakdown.

<sup>7</sup> Red indicates overplay, green indicates potential spare capacity and amber indicates at capacity.

PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use availability	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Agreed quality rating	Current play <sup>5</sup>	Site capacity <sup>6</sup>	Capacity balance <sup>7</sup>	Potential capacity in peak period	Comments
22	Eastwood Hanley Football Club	Central	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	3	Poor	1.5	6	4.5	1.5	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
22	Eastwood Hanley Football Club	Central	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	2	Poor	2.5	2	0.5	-	Pitches are overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions.
22	Eastwood Hanley Football Club	Central	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	2	Poor	2.5	2	0.5	-	Pitches are overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions.
23	Eaton Park Academy	Central	No	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Poor	1	1	0	1	Pitch is considered played to capacity through curricular and extra curricular demand.
25	Fallowfields	South	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	-	1	Good	0	3	3	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
26	Fenton Cricket Club	Central	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Adult	-	1	Standard	0	2	2	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
27	Fenton Park	Central	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	-	3	Good	1	9	8	2	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
27	Fenton Park	Central	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	-	1	Standard	0	2	2	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
28	Florence Colliery Social Welfare Centre	South	Yes	CISWO	Unsecure	Adult	-	1	Good	3	3	0	-	Pitch is played to capacity.
28	Florence Colliery Social Welfare Centre	South	Yes	CISWO	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Good	1	3	2	-	Pitch is played to capacity at peak time.
29	Foley Football Club (Whitcombe Road)	South	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Adult	-	1	Good	1.5	3	1.5	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
32	Goldenhill Primary Academy	North	Yes-unused	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
32	Goldenhill Primary Academy	North	Yes-unused	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Poor	1	1	0	1	Pitch is considered played to capacity through curricular and extra curricular demand.
33	Grange Park	North	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	-	1	Poor	0.5	3	2.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
34	Greenways Primary Academy	North	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
34	Greenways Primary Academy	North	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
36	Hanley Town Football Club (Potteries Park)	Central	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Adult	-	1	Good	1.5	3	1.5	-	Pitch is played to capacity at peak time.
37	Harpfield Primary Academy	Central	No	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Poor	1	1	0	1	Pitch is considered played to capacity through curricular and extra curricular demand.
37	Harpfield Primary Academy	Central	No	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	1	1	0	1	Pitch is considered played to capacity through curricular and extra curricular demand.
38	Haywood Academy	North	Yes-unused	Education	Unsecure	Adult	-	1	Poor	1	1	0	1	Pitch is considered played to capacity through curricular and extra curricular demand.
40	Hillside Primary School	North	No	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	1	1	0	1	Pitch is considered played to capacity through curricular and extra curricular demand.
42	Holden Lane Primary School	North	No	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	2	Poor	2	2	0	2	Pitches are considered played to capacity through curricular and extra curricular demand.
43	Kemball Avenue	Central	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	-	1	Standard	-	2	1	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
44	Kidsgrove Athletic FC Development Centre	North	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Adult	-	1	Poor	1	1	0	-	Pitch is played to capacity.
44	Kidsgrove Athletic FC Development Centre	North	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	2	Poor	1.5	4	2.5	0.5	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.

PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use availability	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Agreed quality rating	Current play <sup>5</sup>	Site capacity <sup>6</sup>	Capacity balance <sup>7</sup>	Potential capacity in peak period	Comments
44	Kidsgrove Athletic FC Development Centre	North	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1.5	2	0.5	-	No actual spare capacity at peak time.
44	Kidsgrove Athletic FC Development Centre	North	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Poor	4.5	1	3.5	-	Pitch is overplayed by 3.5 match equivalent sessions.
44	Kidsgrove Athletic FC Development Centre	North	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	3.5	1	2.5	-	Pitch is overplayed by 2.5 match equivalent sessions.
45	Kingsland C of E Academy	Central	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity not available as pitch is unavailable for community use.
46	Latebrook Recreation	North	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	-	1	Poor	0.5	3	2.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
49	Longton Park	South	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	-	2	Poor	0	2	2	2	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
50	Longton Rugby Football Club	South	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Adult	-	2	Standard	1.5	4	2.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
51	Lymevale Road	Central	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	-	2	Standard	1.5	4	2.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
52	Maple Court Academy	Central	No	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	1	1	0	1	Pitch is considered played to capacity through curricular and extra curricular demand.
53	Mill Hill Primary Academy	North	No	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	1	1		1	Pitch is considered played to capacity through curricular and extra curricular demand.
54	Milton Primary Academy	North	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	2	2	0	0.5	Pitch is considered played to capacity through community, curricular and extra curricular demand.
55	Monks Neil	North	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	-	2	Poor	0.5	2	1.5	1.5	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
56	Mount Pleasant Park	Central	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	-	1	Good	0.5	3	2.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
57	New Ford Academy	North	No	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	1	1	0	1	Spare capacity not available as pitch is unavailable for community use.
59	Newstead Primary Academy	South	Yes-unused	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	1	4	3	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
60	Lysander Road	South	Yes-unused	Council	Secure	Adult	-	1	Poor	0	1	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
61	Normacot Recreation Ground	South	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	-	1	Good	1	3	2	-	Pitch is played to capacity at peak time.
62	Northwood Stadium	Central	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Adult	-	1	Good	2.5	3	0.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
62	Northwood Stadium	Central	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	2	Standard	0	8	8	2	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
62	Northwood Stadium	Central	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
62	Northwood Stadium	Central	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	0	2	2	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
63	Norton Cricket Club & Miners Welfare Institute	North	Yes	CISWO	Unsecure	Adult	-	1	Standard	3	2	1	1	Pitch is overplayed by 1 match equivalent session.
63	Norton Cricket Club & Miners Welfare Institute	North	Yes	CISWO	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	2	Standard	0	8	8	2	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
63	Norton Cricket Club & Miners Welfare Institute	North	Yes	CISWO	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	0	4	4	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
63	Norton Cricket Club & Miners Welfare Institute	North	Yes	CISWO	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Standard	2.5	2	0.5	0.5	Pitch is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions.
63	Norton Cricket Club & Miners Welfare Institute	North	Yes	CISWO	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Good	0.5	4	3.5	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
64	Norton-Le-Moors Primary Academy	North	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity not available as pitch is unavailable for community use.
66	Oakhill Primary School	Central	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity not available as pitch is unavailable for community use.

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use availability	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Agreed quality rating	Current play <sup>5</sup>	Site capacity <sup>6</sup>	Capacity balance <sup>7</sup>	Potential capacity in peak period	Comments
67	Ormiston Horizon Academy	North	Yes-unused	Education	Unsecure	Adult	-	1	Standard	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
68	Ormiston Meridian Academy	South	Yes-unused	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Standard	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
72	Port Vale (Vale Park)	North	No	Elite Sport	Secure	Adult	-	2	Good	-	-	0	-	Elite sport pitches not available for community use.
74	Priors Fields	Central	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	-	1	Good	0	3	3	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
75	Priory C of E Primary School	South	Yes-unused	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
76	Riverside Road	Central	Yes-unused	Council	Secure	Adult	-	1	Good	0	3	3	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
76	Riverside Road	Central	Yes-unused	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Good	0	4	4	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
77	Saint Nathaniel's Academy	North	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity not available as pitch is unavailable for community use.
77	Saint Nathaniel's Academy	North	No	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	1	1	0	1	Spare capacity not available as pitch is unavailable for community use.
78	Sandbach Road	North	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	-	1	Good	0.5	3	2.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
78	Sandbach Road	North	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Good	1	4	3	-	Pitch is played to capacity at peak time.
79	Sandford Hill Primary School	Central	No	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	1	1	0	1	Spare capacity not available as pitch is unavailable for community use.
80	Sandon Primary Academy	South	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Poor	1	1	0	1	Pitch is considered played to capacity through community, curricular and extra curricular demand.
81	Sandyford Cricket Club	North	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Adult	-	1	Poor	0	1	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
82	Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy	South	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult	-	4	Standard	1.5	8	3.5	2.5	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
83	Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre	Central	No	Education	Unsecure	Adult	-	1	Good	1	3	2	1	Spare capacity not available as pitch is unavailable for community use.
84	Sneyd Green Primary School	North	No	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Poor	1	1	0	1	Spare capacity not available as pitch is unavailable for community use.
85	Springbank Sports Ground	North	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	-	2	Good	2	6	4	-	Pitch is played to capacity at peak time.
85	Sprinkbank Sports Ground	North	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Good	-	4	4	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
87	St Gregory's Catholic Academy	South	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	2	Poor	2	4	2	2	Spare capacity not available as pitches are unavailable for community use.
90	St Margaret Ward Catholic Academy	North	No	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Poor	1	1	0	1	Pitch is considered played to capacity through curricular and extra curricular demand.
92	St Peters Academy	Central	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult	-	1	Standard	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
95	St Thomas More Catholic Academy	South	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Standard	2	2	0	-	Pitch is played to capacity.
96	St. Augustines Catholic Academy	South	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity not available as pitch is unavailable for community use.
98	St. Joseph's Catholic Academy	North	Yes-unused	Education	Unsecure	Adult	-	1	Poor	1	1	0	1	Pitch is considered played to capacity through curricular and extra curricular demand.
99	St. Teresas RC Primary School	Central	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity not available as pitches are unavailable for community use.
100	Stoke City FC (Bet365 Stadium)	South	No	Elite Sport	Secure	Adult	-	1	Good	-	-	0	-	Elite sport pitch not available for community use.

PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use availability	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Agreed quality rating	Current play <sup>5</sup>	Site capacity <sup>6</sup>	Capacity balance <sup>7</sup>	Potential capacity in peak period	Comments
102	Summerbank Primary Academy	North	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	1	4	3	1	Spare capacity not available as pitch is unavailable for community use.
106	The Crescent Academy	South	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	2	Standard	2	8	6	2	Spare capacity not available as pitches are unavailable for community use.
106	The Crescent Academy	South	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	1	4	3	1	Spare capacity not available as pitch is unavailable for community use.
108	The Discovery Academy	Central	Yes	Education	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	2	4	2	-	No actual spare capacity at peak time.
108	The Discovery Academy	Central	Yes	Education	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Standard	3	2	1	-	Pitch is overplayed by one match equivalent session.
108	The Discovery Academy	Central	Yes	Education	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	2	Standard	3.5	4	0.5	-	No actual spare capacity at peak time.
110	The Hardman Centre	North	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Adult		2	Standard	3	4	1	0.5	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
110	The Hardman Centre	North	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	2	Standard	3	8	5	-	Pitches are played to capacity at peak time.
110	The Hardman Centre	North	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	6	4	2	-	Pitch is overplayed by 2 match equivalent sessions.
110	The Hardman Centre	North	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	2	Standard	7.5	4	3.5	-	Pitches are overplayed by 3.5 match equivalent sessions.
110	The Hardman Centre	North	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	2	Standard	5	4	1	-	Pitches are overplayed by one match equivalent session.
111	The Meadows Primary Academy (Formerly Blurton Primary School)	South	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	2	Good	1	12	11	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
111	The Meadows Primary Academy (Formerly Blurton Primary School)	South	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Good	1	6	5	-	No actual spare capacity at peak time.
111	The Meadows Primary Academy (Formerly Blurton Primary School)	South	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	0.5	4	3.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
111	The Meadows Primary Academy (Formerly Blurton Primary School)	South	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Good	4	4		-	Pitch is played to capacity.
111	The Meadows Primary Academy (Formerly Blurton Primary School)	South	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	2	Good	3	8	5	-	No actual spare capacity at peak time.
112	Thistley Hough Academy	Central	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult		1	Standard	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
112	Thistley Hough Academy	Central	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Standard	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
112	Thistley Hough Academy	Central	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	2	Standard	2	8	6	2	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
114	Trentham Community Sports Centre	South	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult	-	1	Poor	0.5	1	0.5	0.5	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
114	Trentham Community Sports Centre	South	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Poor	1	1	0	1	Pitch is considered played to capacity through curricular and extra curricular demand.
116	Trubshaw Cross Lads & Dads	North	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Adult	-	2	Good	2	6	4	0.5	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
116	Trubshaw Cross Lads & Dads	North	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	2	Poor	7	4	3	-	Pitch is overplayed by 3 match equivalent sessions.
116	Trubshaw Cross Lads & Dads	North	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	3	Standard	4.5	12	7.5	-	No actual spare capacity at peak time
116	Trubshaw Cross Lads & Dads	North	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	2	Good	6.5	8	1.5	-	No actual spare capacity at peak time
116	Trubshaw Cross Lads & Dads	North	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Good	7	8	1	-	No actual spare capacity at peak time.
117	Tunstall Park	North	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		1	Good	1	3	2	-	No actual spare capacity at peak time.
118	Watery Lane Playing Fields	South	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Good	0	4	4	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
118	Watery Lane Playing Fields	South	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Good	0	4	4	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.

# STOKE-ON-TRENT CITY COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use availability	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Agreed quality rating	Current play <sup>5</sup>	Site capacity <sup>6</sup>	Capacity balance <sup>7</sup>	Potential capacity in peak period	Comments
119	Weston Junior Academy	South	Yes-unused	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	1	1	0	1	Pitch is considered played to capacity through curricular and extra curricular demand.
122	Wood Street Reclamation	Central	Yes-unused	Council	Secure	Adult	-	1	Good	0	3	3	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
147	Former Milton United Ground	North	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Adult	-	1	Standard	0	2	2	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
149	Fegg Hayes Pitch	North	Yes-unused	Council	Secure	Adult	-	1	Poor	0	1	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
152	FC Hanley	Central	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Adult	-	1	Poor	2.5	1	1.5	-	Pitch is overplayed by 1.5 match equivalent sessions due to adult pitch being overmarked by two mini 7v7 pitches.
152	FC Hanley	Central	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	2	Poor					
152	FC Hanley	Central	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	3.5	2	1.5	-	Pitch is overplayed by 1.5 match equivalent sessions.
152	FC Hanley	Central	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Poor	3.5	1	2.5	-	Pitch is overplayed by 2.5 match equivalent sessions due to youth 11v11 pitch being overmarked by a youth 9v9 pitch.
152	FC Hanley	Central	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor					
153	Barkersfield/Poplar Drive	South	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	0.5	2	1.5	0.5	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
153	Barkersfield/Poplar Drive	South	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Poor	1	1	0	-	No actual spare capacity at peak time.
153	Barkersfield/Poplar Drive	South	Yes	Sports club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	2	Poor	0.5	2	1.5	1.5	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.

### *Spare capacity*

Actual spare capacity totals 27.5 match equivalent sessions per week and is identified across the following 24 sites:

- ◀ Bucknall Park (one adult pitch)
- ◀ Bycars Park (one adult pitch)
- ◀ Chatterley Whitfield (one adult pitch)
- ◀ Fallowfields (one adult pitch)
- ◀ Fenton Cricket Club (one adult pitch)
- ◀ Fenton Park (four adult pitches)
- ◀ Foley Football Club (one adult pitch)
- ◀ Former Milton United Ground (one adult pitch)
- ◀ Grange Park (one adult pitch)
- ◀ Kemball Avenue (one adult pitch)
- ◀ Latebrook Avenue (one adult pitch)
- ◀ Longton Rugby Football Club (two adult pitches)
- ◀ Lymevale Road (two adult pitches)
- ◀ Mount Pleasant Park (one adult pitch)
- ◀ Northwood Stadium (one adult, one youth 11v11, one youth 9v9 and two mini 7v7 pitches)
- ◀ Priors Fields (one adult pitch)
- ◀ Riverside Road (one adult and one youth 11v11 pitch)
- ◀ Sandbach Road (one adult pitch)
- ◀ Spingbank Sports Ground (one youth 11v11 pitch)
- ◀ The Hardman Centre (two adult pitches)
- ◀ The Meadows Primary Academy (one mini 7v7 and two mini 5v5 pitches)
- ◀ Trubshaw Cross Lads & Dads (two adult pitches)
- ◀ Watery Lane Playing Fields (one youth 11v11 and one youth 9v9 pitch)
- ◀ Wood Street Reclamation (one adult pitch)

# STOKE-ON-TRENT CITY COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

In 2021 actual spare capacity totalled 20 match equivalent sessions per week, meaning an increase of 7.5 match equivalent sessions. This is mainly due to the increase in quality of many adult pitches based on PitchPower reports.

*Table 2.18: Summary of actual spare capacity in match equivalent sessions per week*

Analysis area	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
<b>2021</b>						
Central	4	0.5	1	2	-	<b>7.5</b>
North	6.5	-	-	-	1	<b>7.5</b>
South	5	-	-	-	-	<b>5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>15.5</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>2023</b>						
Central	10	2	1	2	-	<b>15</b>
North	5.5	1	-	-	-	<b>6.5</b>
South	2.5	1	1	0.5	1	<b>6</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>27.5</b>

Most actual spare capacity is identified on adult pitches, although some is also identified on each remaining pitch type. It is mainly located in the Central Analysis Area (15 match equivalent sessions), in part due to recent pitch quality improvements, especially on adult pitches. The remainder is fairly evenly split between the North (6.5 match equivalent sessions) and the South (six match equivalent sessions).

### **Overplay**

Overplay occurs when there is more play accommodated on a site than it is able to sustain, which can often be due to the low carrying capacity of pitches.

There are 25 pitches currently identified as being overplayed across eight sites, with this equating to 30.5 match equivalent sessions per week. This is an increase of 13



# STOKE-ON-TRENT CITY COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

match equivalent sessions compared to 2021 findings, primarily due to the change in quality and an increase in demand at Kidsgrove Athletic FC Development Centre and FC Hanley which are rated as poor quality.

Table 2.19: Summary of overplay (site-by-site)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Capacity rating (match sessions)
10	Bradeley Football Centre	North	Adult	2	1
22	Eastwood Hanley Football Club	Central	Adult	1	1
22	Eastwood Hanley Football Club	Central	(11v11)	2	0.5
22	Eastwood Hanley Football Club	Central	(9v9)	2	0.5
44	Kidsgrove Athletic FC Development Centre	North	(11v11)	1	3.5
44	Kidsgrove Athletic FC Development Centre	North	(9v9)	1	2.5
63	Norton Cricket Club & Miners Welfare Institute	North	Adult	1	1
63	Norton Cricket Club & Miners Welfare Institute	North	(11v11)	1	0.5
108	The Discovery Academy	Central	(11v11)	1	1
110	The Hardman Centre	North	(7v7)	1	2
110	The Hardman Centre	North	(11v11)	2	3.5
110	The Hardman Centre	North	(9v9)	2	1
116	Trubshaw Cross Lads & Dads	North	(5v5)	2	3
152	FC Hanley	Central	Adult	1	1.5
152	FC Hanley	Central	(7v7)	2	1.5
152	FC Hanley	Central	(5v5)	1	1.5
152	FC Hanley	Central	(11v11)	1	2.5
152	FC Hanley	Central	(9v9)	1	2.5
<b>Total</b>					<b>30.5</b>

As can be seen below, when broken down, most overplay takes place in the North Analysis Area with 18 match equivalent sessions. the remaining overplay is in the Central Analysis Area, with none identified in the South Analysis Area.

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## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

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Table 2.20: Summary of overplay in match equivalent sessions per week

Analysis area	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
<b>2021</b>						
Central	0.5	2.5	-	0.5	-	<b>3.5</b>
North	-	8	2.5	0.5	-	<b>11</b>
South	-	2	1	-	-	<b>3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17.5</b>
<b>2023</b>						
Central	2.5	4	3	1.5	1.5	<b>12.5</b>
North	2	7.5	3.5	2	3	<b>18</b>
South	-	-	-	-	-	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>11.5</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>30.5</b>

There is now some form of overplay for each pitch type, with the most identified on youth 11v11 pitches (11.5 match equivalent sessions) and the least on mini 7v7 pitches (3.5 match equivalent sessions).

### 2.5: Supply and demand analysis

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## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Having considered supply and demand, the tables below identify current demand (i.e., spare capacity taking away overplay and any exported demand) in each of the analysis areas for each pitch type, based on match equivalent sessions. Future demand is based on team generation rates, which are driven by population increases, in addition to club aspirations.

### **Adult pitch analysis**

There is currently an adequate supply of adult pitches to meet demand, with 13.5 match equivalent sessions of spare capacity per week and spare capacity existing in each analysis area. When considering future demand, overall spare capacity decreases to five match equivalent sessions and a shortfall is created in the South Analysis Area.

When compared to 2021 findings, the overall level of spare capacity has reduced by 1.5 match equivalent sessions, although there has been a marked increase in the Central Analysis Area.

*Table 2.21: Supply and demand balance of adult pitches in match equivalent sessions per week*

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
<b>2021</b>					
Central	4	0.5	3.5	2	1.5
North	6.5	-	6.5	2.5	4
South	5	-	5	4	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>15.5</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>6.5</b>
<b>2023</b>					
Central	10	2.5	7.5	2	5.5
North	5.5	2	3.5	2.5	1
South	2.5	-	2.5	4	1.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>5</b>

# STOKE-ON-TRENT CITY COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

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### *Youth 11v11 pitch analysis*

There is currently a shortfall across the City on youth 11v11 pitches totalling 7.5 match equivalent session per week, with shortfalls evident in both the Central and North analysis areas. When accounting for future demand, the shortfalls increase to 13.5 match equivalent sessions per week and is evident in each analysis area.

Notwithstanding the above, the level of shortfall has reduced by 4.5 match equivalent sessions when compared to 2021 findings. This is due to an improved picture in both the North and South analysis areas.

*Table 2.22: Supply and demand balance of youth 11v11 pitches in match equivalent sessions per week*

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
<b>2021</b>					
Central	0.5	2.5	2	2.5	4.5
North	-	8	8	2	10
South	-	2	2	1.5	3.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>2023</b>					
Central	2	4	2	2.5	4.5
North	1	7.5	6.5	2	8.5
South	1	-	1	1.5	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11.5</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>13.5</b>

### *Youth 9v9 pitch analysis*

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## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Overall, there is a current shortfall on youth 9v9 pitches totalling 5.5 match equivalent sessions, with this evident in the Central and North analysis areas (the South Analysis Area is operating at capacity). When taking into consideration future demand the shortfall worsens to 9.5 match equivalent sessions and is identified in each analysis area.

When compared to 2021, the shortfall has increased by three match equivalent sessions. This is due a worsening picture in the Central and North analysis areas.

*Table 2.23: Supply and demand balance of youth 9v9 pitches in match equivalent sessions per week*

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
<b>2021</b>					
Central	1	-	1	-	1
North	-	2.5	2.5	1.5	4
South	-	1	1	2.5	3.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6.5</b>
<b>2023</b>					
Central	1	3	2	-	2
North	-	3.5	3.5	1.5	5
South	-	-	0	2.5	2.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9.5</b>

### **Mini 7v7 pitch analysis**

Across Stoke-on-Trent there is currently a minimal shortfall of one match equivalent session on mini 7v7 pitches which can be attributed to a deficit in the North Analysis Area. This remains unchanged when accounting for future demand.

# STOKE-ON-TRENT CITY COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

In 2021, an overall level of spare capacity was identified, evidencing a worsening picture for mini 7v7 football. This is due to a decrease in spare capacity in the Central Analysis Area and a growing shortfall in the North Analysis Area.

*Table 2.24: Supply and demand balance of mini 7v7 pitches in match equivalent sessions per week*

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
<b>2021</b>					
Central	2	-	2	-	2
North	-	0.5	0.5	-	0.5
South	-	-	0	-	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1.5</b>
<b>2023</b>					
Central	2	1.5	0.5	-	0.5
North	-	2	2	-	2
South	0.5	-	0.5	-	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>

### **Mini 5v5 pitch analysis**

Currently, mini 5v5 pitches have a shortfall of 4.5 match equivalent sessions, with this evident in the Central and North analysis areas (the South Analysis Area is operating at capacity). When accounting for future demand there is a predicted overall shortfall of 11.5 match equivalent sessions.

In 2021, an overall level of spare capacity was identified, evidencing a worsening picture for mini 7v7 football. This is due to the creation of a shortfall in both the Central Analysis Area and the North Analysis Area.

*Table 2.25: Supply and demand balance of mini 5v5 pitches in match equivalent sessions per week*

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Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
<b>2021</b>					
Central	-	-	0	2.5	2.5
North	1	-	1	3	2
South	-	-	0	2.5	2.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>2023</b>					
Central	-	1.5	1.5	2.5	4
North	1	3	2	3	5
South	-	-	0	2.5	2.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11.5</b>

### 2.6: Conclusions

Based on current demand, there is a present shortfall of youth 11v11, youth 9v9, mini 7v7 and mini 5v5 pitches across Stoke-on-Trent, with spare capacity only existing on adult pitches. This remains the case when accounting for future demand, although the deficits are projected to worsen.

*Table 2.25: Summary of supply and demand across Stoke-on-Trent in match equivalent sessions per week*

Pitch type	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
<b>2021</b>					
Adult	15.5	0.5	15	8.5	6.5
Youth 11v11	0.5	12.5	12	6	18
Youth 9v9	1	3.5	2.5	4	6.5
Mini 7v7	2	0.5	1.5	-	1.5
Mini 5v5	1	-	1	8	7
<b>2023</b>					
Adult	18	4.5	13.5	8.5	5
Youth 11v11	4	11.5	7.5	6	13.5
Youth 9v9	1	6.5	5.5	4	9.5
Mini 7v7	2.5	3.5	1	-	1

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## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

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Mini 5v5	1	4.5	3.5	8	11.5
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In the 2021 PPS, it was determined that there was current spare capacity across adult, youth 9v9, mini 7v7 and mini 5v5 pitches, therefore suggesting that the picture has worsened, overall. However, it should be noted that the shortfall of youth 11v11 capacity has reduced and this decrease is greater than any deficit increases in regards to the other pitch types.



### Football – grass pitch summary

- ◀ **Actual spare capacity totals 27.5 match equivalent sessions and is identified across 24 sites, whilst 25 pitches are overplayed by a total of 30.5 match equivalent sessions.**
- ◀ **There is a present shortfall of youth 11v11, youth 9v9, mini 7v7 and mini 5v5 pitches across Stoke-on-Trent, with spare capacity only existing on adult pitches.**
- ◀ **When accounting for future demand, existing deficits are projected to worsen.**
- ◀ **The picture has worsened since 2021 findings, with deficits increasing on youth 9v9 pitches, shortfalls being created on mini 7v7 and mini 5v5 pitches and spare capacity reducing on adult pitches (only youth 11v11 provision has an improved outlook).**
- ◀ The audit identifies a total of 180 grass football pitches within Stoke-on-Trent across 86 sites, with 142 pitches available for community use across 59 sites.
- ◀ There are seven disused sites (Norwich Road, Anchor Road, Edensor Technology College, St Peters Academy, Berryhill High School, Mitchell High School and The Croft Sports Ground & Pavilion – now leased to Thistley Hough Academy).
- ◀ A separate mitigation strategy is being carried out regarding the potential disposal of the former school sites (Edensor Technology College / Berryhill High School / Mitchell High School), whilst a new High School (Florence MacWilliams Academy) is planned to be built at Whitcombe Road Playing Fields.
- ◀ In total, 41 pitches are assessed as good quality, 45 as standard quality and 56 as poor quality; this represents an increase in good quality provision and a decrease in poor quality provision compared to 2021 findings.
- ◀ Of the 38 sites that are actively used for community football, nine are accompanied by good quality ancillary facilities, 12 by standard quality ancillary facilities and two by poor quality ancillary facilities.
- ◀ Demand through the audit and assessment identifies that 318 teams currently play in Stoke-on-Trent, with this consisting of 66 adult men's, nine adult women's, 137 youth boys', 22 youth girls' and 84 mini teams (2022/2023 data).
- ◀ There has been a marginal increase in demand since the 2021 study (based on 2020/2021 data), with 316 teams previously registered.
- ◀ There are three clubs which import demand into the City (Chesterton AFC, Butt Lane White Star FC and Kidsgrove Athletic FC), whereas Stoke City FC and City of Stoke FC both export demand.
- ◀ A total of 20 clubs express some form of latent/unmet demand.
- ◀ 12 clubs express future demand aspirations equating to the potential growth of 44 teams, whilst population projections predict an increase of nine teams to 2040.

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

#### **3.1: Introduction**

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

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

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

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

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

### **3.2: Supply**

The recommended dimensions for a full size 3G artificial grass pitch for football are 100 x 64 metres. This extends to an area of 106 x 70 metres with the recommended minimum three metre run off area included. These dimensions allow for all age group match play to take place including adults, youth under 17/18 and younger age groups via overmarked pitches, e.g. the marking out of two 9v9 pitches for under 11/12s.

If a new pitch is proposed to measure below the recommended dimensions, then justification must be provided for this in relation to the identified needs it will provide for and/or site constraints. In doing so, the impacts of a reduced pitch size in meeting current and future needs must be considered, e.g. a pitch not providing the recommended dimensions for adult match play and/or only being able to accommodate one rather than two overmarked 9v9 pitches. This justification needs to be included in the planning application details submitted to the relevant Local Planning Authority for the new pitch.

Unless otherwise stated and justified for an individual pitch, proposals in this PPS for any new 3G artificial grass pitches are based on providing them to the recommended dimensions.

There are seven full size 3G pitches in Stoke-on-Trent that fully comply with the above specification. The majority (four pitches or 57%) are located in the Central Analysis Area, whilst the two pitches (29%) are located in the South Analysis Area and one pitch (14%) is in the North Analysis Area. All pitches are serviced by sports lighting and available for community use.

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Table 3.2: Full size 3G pitches in Stoke-on-Trent

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Sports lighting?	Size (metres)	Certification
21	Dimensions Leisure Centre	North	Yes	Yes	105 x 70	FA Expired (24/05/23)
62	Northwood Stadium	Central	Yes	Yes	100 x 65	FA (31/05/25)
82	Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy	South	Yes	Yes	106 x 70	FA (31/05/24)
83	Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre	Central	Yes	Yes	102 x 68	FA Expired (11/01/19)
92	St Peters Academy	Central	Yes	Yes	104 x 65	FA (31/05/24)
95	St Thomas More Catholic Academy	South	Yes	Yes	95 x 64	FA Expired (31/05/22)
108	The Discovery Academy	Central	Yes	Yes	106 x 71	FA (31/05/25)

The number and location of full size 3G pitches has not changed since the collation of data in 2021. However, it should be noted that FA pitch certification at Dimensions Leisure Centre, Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre and St Thomas More Catholic Academy have all expired. The implications of this are detailed later on within this part of the report (see FA 3G Pitch Register section).

In addition to the full size pitches, there are also 28 smaller size 3G pitches servicing Stoke-on-Trent, of which 19 are sport-lit and available for community use. This is an increase of one pitch from the original study following the recent conversion of what was a sand-based pitch located at Hanley Park.

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## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Table 3.3: Additional supply of 3G pitches

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	No. of pitches	Community use?	Sports lighting?	Size (metres)
21	Dimensions Leisure Centre	North	2	Yes	Yes	60 x 45
28	Florence Colliery Social Welfare Centre	South	1	Yes	Yes	40 x 25
35	Hanley Park	Central	1	Yes	Yes	44 x 33
50	Longton Rugby Football Club	South	1	Yes	Yes	60 x 40
63	Norton Cricket Club & Miners Institute	North	1	Yes	Yes	45 x 35
73	Powerleague	South	10	Yes	Yes	30 x 20 (6) 40 x 30 (2)
83	Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre	Central	1	Yes	Yes	35 x 26
101	Stoke City FC Academy Dome (Indoor)	South	1	No	No	60 x 40
110	The Hardman Centre	North	1	Yes	Yes	42 x 22
124	YMCA North Staffordshire	Central	1	Yes	Yes	30 x 20
155	The Excel Academy (Former Goals)	North	8	No	Yes	30 x 20

Smaller size pitches are generally not suitable for adult match play but can be used to accommodate youth and mini matches provided they are FIFA/FA approved, of an adequate size and with adequate run-off areas. More commonly, they are used to accommodate training demand, commercial football leagues and social play.

Eight of the smaller size pitches that are not currently available for community use are located at The Excel Academy (the other is at Stoke City FC Academy Dome). This provision until early 2021 was managed by Goals, prior to the business going into liquidation. The School now manages the provision internally with no external usage currently offered.

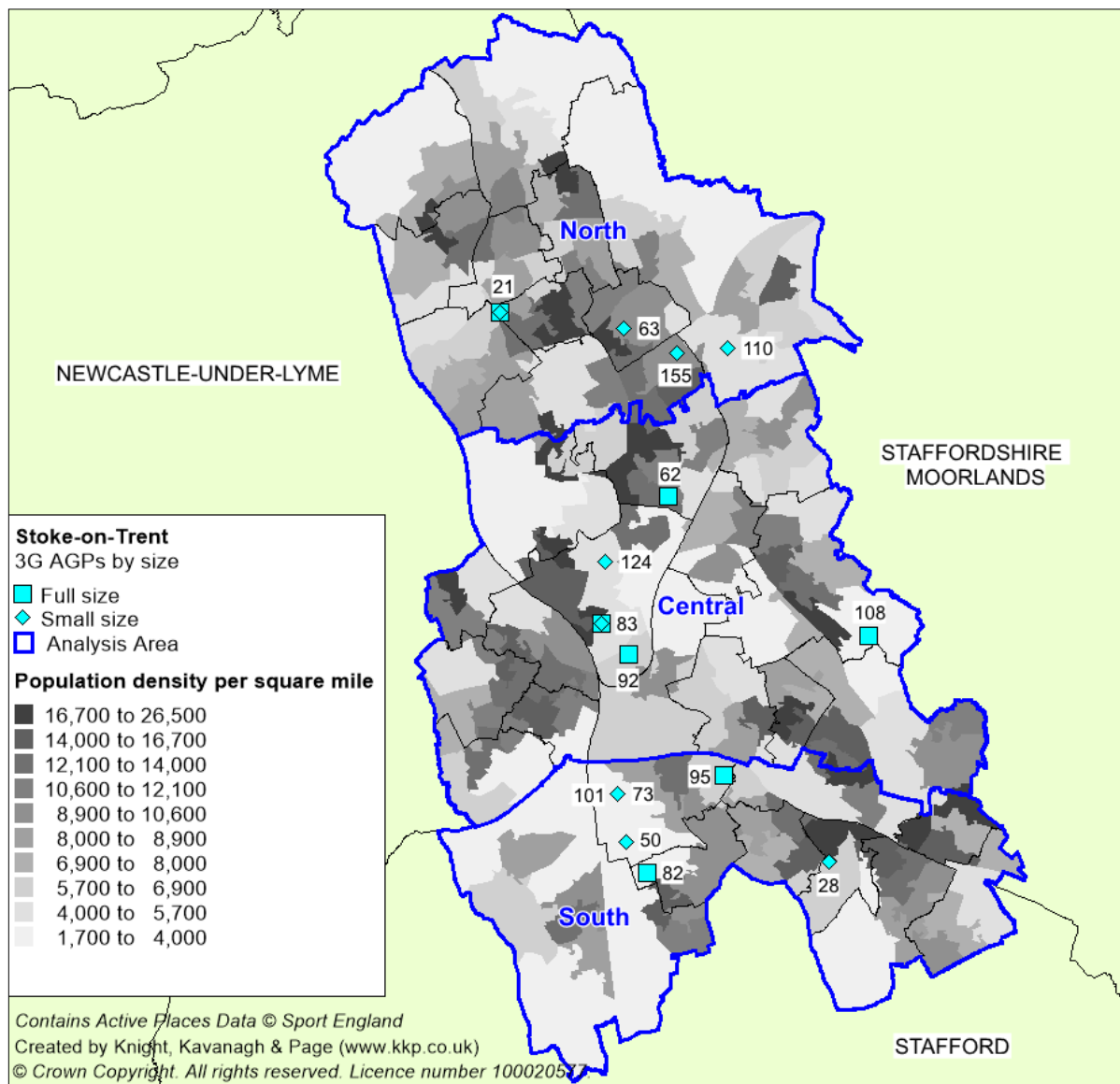
Please see Figure 3.1 below for the location of the 3G pitches, regardless of size.

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## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

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*Figure 3.1: Location of full size 3G AGPs in Stoke-on-Trent*



**Future provision**

Planning permission has been granted at Powerleague for the creation of an additional mini 7v7 sized 3G pitch to add to the 10 smaller size pitches currently provided.

A new high school (Florence MacWilliams Academy) is planned to be built on Whitcombe Road Playing Fields. If approved, it sets to come online in 2024 with a full size 3G pitch and four dedicated grass football pitches. There are also plans to collaborate the development with Foley Meir FC to provide the Club with additional capacity for growth.

As mentioned in Part 2: Football, clubs and leagues have identified aspirations to create full size 3G pitches at the Hardman Centre and Bradeley Football Centre. Both of these developments, if they come to fruition, would replace grass football pitches.

SFA indicates that previous aspirations for a 3G pitch to be established at Trubshaw Cross Lads & Dads is now likely to instead involve grass pitch enhancements rather than the creation of any artificial surface.

Stoke City FC via its Community Trust also aspires to create a new full size indoor 3G pitch; however, to do this it would require additional land. The Trust indicates that it is looking to take on any land close to its Academy Dome facility on a long-term agreement in order to progress the project.

Furthermore, through consultation, Thistley Hough Academy and Ormiston Meridian Academy both reference an aspiration to create a full size 3G pitch at their sites, although such ambitions are less formalised.

There are also aspirations to create indoor 3G provision as part of Youth Collective Programme initiative. This plans to create a facility which will be socially inclusive and accessible for the local community. Its pilot centre will be located in the centre of Stoke-on-Trent, although if successful, there are plans to develop provision in each of the six towns.

### ***FA 3G Pitch Register***



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

Pitches undergo testing to become a FIFA Quality pitch or a FIFA Quality Pro pitch, with provision commonly constructed, installed and tested in situ to achieve either accreditation. The differences between the accreditations are that FIFA quality pitches are designed to accommodate substantial levels of regular usage, whereas FIFA Quality Pro pitches are more for high level performance, with usage levels therefore more limited to protect the standard.

For pitches used by affiliated grassroots football clubs (at and below Regional Feeder League level (previously Step 7) and clubs below the Women's Football Pyramid (Tier 3), the minimum requirement of testing is the FA Register Test. However, matches played at Step 1 to 6 of the Men's National League System must follow more stringent testing, with this including a minimum pitch size of 100 x 64 metres, a run-off area of between 1.83 metres (Step 2-6) and 2.25 metres (Step 1), a consistent playing surface shade of green and line markings must be in accordance with the Laws of Association Football. In addition, FA testing must take place annually rather than every three years.

As for 3G pitches used in the Women's Football Pyramid; at Tier 1, matches cannot be played on a 3G pitch, whilst existing 3G pitches at Tier 2 must be accredited to the FIFA Recommended Quality performance standard.

Generally, FIFA Quality pitches can be typically used for 60-85 hours per week, whereas FIFA Quality Pro pitches are able to accommodate 20-30 hours. To remain accredited, pitches must be re-assessed every three years to ensure that quality has not deteriorated beyond acceptable levels, although this is required annually for clubs using 3G pitches within the football pyramid (steps 1-6).

In Stoke-on-Trent, four of the seven full size 3G pitches are FA certified, these being at Northwood Stadium, Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy, St Peters Academy and The Discovery Academy. Previously, the pitches at Dimension Leisure Centre, Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre and St Thomas More Catholic Academy were on the FA Pitch Register; however, their certification has recently expired.

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## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

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No smaller size pitches are approved, although those at Stoke City FC Academy Dome and Dimensions Leisure Centre were previously.

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

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

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

There are no WR compliant 3G pitches within Stoke-on-Trent with the nearest one situated at Keele University Sports Centre (Newcastle-under-Lyme). Although the pitch is compliant, it does not meet the minimum size recommendations for competitive rugby union, meaning it is only suitable to accommodate training demand and mini play.

Trentham RUFC has aspiration to develop a WR compliant 3G pitch at its site.

### ***Management***

The 3G pitch at Dimensions Leisure Centre is managed by the City Council whereas the pitch at Northwood Stadium is now managed by Stoke Athletics Club having previously been council operated. All the remaining provision is managed by their respective educational providers.

# STOKE-ON-TRENT CITY COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

### **Availability**

As seen in the table below, each community available pitch is considered widely accessible during both midweek evenings (peak time access for training) and on weekdays (peak time access for matches).

*Table 3.4: Summary of 3G pitch availability*

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Availability
21	Dimensions Leisure Centre	North	Monday to Friday 10:00 to 22:00 Saturday/Sunday 10:00 to 18:00
62	Northwood Stadium	Central	Monday 15:30 to 22:00 Tuesday/Wednesday 14:30 to 22:00 Thursday/Friday 09:30 to 22:00 Saturday/Sunday 10:00 to 16:00
82	Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy	South	Monday to Friday 17:00 to 22:00 Saturday/Sunday 09:00 to 16:00
83	Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre	Central	Monday to Friday 17:00 to 22:00 Saturday/Sunday 10:00 to 18:00
92	St Peters Academy	Central	Monday to Friday 17:00 to 22:00 Saturday/Sunday 09:00 to 15:00
95	St Thomas More Catholic Academy	South	Monday to Friday 18:00 to 22:00 Saturday/Sunday 09:00 to 16:00
108	The Discovery Academy	Central	Monday to Friday 17:00 to 22:00 Saturday/Sunday 09:00 to 16:00

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### **Quality**

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

In Stoke-on-Trent, most full size 3G pitches are currently considered to be standard quality. The only exception is the pitch at St Thomas More Catholic Academy, which is still rated as good quality with no issues identified following installation in 2018.

*Table 3.5: Age and quality of full size 3G pitches*

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Year installed/resurfaced	Quality (2021)	Quality (2023)
21	Dimensions Leisure Centre	North	2014	Standard	Standard
62	Northwood Stadium	Central	2013	Standard	Standard
82	Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy	South	2013	Good	Standard
83	Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre	Central	2015	Standard	Standard
92	St Peters Academy	Central	2013	Good	Standard
95	St Thomas More Catholic Academy	South	2018	Good	Good
108	The Discovery Academy	Central	2013	Standard	Standard

Since 2021, most pitches have remained the same quality. The only two pitches which have reduced in quality (from good to standard) are those at Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy and St Peters Academy.

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The pitches at Northwood Stadium, Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy, St Peters Academy and The Discovery Academy are now nearing the end of their lifespan. As such, resurfacing will be required in the near future to prevent further quality deterioration.

Regarding the smaller size pitches, those at Longton Rugby Football Club and The Hardman Centre were refurbished in 2021 and 2022, respectively. The sports lights at the former have also been replaced.

The operators of pitches Stoke City FC Academy and YMCA North Staffordshire have aspirations for refurbishment due to the age and poor quality of their provision.

### ***Ancillary facilities***

The ancillary facilities at most sites are standard or good quality with no specific issue raised through consultation. The only exception to this is at St Thomas More Catholic Academy, where the School states that it is looking at potential funding streams to create new ancillary provision which is separate to the School and also closer to the 3G pitch. Currently, users of the 3G pitch cannot freely access changing provision as it is located within the main school building which is generally locked at weekends.

### **3.3: Demand**

The 3G provision currently servicing Stoke-on-Trent is reported to be operating at or close to capacity at peak times, especially during winter months when grass pitches cannot be used for training or recreational demand (due to a lack of sports lighting).

In addition to capacity being taken up by football clubs for training and match play purposes, there is also a strong presence of small-sided football being played. In this regard, Champion Fives is a key commercial operator, running leagues at St Thomas

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More Catholic Academy, with Powerplay at Sir Stanley Matthew Sports Centre and Soccer Sixes at St Peters Academy.

Other activity taking place on 3G provision comes in the form of walking football, particularly at Dimensions Leisure Centre. Furthermore, various coaching sessions are held across the pitches, such as at Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Centre during school holidays. In addition, the pitches at both Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre and St Peters Academy are used to accommodate American football training demand, whilst the former also occasionally caters for Ultimate frisbee.

The table below summarises usage levels of the full size 3G provision in Stoke-on-Trent based on booking sheets supplied by the operators (updated for the 2022/2023 season, where possible). This is compared against availability at peak time, using Sport England's Facilities Planning Model (FPM). This applies an overall peak period for 3G pitches of 34 hours per week (Monday to Thursday 17:00-21:00; Friday 17:00-19:00; Saturday and Sunday 09:00-17:00).

*Table 3.6: Current usage of 3G pitches across Stoke-on-Trent*

Site ID	Site name	Midweek availability (hours)	Midweek usage (hours)	Weekend availability (hours)	Weekend usage (hours)
21	Dimensions Leisure Centre	18	18	16	7
62	Northwood Stadium	18	17	14	7
82	Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy	18	18	16	4
83	Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre <sup>8</sup>	18	18	16	10
92	St Peters Academy	14	13	16	6
95	St Thomas More Catholic Academy <sup>9</sup>	14	14	16	12

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<sup>8</sup> Updated information unavailable (based on 2019/2020 data – pre Covid-19).

<sup>9</sup> Updated information unavailable (based on 2019/2020 data – pre Covid-19).

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Site ID	Site name	Midweek availability (hours)	Midweek usage (hours)	Weekend availability (hours)	Weekend usage (hours)
108	The Discovery Academy	18	16	16	5

As seen, most midweek availability is currently taken up, with only minimal spare capacity existing at Northwood Stadium, St Peters Academy and The Discovery Academy. More availability exists at weekends, with some present at each site, although many free booking slots are outside of regular fixture times (e.g., Saturday afternoons and Sunday mornings).

In addition, it must also be noted that there is football use on the sand-based AGPs in Stoke-on-Trent, particularly given that only minimal club hockey demand exists. This is especially the case on the full size pitches at Ormiston Horizon Academy, the Co-Operative Academy of Stoke-on-Trent and the Excel Academy, where community use is almost exclusively football related (although spare capacity remains at each venue).

Without football activity on the sand-based stock, the future sustainability of the provision would be questionable. Whilst the transfer of demand to 3G provision would be beneficial to the users and to the FA, it could impact on pitch viability.

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

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

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In 2021, 19 football clubs in Stoke-on-Trent expressed unmet/latent demand linked to a lack of suitable training facilities. These are:

- ◀ Abbey Hulton FC
- ◀ Ball Green Academy
- ◀ Bentilee FC
- ◀ Birches Head FC
- ◀ Bradwell FC
- ◀ Blurton Reds JFC
- ◀ Blythe Bridge JFC
- ◀ FC41
- ◀ Foley Meir FC
- ◀ FC Hanley
- ◀ Hazlehurst FC
- ◀ Kidsgrove Athletic Youth FC
- ◀ Linley Tavern FC
- ◀ Meir Mustangs FC
- ◀ Port Vale FC / Port Vale Foundation
- ◀ Six Towns FC
- ◀ Stoke City Women's & Girls FC
- ◀ Stoke Spartans FC
- ◀ Stoke Town FC

Collectively, these currently cater for 119 teams, although some of these are already training on 3G pitches.

A degree of unmet demand for rugby union is also identified by Trentham RUFC as it aspires to access a 3G pitch to alleviate overuse of its grass pitches (one of its pitches remains overplayed by 1.75 match equivalent sessions, despite quality improvements since 2021).



No unmet demand is identified from any other sports.

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

There are no known clubs importing or exporting competitive demand on 3G pitches, although several clubs indicate that they train outside of the City to access suitable 3G pitches, such as at Chesterton Sports College (Newcastle-under-Lyme) as well as at Alsager Leisure Centre and Alsager Sports Hub (both in Cheshire East). The majority of these clubs' report that they would prefer for this training demand to return to the City.

The pitch at Alsager Leisure Centre is newly established following a sand-based conversion in 2023. In the emerging Cheshire East PPS, it is noted that it cannot fully meet requirements of Cheshire East-based demand due to the level of access received by Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme clubs.

### ***Future demand***

As set out in Part 2 of this report, there is potential growth equating to nine teams forecast through population projections and 44 teams based on club aspirations. If this demand was realised, and if all additional teams wanted to train on 3G provision, it would increase the number of 3G pitches required.

Similarly, both rugby union clubs express a demand to grow, including Trentham RUFC which as mentioned aspires to establish and access a 3G pitch. Such growth will further increase this need.

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

#### ***Football training***

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

The FA's long-term ambition is to provide every affiliated team in England the opportunity to train once per week on sports lit 3G surface, together with priority access for every Charter Standard Community Club through a partnership agreement. The FA standard is calculated by using the latest Sport England research "AGPs State of the Nation March 2012" assuming that 51% of AGP usage is by sports clubs when factoring in the number of training slots available per pitch at peak times. It is estimated that one full size AGP can service 38 teams.

The above model assumes that all pitches are fully available for club use at peak time; however, in practice, this is not always the case which can reduce available capacity. For this reason, the full size pitch at Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre is excluded from the analysis as it is primarily programmed for internal usage (e.g., university training and match play), with limited capacity available to accommodate community clubs.

There is also a need to consider training demand on the existing smaller sized 3G stock, some of which play an important role in meeting some club requirements, although many should not be considered due to their size, lack of sports lighting and/or their operational structure. The table below summarises this.

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Table 3.7: Role of smaller sized 3G pitches in meeting training requirements

Site name	Analysis area	No. of pitches	Size (metres)	Comments	Full size pitch equivalents
Dimensions Leisure Centre	North	2	60 x 45	Equivalent of one pitch is well used for football training demand	0.25
Florence Colliery Social Welfare Centre	South	1	40 x 25	Well used for football training demand	0.25
Hanley Park	Central	1	44 x 33	Potential to be used for football training demand	0.25
Longton Rugby Football Club	South	1	60 x 40	Primarily for rugby union use, therefore discounted from calculations	-
Norton Cricket Club & Miners Institute	North	1	45 x 35	Well used for football training demand	0.25
Powerleague	South	10	30 x 20	Primarily for commercial small-sided use, therefore discounted from calculations	-
Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre	Central	1	35 x 26	Primarily for internal use and too small for meaningful activity, therefore discounted from calculations	-
Stoke City FC Academy Dome (Indoor)	South	1	60 x 40	Unavailable for community use, therefore discounted from calculations	-
The Hardman Centre	North	1	42 x 22	Well used for football training demand	0.25
YMCA North Staffordshire	Central	1	30 x 20	Primarily for internal use and too small for meaningful activity, therefore discounted from calculations	-

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Site name	Analysis area	No. of pitches	Size (metres)	Comments	Full size pitch equivalents
The Excel Academy (Former Goals)	North	8	30 x 20	No longer in use and previously reserved for commercial small-sided use, therefore discounted from calculations	-

Using all of the above, the table below considers the number of 3G pitches required if every team was to remain training within the analysis area in which they play. The 3G requirement is rounded to the nearest half number. As seen, there is a current shortfall of 3.5 full size 3G pitches within the City, all of which is evident in the North Analysis Area.

*Table 3.8: Current demand for 3G pitches in Stoke-on-Trent for affiliated football team training*

Analysis area	Current number of teams	Current requirement <sup>10</sup>	Current number of full size 3G pitches	Current shortfall
Central	73	1.92 - <b>2</b>	3.5	-
North	182	4.78 - <b>5</b>	1.5	<b>3.5</b>
South	63	1.65 - <b>1.5</b>	2.25	-

As seen in the table below, after factoring in future demand, the overall shortfall increases marginally to four full size 3G pitches. This again is solely identified in the North Analysis Area.

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<sup>10</sup> Rounded to the nearest 0.5.

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Table 3.9: Future demand for 3G pitches in Stoke-on-Trent for affiliated football team training

Analysis area	Future number of teams <sup>11</sup>	3G requirement <sup>12</sup>	Current number of 3G pitches	Future shortfall
Central	89	2.34 – 2.5	3.5	-
North	200	5.26 – 5.5	1.5	4
South	81	2.13 - 2	2.25	-

Compared to 2021 findings, the current shortfall has increased by 0.5 full size 3G pitches and the future shortfall has increased by one full size pitch. This is due to a growth in demand in the North Analysis Area.

Notwithstanding the above, it must be noted that there is a theoretical oversupply in the South Analysis Area and particularly the Central Analysis Area. In reality, some clubs will travel to neighbouring analysis areas to access provision if required, especially if pitches are strategically located in close proximity. This means that provision outside of the North Analysis Area could partially meet some of the identified shortfall.

In addition, the modelling also presumes that all football teams should train on 3G pitches when in practice a proportion of football training demand must be retained on sand-based AGPs where they are provided in order to maintain financial and commercial sustainability for such provision (unless conversion takes place). This is particularly key in Stoke-on-Trent given that the three full size sand-based pitches currently provided are located within the North Analysis Area, which is where all the 3G shortfalls exist. In addition, all community use currently received on the pitches is football related, with no hockey demand identified (see Part 6 for further information).

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<sup>11</sup> Based on increased demand forecasted from team generation rates and club aspirational demand, both re-applied to the Area where the club is based for training purposes.

<sup>12</sup> Rounded to the nearest 0.5.

### ***Football match play***

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

In Stoke-on-Trent, four of the full size 3G pitches are on the FA 3G Pitch Register and can therefore host competitive matches, with 49 affiliated teams currently registered as using the provision currently (2022/2023 season). This is a relatively small number compared to the number of pitches provided, with opportunities therefore existing for it to be further increased, especially if the remaining three full size pitches could be re-accredited.

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

The use of 3G pitches for matches also emphasises the importance of maintaining good quality pitches. Should pitches become poor quality, they will likely lose accreditation to accommodate fixtures. This will then result in all teams using the provision needing to transfer to grass pitches, adding to their usage, reducing their capacity and further diminishing their quality.

### ***Rugby union***

Given the identified shortfalls of grass rugby pitches (highlighted in Part 5 of this report), evidence exists to warrant World Rugby compliant provision being developed in the future, although it is possible for the shortfalls to be reduced in other ways (e.g., quality improvements, additional sports lighting and site extensions).

### ***Other sports***

The pitches at both Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre and St Peters Academy are used to accommodate American football demand from Staffordshire Stallions and Staffordshire Surge, respectively. It is imperative that this can continue to be accommodated to protect grass pitches from needing to accommodate such activity.

No other sports have any current or future demand for regular 3G pitch access and therefore do not require consideration at this time.

### **3.5: Conclusion**

There is an insufficient supply of full size 3G pitches to meet current and anticipated future football training demand in the North Analysis Area in Stoke-on-Trent (demand is being met elsewhere), primarily based on the FA training model, with this deficit marginally increasing since 2021 findings. As such, it is determined that an increase in provision is required in the North Analysis Area. This should, however, be mindful of the sand-based pitches that exist and the future sustainability of them.

In addition, to ensure that provision deficits do not increase, the existing supply requires attention, with resurfacing soon to be required at several venues and with three of the full size pitches not currently approved for competitive football demand.

For rugby union, the creation of a World Rugby compliant 3G pitch in a strategically viable location would further relieve pressure on grass pitches and also help to

accommodate any future demand, although other solutions are also possible and may be preferred. This will be further explored in the proceeding Strategy document.

Use of the existing 3G pitch stock for American football should also be safeguarded.

### 3G summary

- ◀ **There is an insufficient supply of full size 3G pitches to meet current and anticipated future football demand in the North Analysis Area of Stoke-on-Trent (demand is being met in the Central and South analysis areas).**
- ◀ **To ensure that provision deficits do not increase, the existing supply requires attention, with resurfacing soon to be required at several venues and with three of the full size pitches not currently approved for competitive football demand.**
- ◀ **For rugby union, the creation of a World Rugby compliant 3G pitch in a strategically viable location would further relieve pressure on grass pitches and also help to accommodate any future demand, although other solutions are also possible.**
- ◀ **Use of the existing 3G pitch stock for American football should also be safeguarded.**
- ◀ There are seven full size 3G pitches in Stoke-on-Trent, all of which are available to the community and serviced by sports lighting.
- ◀ There are also 28 smaller size 3G pitches, of which 19 are sports-lit and available for community use.
- ◀ Planning permission has been granted at Powerleague for the creation of an additional mini 7v7 sized 3G pitch.
- ◀ Four of the seven full size 3G pitches are FA certified, these being at Northwood Stadium, Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy, St Peters Academy and The Discovery Academy (the remainder were previously registered by this has now expired).
- ◀ None of the pitches are World Rugby compliant.
- ◀ The full size 3G pitch at St Thomas More Catholic Academy is currently considered to be good quality, with the remaining pitches being standard quality.
- ◀ The operators of smaller size pitches Stoke City FC Academy, YMCA North Staffordshire and Longton Rugby Football Club all have aspirations for refurbishment due to the age and poor quality of their provision.
- ◀ At St Thomas More Catholic Academy, the School states that it is looking at potential funding streams to create new ancillary provision which is closer to the 3G pitch.
- ◀ Current demand for the 3G pitches is high, with most midweek availability currently taken up, although all current usage is football based.
- ◀ 19 football clubs express unmet/latent demand linked to a lack of suitable training facilities, whilst a degree of unmet demand for rugby union is also identified by Trentham RUFC.
- ◀ Using the FA training model, there is a current shortfall of 3.5 full size 3G pitches to meet football training requirements, increase to four pitches when factoring in future demand and with this all identified in the North Analysis Area.
- ◀ Whilst the number needed for matches will never outweigh the number needed for training, there is an opportunity to increase match play demand on the provision with only 49 teams currently using the pitches for this purpose.



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- ◀ Given the identified shortfalls of grass rugby, evidence exists for World Rugby compliant provision to be developed in the future.
- ◀ The pitches at both Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre and St Peters Academy are used to accommodate American football demand from Staffordshire Stallions and Staffordshire Surge, respectively, whilst the former also caters for occasional Ultimate frisbee demand (internal).
- ◀ No other sporting activity requiring access to 3G pitches has been identified.

### **PART 4: CRICKET**

#### **4.1: Introduction**

Staffordshire Cricket Board (SCB) serves as the main governing and representative body for cricket across Stoke-on-Trent. Working closely with the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), it is responsible for the management and development of every form of recreational cricket for men, women and children across the City. It is currently working with the ECB on delivering its Inspiring Generations Strategy which has been live since 2020.

For adult cricket in Stoke-on-Trent there are three main offerings; Saturday, Sunday and midweek cricket (including strong recreational demand across the City). The youth league structure tends to be club-based matches which are played mid-week, although some matches are also played on Sundays. The playing season runs from April-September.

#### ***Consultation***

There are seven cricket clubs playing in Stoke-on-Trent:

- ◀ Burslem CC
- ◀ Caverswall CC
- ◀ Hanford CC
- ◀ Hem Heath CC
- ◀ J & G Meakin CC
- ◀ Longton CC
- ◀ Sandyford CC

All clubs responded to consultation in 2021 to inform the original PPS, resulting in a response rate of 100%. For this update, supply and demand has been checked and challenged via discussions with the ECB and SCB.

### 4.2: Supply

#### *Grass wicket squares*

There are eight grass wicket squares in Stoke-on-Trent located across eight sites, all of which are available for community use.

The Central Analysis Area accommodates the most amount of community available provision with four squares (50%). This is closely followed by the South Analysis Area with three squares (38%) and finally the North Analysis Area which has just one square (12%).

*Table 4.1: Summary of grass wicket squares across Stoke-on-Trent*

Analysis area	Number of squares available for community use	Number of squares not available for community use	Total
Central	4	-	4
North	1	-	1
South	3	-	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8</b>

In addition, Norton Cricket Club & Miners Welfare Institute (North Analysis Area) previously accommodated an eight wicket grass square. Although it is no longer used for cricket, the site as a whole cannot be categorised as disused as it is still used actively for football.

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Similarly, a grass wicket cricket square was previously provided at Bucknall Park. This has not been maintained or used since at least 2003.

The level of supply remains unchanged since 2021.

### ***Non-turf pitches (NTPs)***

In Stoke-on-Trent, there are two NTPs that accompany grass wicket squares in addition to 10 standalone NTPs. The location of these can be seen in the table below.

*Table 4.2: Summary of NTPs in Stoke-on-Trent*

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Number of NTPs	Position
13	Burslem Cricket Club	Central	1	Square
33	Grange Park	North	1	Standalone
35	Hanley Park	Central	1	Standalone
38	Haywood Academy	North	1	Standalone
68	Ormiston Meridian Academy	South	1	Standalone
78	Sandbach Road	North	1	Standalone
92	St Peters Academy	Central	1	Standalone
105	The Co-Operative Academy of Stoke-On-Trent	North	1	Standalone
112	Thistley Hough Academy	Central	1	Standalone
118	Watery Lane Playing Fields	South	1	Standalone
158	J & G Meakin Cricket Club	Central	1	Square
163	Cobridge Park	North	1	Standalone

It should also be noted that there is also a disused NTP at Birches Head Academy. The School reports that it had limited utilisation of the provision and as such has stopped regularly maintaining it.

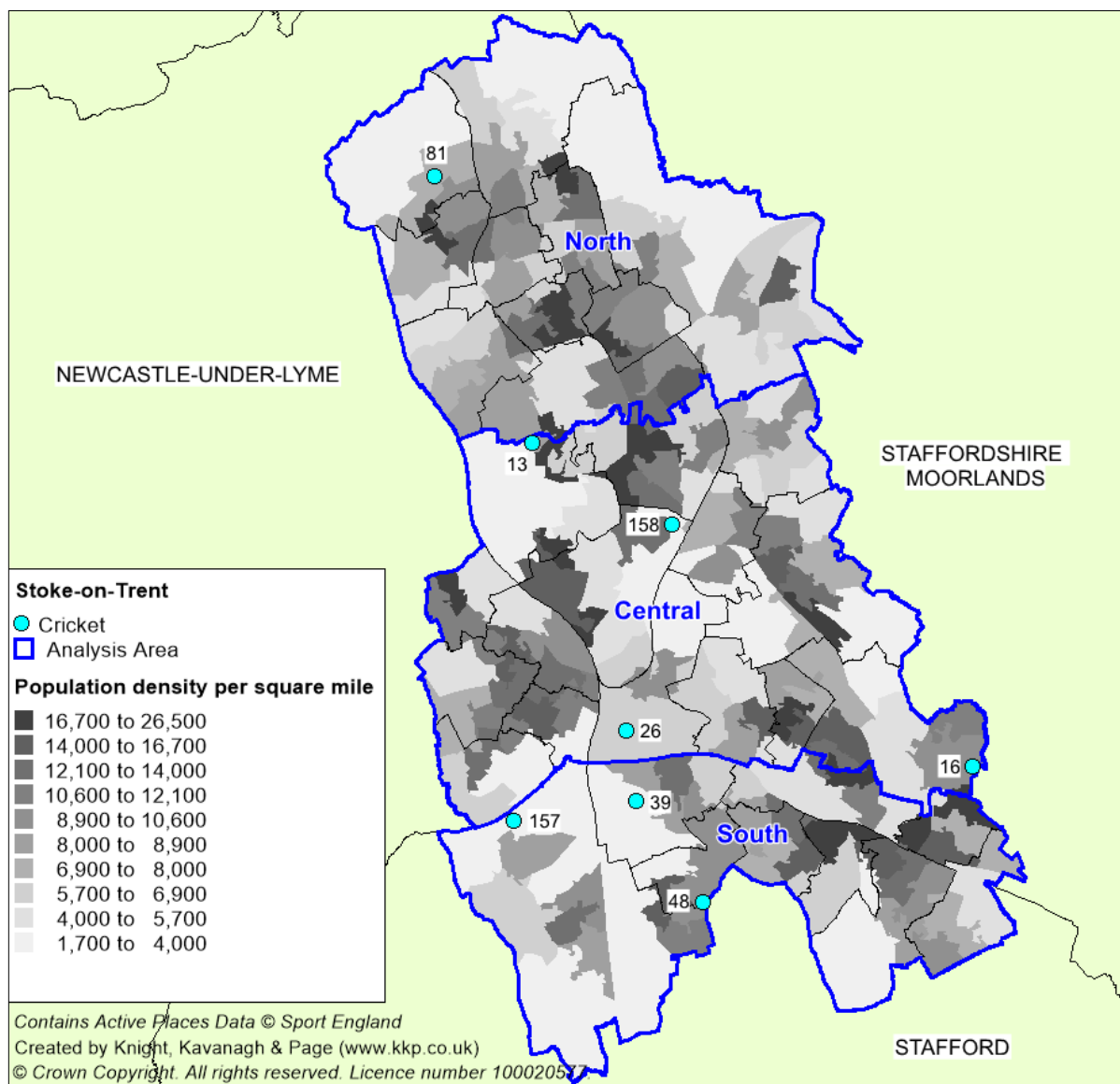
The ECB highlights that NTPs which follow its TS6 guidance on performance standards are suitable for high level, senior play and are considered able to take 60 matches per season, although this may include training sessions via the use of mobile nets.

Figure 4.1 below identified the location of all cricket provision in Stoke-on-Trent. For a key to the map, see Table 4.3 which follows.

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Figure 4.1: Summary of grass cricket squares in Stoke-on-Trent



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Table 4.3: Key to map of cricket squares

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	No. of squares	User/s	No. of wickets	
							Grass	Non-turf
13	Burslem Cricket Club	ST6 3LQ	Central	Yes	1	Burslem CC	12	1
16	Caverswall Cricket Club	ST3 6PJ	Central	Yes	1	Caverswall CC	14	-
26	Fenton Cricket Club	ST4 4PP	Central	Yes	1	J & G Meakin CC	12	-
33	Grange Park	ST6 3JH	North	Yes	1	-	-	1
35	Hanley Park	ST1 4DX	Central	Yes	1	-	-	1
38	Haywood Academy	ST6 7AB	North	No	1	-	-	1
39	Hem Heath Cricket Club	ST4 4TN	South	Yes	1	Hem Heath CC	14	-
48	Longton Cricket Club	ST3 3BL	South	Yes	1	Longton CC	12	-
68	Ormiston Meridian Academy	ST3 7DF	South	No	1	-	-	1
78	Sandbach Road	ST6 2DR	North	Yes	1	-	-	1
81	Sandyford Cricket Club	ST6 5LA	North	Yes	1	Sandyford CC	12	-
92	St Peters Academy	ST4 2RR	Central	No	1	-	-	1
105	The Co-Operative Academy of Stoke-On-Trent	ST6 4LD	North	No	1	-	-	1
112	Thistley Hough Academy	ST4 5JJ	Central	No	1	-	-	1
118	Watery Lane Playing Fields	ST3 4QY	South	Yes	1	-	-	1
157	Hanford Cricket Club	ST4 4QB	South	Yes	1	Hanford CC	12	-
158	J & G Meakin Cricket Club	ST1 3NU	Central	Yes	1	J & G Meakin CC	9	1

### *Future supply*

Since the production of the original PPS in 2021, a separate Mitigation Strategy has been commissioned on behalf of the Council regarding the potential disposal of three former school sites (Edensor Technology College, Berry Hill High School and Mitchell High School). This is currently under development and will seek to present a comprehensive overview as to how the playing pitch and outdoor sports provision at the sites can be collectively and adequately mitigated to meet planning policy and how a positive strategy for sports investment can be developed as a result.

Edensor Technology College closed in 2013 with the school building being demolished shortly afterwards, whilst Berryhill High School and Mitchell High School closed in 2011. Although provided standalone NTPs when active.

Elsewhere, a new high school (Florence MacWilliams Academy) is planned to be built on Whitcombe Road Playing Fields. If approved, it sets to come online in 2024, with current plans including the provision of a standalone NTP. This will however entail the loss of playing field land.

### *ECB Ball Strike*

Where there is either new cricket provision being put in place, or more commonly a development which may prejudice the use of the cricket facility, there is a requirement for a full ball strike risk assessment to be undertaken and appropriate mitigation put in place as part of the development. As such, the ECB recommends that the clubs and organisations seek to have a ball strike risk assessment undertaken; further information can be provided by the ECB.

### *Hybrid wickets*



The ECB has been working with SIS Pitches on the installation of hybrid cricket wickets at cricket clubs, although none are currently provided in Stoke-on-Trent.

A hybrid wicket combines natural turf grass with less than 5% of uniquely engineered, soft polyethylene yarn, which has already been used for other sports such as to improve golf tees, tennis courts and pitch surrounds. These wickets are designed to offer greater capacity in addition to reducing the time spent on repair works, with a faster recovery time intended. Reports have found that hybrid wickets improve surface stability, reduce wear, reduce bowler foot holes and significantly extended hours of playing time (around double the capacity of natural turf provision).

Ideally, once hybrid wickets become more readily available for community cricket clubs and have gone through the required testing, they could act as a way to increase levels of playing capacity on heavily used squares. This would be particularly beneficial for those sites which are limited in space and cannot create additional wickets due to restrictions on things such as boundary length and ball strike.

Although it is difficult at this stage to understand what impact hybrid wickets could have on capacity, it is suggested that they could potentially alleviate all the overplay on both junior and senior wickets. This is based on the assumption that more senior demand can take place on the hybrid wickets allowing for the outer senior wickets to be used/converted for junior demand.

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

Most clubs in Stoke-on-Trent (86% or six clubs) have secure tenure at their home venues through ownership or a long-term lease. The only club not considered to have security of tenure is Sandyford CC which reports that it is negotiating a lease with the landowner of its site, Network Space, although there has been no movement on this since 2021.

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For reference, a site is considered to have unsecure tenure if the cricket provision on the site is not guaranteed to be retained over the next three years. The table below identifies tenure arrangements for all affiliated clubs.

*Table 4.4: Summary of security of tenure for Stoke-on-Trent cricket clubs*

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Club	Arrangement	Tenure
13	Burslem Cricket Club	Central	Burslem CC	Freehold	Secure
16	Caverswall Cricket Club	Central	Caverswall CC	Freehold	Secure
26	Fenton Cricket Club	Central	J&G Meakin CC	Long term agreement	Secure
39	Hem Heath Cricket Club	South	Hem Heath CC	Freehold	Secure
48	Longton Cricket Club	South	Longton CC	Freehold	Secure
81	Sandyford Cricket Club	North	Sandyford CC	Currently negotiating a lease with Network Space	<b>Unsecure</b>
157	Hanford Cricket Club	South	Hanford CC	Freehold	Secure
158	J & G Meakin Cricket Club	Central	J&G Meakin CC	Long term lease from Wedgewood	Secure

### ***Pitch quality***

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

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

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- ◀ Good
- ◀ Standard
- ◀ Poor

This was originally carried out across 2020/2021, with quality ratings revisited as part of this update via consultation with the ECB and SCB, although no significant changes are thought to have occurred. The full assessment criteria can be found in Appendix 2.

Across Stoke-on-Trent, five grass wicket squares are rated as good quality (63%) and three are rated as standard quality (37%). There are no poor quality grass squares in the City.

*Table 4.5: Quality ratings for grass wicket squares (site by site)*

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	No. of squares	Square quality
13	Burslem Cricket Club	Central	1	Good
16	Caverswall Cricket Club	Central	1	Good
26	Fenton Cricket Club	Central	1	Standard
39	Hem Heath Cricket Club	South	1	Good
48	Longton Cricket Club	South	1	Good
81	Sandyford Cricket Club	North	1	Standard
157	Hanford Cricket Club	South	1	Standard
158	J & G Meakin Cricket Club	Central	1	Good

During consultation in 2020/2021 only two clubs report specific issues relating to the provision they use, namely Hanford CC and Burslem CC. The former reports that its outfield is uneven due to a fault line going through the site, which also affects a small

part of the square. It also states there are areas of poor grass growth due to periods of overuse.

Burslem CC reports that there are issues with animals burrowing on its outfield. Issues cited by both clubs are still thought to exist.

In regards to NTPs, The Co-Operative Academy of Stoke-On-Trent reports is not frequently used due to its current quality, although it is serviceable. There is a need to carry out some maintenance on the provision in order to make it more accessible. The ECB and SCB report they are willing to work with the School in order to improve its condition, increase levels of usage (community and curricular) and to teach it how to sustain quality.

The NTP at Sandbach Road also has quality issues, with signs of wear and tear affecting the surface.

To obtain a full technical assessment of wicket and pitches, the ECB recommends a PQS assessment. The PQS looks at a cricket square to ascertain whether the pitch meets the Performance Quality Standards, which are benchmarked by the Institute of Groundsman.

*Table 4.6: PQS ratings*

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

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

### ***Ancillary facilities***

The audit of ancillary facilities determines that most club sites (five squares or 63%) are accompanied by good quality provision. The quality of ancillary facilities at the remaining three squares is standard quality.

*Table 4.7: Changing room quality (grass wicket squares, site by site)*

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	No. of squares	Quality
13	Burslem Cricket Club	Central	1	Good
16	Caverswall Cricket Club	Central	1	Good
26	Fenton Cricket Club	Central	1	Standard
39	Hem Heath Cricket Club	South	1	Good
48	Longton Cricket Club	South	1	Good
81	Sandyford Cricket Club	North	1	Standard
157	Hanford Cricket Club	South	1	Standard
158	J & G Meakin Cricket Club	Central	1	Good

No specific issues are raised regarding the quality of ancillary provision, although the three sites rated as standard quality (Fenton Cricket Club, Sandyford Cricket Club and Hanford Cricket Club) are in need of some level of investment in order to modernise facilities.

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Hanford, Burslem and Hem Heath cricket clubs all report minor incidences of vandalism over recent years, including break ins and damage to outdoor furniture and equipment.

### ***Training facilities***

Access to cricket nets is important, particularly for pre-season/winter training. Only one site used by affiliated clubs in Stoke-on-Trent is not serviced by fixed practice nets, with this being Fenton Cricket Club. Both Burslem CC and Sandyford CC have recently had new nets installed.

In contrast, despite having practice nets, Caverswall CC, Hanford CC and J & G Meakin CC all report a need more or better provision, as summarised in table below.

*Table 4.8: Summary of demand for additional training facilities*

Site ID	Site	Club	Comments
16	Caverswall Cricket Club	Caverswall CC	There is a need for additional space for training.
157	Hanford Cricket Club	Hanford CC	Nets need refurbishing and there are aspirations for a mobile cage.
158	J & G Meakin Cricket Club	J & G Meakin CC	New practice nets.

Four standalone practice nets were also previously in place at Hanley Park; however, the netting is no longer provided.

### **4.3: Demand**

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There are seven cricket clubs competing in Stoke-on-Trent, generating 73 teams (2023 season). As a breakdown, this equates to 28 senior men's, six senior women's, 36 junior boys' and three junior girls' teams.

*Table 4.9: Summary of competitive teams*

Club name	Analysis area	Senior men's	Senior women's	Junior boys'	Junior girls'
Burslem CC	Central	3	1	4	-
Caverswall CC	Central	3	1	6	-
Hanford CC	South	4	-	-	-
Hem Heath CC	South	5	1	7	-
J & G Meakin CC	Central	5	2	7	3
Longton CC	South	5	1	6	-
Sandyford CC	North	3	-	6	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>28</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>3</b>

The largest club in the City is J & G Meakin CC which accommodates a total of 17 teams. It should also be noted that unlike most local authorities, there is a strong representation of women teams in comparison to the number of clubs. In fact, only two of the seven clubs do not accommodate any dedicate women's demand (Hanford CC and Sandyford CC).

The greatest amount of demand is in the Central Analysis Area which accommodates 35 teams, followed by the South Analysis Area with 29 teams. The fewest number of teams are in the North Analysis Area (nine teams).

*Table 4.10: Summary of teams by analysis area*

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Analysis area	Senior men's	Senior women's	Junior boys'	Junior girls'	Total
<b>2021</b>					
Central	8	3	10	3	<b>24</b>
North	4	-	5	-	<b>9</b>
South	17	3	22	-	<b>42</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>2023</b>					
Central	11	4	17	3	<b>35</b>
North	3	-	6	-	<b>9</b>
South	14	2	13	-	<b>29</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>73</b>

When compared to 2021 findings, there are now two fewer teams identified. This is despite growth experienced by Burslem, Caverswall, Hem Heath and Longton cricket clubs, with such increases offset by a reduction in participation at Hanford CC. The Club no longer operates a junior section whereas it previously fielded four teams.

Notwithstanding the above, through consultation with the ECB and SCB, it is clear that there has been a more general growth in women's and girls' activity across the clubs with more participation also taking place within mixed teams as well as dedicated nine women's/girls teams already in situ.

### ***Additional demand***

In addition to the affiliated teams featured above, there is also additional demand hosted by club in Stoke-on-Trent, most prominently through programmes such as All Stars and Dynamos as well as women's softball.

### ***All Stars Cricket***

In partnership with the ECB and Chance to Shine cricket clubs in Stoke-on-Trent can register to become an ECB All Stars Cricket Centre. Once registered, a club can deliver



the programme which aims to introduce cricket to children aged from five to eight. Subsequently, this may lead to increased interest and demand for junior cricket at clubs.

The programme seeks to achieve the following aims:

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

In Stoke-on-Trent, Burslem, Caverswall, Hem Heath, Longton, Sandyford and J&G Meakin cricket clubs all cater for All Stars demand.

#### *Dynamos cricket*

A key development area for the ECB in delivering on the outcomes of 'Inspiring Generations' is the Dynamos Cricket programme for 8-11 year olds. This builds on the significant growth of All Stars for 5-8 year olds and further develops the pathway to retain juniors progressing from it.

Where All Stars seeks to engage children in cricket activity and learning the skills, Dynamos seeks to engage children in learning how to play, introducing a modified soft ball format as competitive progression with a view to eventual transition through to hardball cricket.

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In Stoke-on-Trent, as with All Stars, Burslem, Hem Heath and J&G Meakin cricket clubs all cater for Dynamos demand.

### *Softball cricket*

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

Burslem, Caverswall, Hem Heath, Longton and J&G Meakin cricket clubs all cater for softball demand.

The table overleaf summarises which clubs are involved in the initiatives and current participation figures, where known.

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Table 4.11: Stoke-on-Trent cricket clubs participating Allstars, Dynamos and Women & Girls softball

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Club	Allstars	Sign ups	Dynamos	Sign ups	Softball
13	Burslem Cricket Club	Central	Burslem CC	✓	15	✓	2	✓
16	Caverswall Cricket Club	South	Caverswall CC	✓	29	-	-	✓
39	Hem Heath Cricket Club	South	Hem Heath CC	✓	5	✓	8	✓
48	Longton Cricket Club	South	Longton CC	✓	18	-	-	✓
81	Sandyford Cricket Club	North	Sandyford CC	✓	18	-	-	-
157	Hanford Cricket Club	South	Hanford CC	-	-	-	-	-
158	J & G Meakin Cricket Club	Central	J & G Meakin CC	✓	18	✓	8	✓

It should be noted that all activity for the initiatives generally takes place on the cricket outfield rather than the actual squares. Although this does not impact the carrying capacity of a square it does influence the accessibility of them as whilst the outfield is in use the main square cannot be used to accommodate fixtures. As such, this may limit the potential spare capacity whilst these activities are taking place, generally on midweek evenings or Sunday mornings.

#### *Staffordshire Cricket*

Staffordshire Cricket also utilises a number of cricket squares within Stoke-on-Trent on a semi frequent basis to accommodate demand from its county age group teams. This supplementary demand has been factored into the supply and demand analysis later on within this section of the report.

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These teams are coached and managed through the Staffordshire Young Cricketers programme and enhanced by Staffordshire Crickets Player Development Scheme and Emerging Player Programme and onto national county, first class county and international cricket.

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

Hem Heath CC currently (2023 season) exports its third and fourth Saturday teams outside of Stoke-on-Trent, in addition to one junior team. Forsbrook Cricket Club in Staffordshire Moorlands is used. This is because the Club's main site is operating at capacity, and it travels approximately 11 minutes (5.7 miles) to access the provision. However, it does not indicate this to be problematic, meaning the demand is likely to remain displaced for the foreseeable future.

There is no known imported demand into Stoke-on-Trent.

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

There is no recorded unmet demand for cricket in Stoke-on-Trent. Outside of the exported demand referenced above, no clubs report that capacity is limiting participation.

### ***Future demand***

Future demand can be defined via several ways, including through participation increases and by using population forecasts. In addition, the proceeding Strategy & Action Plan document will contain housing growth scenarios that will estimate additional demand that could arise from housing developments across Stoke-on-Trent.

### ***Participation increases***

During the 2020/2021 consultation process, a number of clubs reported aspirations to increase the number of teams they provide. These figures have been revisited for this update to determine if initial demand has been realised, or where additional future

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demand is known to now exist. However, no changes have been deemed to be necessary.

Of the responding clubs, four indicate aspirations to increase levels of participation. This equates to a total predicted growth of six teams, equating to one senior men's, one senior women's and four junior teams.

*Table 4.12: Future demand expressed by clubs*

Club	Analysis area	Senior men's	Senior women's	Junior
Burslem CC	Central	-	-	1
Hanford CC	South	-	1	1
J & G Meakin CC	Central	-	-	2
Longton CC	South	1	-	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>

### *Population forecasts*

Team generation rates are used below as the basis for calculating the number of teams likely to be generated in the future (2040) based on population growth. When team generation rates are applied across Stoke-on-Trent there is predicted growth of two teams in the senior men's (18-55) age group.

*Table 4.13: Team generation rates based on population growth (2040)*

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Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams	Team Generation Rate	Future population within age group	Predicted future number of teams	Additional teams generated from increased population
Senior Men's (18-55)	65,678	28	1:2,345	70,314	30	2
Senior Women's (18-55)	62,000	6	1:10,333	62,468	6	0
Junior Boys (7-18)	18,863	36	1:524	18,452	36	0
Junior Girls (7-18)	17,944	3	1:5,981	17,738	3	0

When future growth is dissipated to individual analysis areas rather than as a whole, there is enough demand in South Analysis Area to establish one additional senior men's team. No growth is forecast in the Central or North analysis areas.

Notwithstanding the above, it is important to acknowledge that whilst team generation rates project team growth as a factor of population and existing teams, there are also plans and strategies to increase the number of teams at some formats beyond what current trends suggest. For example, the aforementioned ECB initiatives such as All Stars, Dynamos and women and girls' softball are all likely to contribute to growth above levels shown through team generation rates, especially in female and junior playing formats.

Furthermore, the ECB's media rights deal includes a continuation of its relationship with Sky Sports, now up to 2028. This extends beyond broadcasting and is a partnership which will secure significant investment and a commitment to increase participation and drive engagement. This could therefore boost demand to levels in excess of those anticipated through the PPS, meaning the impact should continue be reviewed over coming years.

### *Future demand summary*

Both growth from club aspirational demand and population demand will be used in the supply and demand analysis below to ensure that all planned growth is captured.

Accounting for this, future demand to be carried through to the supply and demand analysis equates to two senior men's, one senior women's and four junior teams.

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

An analysis of match play identifies that peak time demand for senior cricket in Stoke-on-Trent is Saturday, although a good proportion of teams are also fielded on a Sunday, including senior women's teams, as well as midweek in shorter formats of the game. In addition, peak time is midweek for junior cricket, albeit that some Sunday cricket is also recorded.

Based on the above, capacity across Saturday's, Sunday's and midweek requires consideration, which the following analysis looks to provide. This involves factoring in the overall capacity level at each site and current usage levels across each relevant period.

### **4.4: Capacity analysis**

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

The capacity of a square to accommodate matches is driven by the number and quality of wickets. This section of the report presents the current pitch stock available for cricket and illustrates the number of competitive matches per season per square. For good quality squares, capacity is considered to be five matches per wicket per season, whilst for a standard quality square, capacity is four matches per wicket per season. For poor quality squares, no capacity is considered to exist as such provision is not safe for play.



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

The above is used to allocate capacity ratings as follows:

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

Please note that NTPs have been discounted from the analysis. No non-turf wicket squares are recorded as accommodating more than 60 matches per season in Stoke-on-Trent, meaning all non-turf wickets are considered to have spare capacity (where community availability is offered). This translates to actual spare capacity for junior cricket as peak time is midweek, whereby NTPs are more commonly used and where matches can be played on a variety of days.

### ***Spare capacity***

The table below explains the difference between the potential spare capacity referenced in Table 4:14 in the final three columns (Saturday, Sunday and Midweek).

*Table 4.14: Spare capacity examples*

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

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

Table 4.15: Capacity of cricket squares

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Users	Security of tenure	No. of squares	Pitch quality	No. of grass wickets	Capacity (sessions per season)	Actual play (sessions per season)	Capacity rating (sessions per season)	Potential spare capacity for Saturday cricket?	Potential spare capacity for Sunday cricket?	Potential spare capacity for midweek cricket?
13	Burslem Cricket Club	Central	Yes	Burslem CC	Secure	1	Good	12	60	54 <sup>13</sup>	6	No	No	Yes
16	Caverswall Cricket Club	Central	Yes	Caverswall CC	Secure	1	Good	14	70	68 <sup>14</sup>	2	No	No	No
26	Fenton Cricket Club	Central	Yes	J & G Meakin CC	Secure	1	Standard	12	48	41	7	No	No	Yes
39	Hem Heath Cricket Club	South	Yes	Hem Heath CC	Secure	1	Good	14	70	70	0	No	No	No
48	Longton Cricket Club	South	Yes	Longton CC	Secure	1	Good	12	60	78 <sup>15</sup>	18	No	No	No
81	Sandyford Cricket Club	North	Yes	Sandyford CC	<b>Unsecure</b>	1	Standard	12	48	54	6	No	No	Yes
157	Hanford Cricket Club	South	Yes	Hanford CC	Secure	1	Standard	12	48	48	0	No	Yes	Yes
158	J & G Meakin Cricket Club	Central	Yes	J & G Meakin CC	Secure	1	Good	9	45	48 <sup>16</sup>	3	No	No	Yes

<sup>13</sup> Additional demand added from Staffordshire Cricket

<sup>14</sup> Additional demand added from Staffordshire Cricket

<sup>15</sup> Additional demand added from Staffordshire Cricket

<sup>16</sup> Additional demand added from Staffordshire Cricket

### *Actual spare capacity*

A square is only considered to have actual spare capacity if it is available for further usage during a particular peak period. Using the capacity analysis, this section considers the level of actual spare capacity available for each playing format.

Notwithstanding the above, it should be noted that the actual spare capacity on Saturdays, Sundays and during midweek should not be viewed collectively as utilising it across different days may result in overplay. For example, a site with 12 match equivalent sessions of spare capacity per season theoretically has capacity for one additional senior team and two additional junior teams; however, it does not have capacity for both. As such, this needs to be taken into consideration on a site-by-site basis as and when demand grows.

### *Saturday cricket spare capacity*

For senior men's cricket, peak time is Saturday as this is when most demand exists. As only one match can be played on each square per day, only two Saturday teams can be assigned to play home matches on one square (based on matches being played on an alternate home and away basis). As such, if a square has two Saturday teams already playing home fixtures on it, no actual spare capacity is perceived to exist for additional senior usage. If one or no teams are playing on a square on a Saturday, and it has overall capacity, actual spare capacity for senior demand is generally identified.

Notwithstanding the above, there may be situations where, although a site is highlighted as potentially able to accommodate some additional play, this should not be recorded as actual spare capacity against the site. For example, a site may be managed to operate slightly below full capacity to ensure that it can cater for a number of regular training sessions, or to protect the quality of the site. As such, no sites that are over, at, or close to capacity are considered to have actual spare capacity (at least 12 match equivalent sessions of spare capacity are required for an additional senior team to be accommodated) and neither are sites with unsecure tenure as future usage cannot be guaranteed.

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Taking the above into consideration, no squares in Stoke-on-Trent currently have spare capacity for an increase in Saturday demand. This is unchanged since 2021 findings.

### ***Sunday cricket spare capacity***

Similar to Saturday cricket, a square on a Sunday is only considered to have actual spare capacity if it is not already used by two teams at this time, has secure tenure and is not over, at, or close to capacity. This results in there being no actual spare capacity to accommodate any additional demand on a Sunday in Stoke-on-Trent, as was the case in 2021.

### ***Midweek cricket spare capacity***

For midweek cricket, most squares with spare capacity have actual spare capacity for an increase in demand. This is because usually most of the demand is from junior matches which are generally played during midweek, where matches can be spread across numerous days, meaning capacity is not limited to two teams. Moreover, the presence of junior wickets at certain sites, as well as NTPs, provide further capacity that is generally not available to senior demand.

For a square to have actual spare capacity for midweek cricket, it must have secure tenure, not be overplayed and have more than four match equivalent sessions of spare capacity as this is generally the minimum number of matches an additional junior team would play. However, a square is not considered to have capacity for an increase in demand if it is already used by six midweek teams or more as availability is then assumed to be limited (on average, clubs are able to play fixtures on three nights per week, with other nights reserved for other activity such as All Stars and Dynamos).

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Unlike Saturday and Sunday cricket, there is actual spare capacity for additional midweek play in Stoke-on-Trent. This being said, it is minimal and amounts to two additional teams solely in the Central Analysis Area. The sites with capacity are Burslem Cricket Club (six match equivalent sessions) and Fenton Cricket Club (seven match equivalent sessions).

When compared to 2021 findings, there is less actual spare capacity for midweek demand, although the same sites offer it. This is due to an increase in junior activity at the sites.

### **Overplay**

There are three sites in Stoke-on-Trent considered to be overplayed by a total of 27 match equivalent sessions per season. Although it is possible to sustain certain, minimal levels of overplay providing that a regular, sufficient maintenance regime is in place, a resolution is recommended to ensure that there is no detrimental effect on quality over time.

*Table 4.16: Summary of overplay*

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Number of squares	Overplay (matches per season)
48	Longton Cricket Club	South	1	18
81	Sandyford Cricket Club	North	1	6
158	J & G Meakin Cricket Club	Central	1	3
<b>Total</b>			<b>3</b>	<b>27</b>

There is some level of overplay in each of the three analysis areas within the City. The North Analysis Area has overplay totalling six match sessions per season, the South Analysis Area has overplay totalling 18 match equivalent sessions and the Central Analysis Area has a marginal amount of overplay amounting to three match equivalent sessions.

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The level of overplay has reduced since 2021, predominately on account of Hanford Cricket Club no longer being overused. This is due to dwindling demand at the site, particularly following the loss of its junior demand. Total overplay previously equated to 41 match equivalent sessions across the City.

Conversely, overplay at Longton Cricket Club has increased due to a growth in demand.

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

Consideration must be given to the extent to which current provision can accommodate current and future demand for both senior and junior cricket. This section therefore looks at actual spare capacity on grass wicket squares considered against overplay and identified future demand. Match equivalent sessions for future demand are calculated using the average number of matches played per season (12 matches for senior Saturday teams, six matches for Sunday teams and four matches for junior teams).

#### ***Saturday cricket capacity balance***

The table below looks at the supply and demand balance during the peak period for senior men's cricket (Saturday).

The analysis suggests that there is currently an overall shortfall of 27 match equivalent sessions per season for senior Saturday cricket across Stoke-on-Trent as a whole, with a deficit existing in each area. When factoring in future demand, the overall shortfall worsens to 51 match equivalent sessions per season.

*Table 4.17: Capacity balance of grass cricket squares for Saturday cricket in match sessions per season*

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Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
<b>2021</b>					
Central	-	3	3	-	3
North	-	10	10	-	10
South	-	30	30	24	54
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>43</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>2023</b>					
Central	-	3	3	-	3
North	-	6	6	-	6
South	-	18	18	24	42
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>51</b>

When compared to 2021 findings, the shortfall has reduced by 16 match equivalent sessions. This is due to a decline in the North and South analysis areas.

### ***Sunday cricket capacity balance***

The table below looks at the supply and demand balance for Sunday cricket, which is peak time for senior women's demand but also relevant to some senior men's and junior teams.

Similar to Saturday capacity, there is an overall shortfall for Sunday cricket amount to 27 match equivalent sessions. This worsens to 33 match equivalent sessions per season when considering future demand.

*Table 4.18: Capacity balance of grass cricket squares for Sunday cricket in match sessions per season*



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Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
<b>2021</b>					
Central	-	3	3	-	3
North	-	10	10	-	10
South	-	30	30	6	36
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>43</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>2023</b>					
Central	-	3	3	-	3
North	-	6	6	-	6
South	-	18	18	6	24
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>33</b>

When compared to 2021 findings, the shortfall has reduced by 16 match equivalent sessions. This is due to a decline in the North and South analysis areas.

### ***Midweek cricket capacity balance***

The table below looks at actual spare capacity during the peak period midweek cricket, which is most relevant for junior demand.

For this, actual spare capacity equates to the total spare capacity at each available site or, if it is lower, the total number of additional junior teams that could be fielded on each available square (on the assumption that one square can accommodate six midweek teams playing home and away) multiplied by four (the minimum number of matches a junior team plays).

There is a current shortfall of 19 match equivalent sessions per season, although a small level of spare capacity exists in the Central Analysis Area. After factoring in future demand, this shortfall increases 35 match equivalent sessions per season and there is a deficit within each analysis area.

*Table 4.19: Capacity balance of grass cricket squares for junior cricket in match sessions per season*

# STOKE-ON-TRENT CITY COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
<b>2021</b>					
Central	12	3	9	12	3
North	-	10	10	-	10
South	-	30	30	4	34
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>2023</b>					
Central	8	3	5	12	7
North	-	6	6	-	6
South	-	18	18	4	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>35</b>

When compared to 2021 findings, the shortfall has reduced by 12 match equivalent sessions. This is due to a decline in the North and South analysis areas, although spare capacity has also reduced in the Central Analysis Area.

### 4.6: Conclusion

Overall, there is currently an insufficient supply of cricket squares in Stoke-on-Trent to cater for all types of cricket (Saturday, Sunday and midweek). These shortfalls worsen when taking into consideration future demand.

*Table 4.20: Capacity balance of grass cricket squares across Stoke-on-Trent in match sessions per season*

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Saturday	-	27	27	24	51
Sunday	-	27	27	6	33
Midweek	8	27	19	16	35

Notwithstanding the above, when compared to 2021 data, the shortfalls have actually reduced within each playing period. However, this is solely due to demand decreasing at Hanford Cricket Club, which has in turn reduced overplay. The picture for the remaining clubs is either unchanged or it has worsened.

### Cricket summary

- ◀ **There is no spare capacity for Saturday or Sunday cricket however there is enough actual spare capacity to accommodate two additional midweek teams.**
- ◀ **There are three sites that are considered to be overplayed by a total of 27 match equivalent sessions per season.**
- ◀ **Overall, there is currently an insufficient supply of cricket squares in Stoke-on-Trent to cater for all types of cricket (Saturday, Sunday and midweek) and all shortfalls worsen when taking into account future demand.**
- ◀ There are eight grass wicket squares in Stoke-on-Trent located across eight sites, all of which available for community use.
- ◀ Both Bucknall Park and Norton Cricket Club & Miners Welfare Institute (North Analysis Area) also previously accommodated grass wicket squares (disused).
- ◀ There are also two NTPs that accompany grass wicket squares in addition to 10 standalone NTPs.
- ◀ A standalone NTP is planned as part of the creation of a new school (Florence MacWilliams Academy).
- ◀ Sandyford Cricket Club is without security of tenure due to an expired lease which it acquires from Network Space.
- ◀ In total, there are five grass wicket squares which are good quality and three are rated as standard quality (none are assessed as poor quality).
- ◀ The audit of ancillary facilities determines that five squares are accompanied by good quality provision, with the remaining three being standard and in need of modernisation.
- ◀ Despite having training facilities, Caverswall CC, Hanford CC and J & G Meakin CC each report a need more or better provision, whilst Fenton Cricket Club has no provision.
- ◀ There are seven cricket clubs competing in Stoke-on-Trent generating 73 teams, which as a breakdown equates to 28 senior men's, six senior women's, 36 junior boys' and three junior girls' teams.
- ◀ There has been a general growth in demand in recent years, although this is partially offset by a reduction in participation at Hanford CC.
- ◀ Six clubs participate in All Stars and/or Dynamos initiatives as well as women's and girls' softball.
- ◀ Hem Heath CC exports its third and fourth Saturday teams as well as one junior team to Forsbrook Cricket Club in Staffordshire Moorlands.
- ◀ Of the responding clubs, four indicate aspirations to increase levels of participation, whilst population growth predicts that there is enough demand in South Analysis Area to establish one additional senior men's team.

### PART 5: RUGBY UNION

#### 5.1: Introduction

The Rugby Football Union (RFU) is split into four areas across the country with a workforce team that covers development, coaching, governance and competitions. It governs a variety of formats and programmes, including 15-a-side, 10-a-side, 7-a-side and Tag rugby as well as the O2 Touch programme. Its aim is to increase and retain participation within the game, with facilities needing to be appropriate, affordable and accessible in order to enable this.

For traditional rugby union, there are generally three playing formats, based on the age of the players involved. These are now known as age grade mixed rugby (previously mini), age grade boys/girls rugby (previously junior) and senior rugby.

The rugby union playing season operates from September to May.

#### ***Consultation***

There are two clubs currently playing within Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham RUFC and Longton RUFC. Both were consulted in 2021 through an online meeting, whereas the latter also completed an online survey. This results in 100% response rate.

For this update, the RFU has been consulted to check and challenge previous information and supply latest affiliation data.

#### 5.2: Supply

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## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Within Stoke-on-Trent, there are 12 senior and three age grade pitches provided, with all but two being available for community use. The unavailable pitches are located at Abbey Hill School & College and Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre.

As seen in the table below, the majority of rugby union provision (13 pitches or 87%) is in South Analysis Area. The remaining provision is in the Central Analysis Area, with no rugby union provision of any kind present in North Analysis Area.

*Table 5.1: Supply of all rugby union pitches across Stoke-on-Trent*

Analysis area	No. of senior pitches	No. of age grade pitches
Central	2	-
North	-	-
South	10	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3</b>

The number of pitches supplied remains unchanged since the 2021 PPS, although Trentham RUFC has obtained an additional strip of land, from private ownership, in order to create additional playing field land. It has used this to extend what was an age grade pitch to an additional senior pitch.

The audit only identifies dedicated, line marked pitches that are serviced by goalposts. However, there are some additional marked spaces that are used, without goalposts, particularly for age grade rugby. It is also common for age grade matches to be played on senior pitches via the use of cones, particularly at sites used by clubs. This is the case across club sites in Stoke-on-Trent.

For rugby union pitch dimension sizes please see the table overleaf.

*Table 5.2: Pitch dimensions*

Age	Playing format	Maximum pitch dimensions (metres)
U7	Age grade mixed	20 x 12
U8	Age grade mixed	45 x 22

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### PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

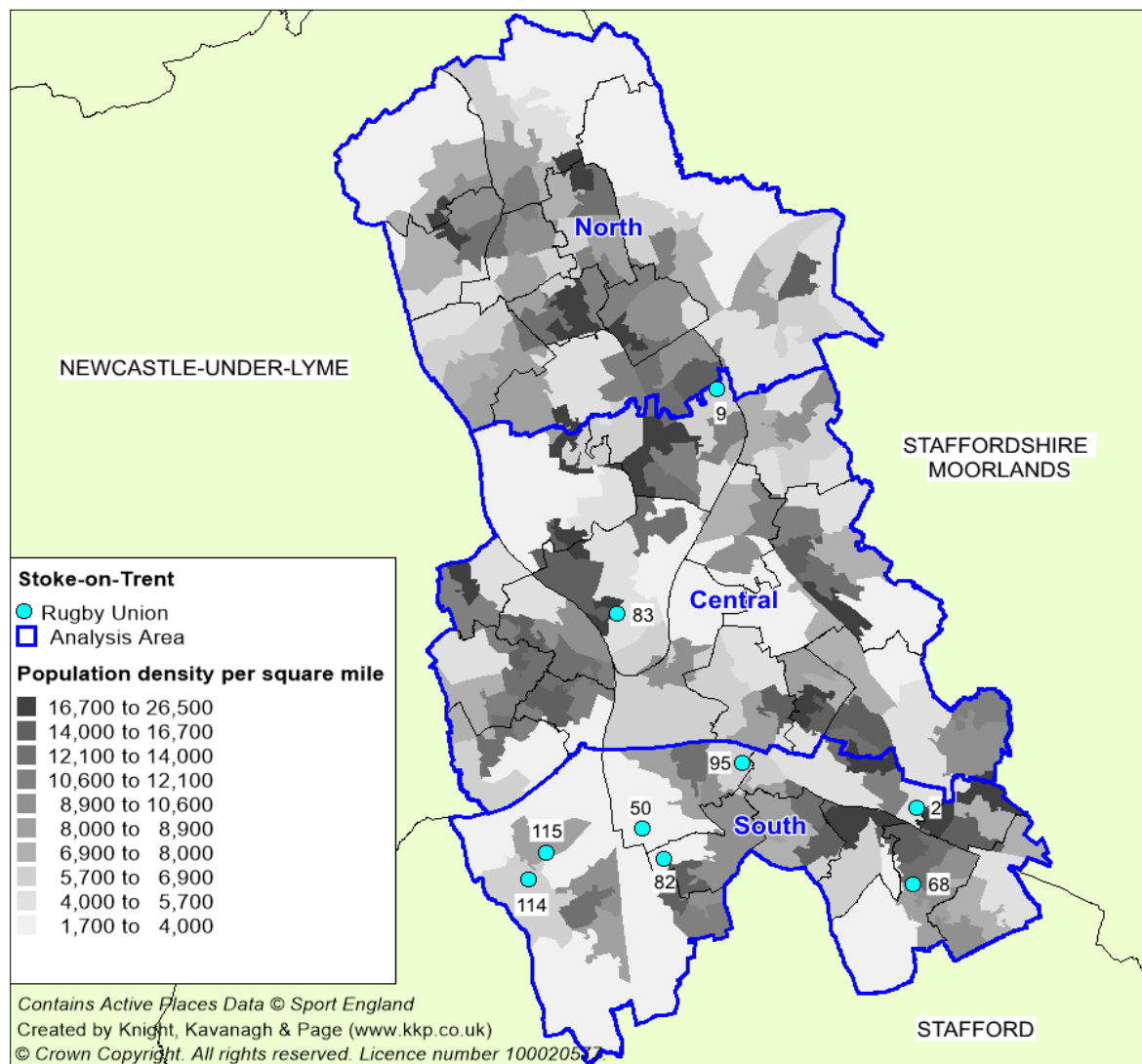
Age	Playing format	Maximum pitch dimensions (metres)
U9	Age grade mixed	60 x 30
U10	Age grade mixed	60 x 35
U11	Age grade mixed	60 x 43
U12	Age grade mixed	60 x 43
U13	Age grade boys/girls	90 x 60 (60 x 43 for girls)
U14	Age grade boys/girls	100 x 70
U15	Age grade boys/girls	100 x 70
U16	Age grade boys/girls	100 x 70
U17	Age grade boys/girls	100 x 70
U18	Colts	100 x 70
Senior	Senior	100 x 70

Figure 5.1 below shows the location of all rugby union pitches currently servicing the City. For a key to the map, see Table 5.6.

# STOKE-ON-TRENT CITY COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Figure 5.1: Location of rugby union pitches within Stoke-on-Trent



### Future developments

Since the production of the original PPS in 2021, a separate Mitigation Strategy has been commissioned on behalf of the Council regarding the potential disposal of three former school sites (Edensor Technology College, Berry Hill High School and Mitchell High School). This is currently under development and will seek to present a comprehensive overview as to how the playing pitch and outdoor sports provision at the sites can be collectively and adequately mitigated to meet planning policy and how a positive strategy for sports investment can be developed as a result.

Of the schools, both Edensor Technology College and Berryhill High School provided a senior rugby union pitch when active (Mitchell High School contained no formal rugby union provision).

Elsewhere, in the original PPS, future development plans were identified for both Trentham RUFC (obtaining additional land) and Longton RUFC (resurfacing its 3G pitch). These have both since come to fruition.

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

Trentham RUFC has secure tenure at its home venue via a freehold. Similarly, Longton RUFC is considered to have secure tenure at Longton Rugby Football Club through a long-term lease from the City Council running until 2056.

No other sites are currently used for community rugby. Furthermore, security of tenure is limited on account of all other pitches being located at education sites.

### ***Pitch quality***

The quality of rugby pitches across Stoke-on-Trent have been assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments as determined by RFU) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating. This was originally carried out across 2020/2021, with quality ratings revisited as part of this update via consultation and through utilising more recent PitchPower reports.

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

For maintenance, each pitch is given a maintenance rating of M0, M1 or M2, based on the regime that is usually undertaken, with the definitions of these shown in the table below.



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## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Table 5.3: Definition of maintenance categories

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

For drainage, a rating of D0, D1, D2 or D3 is assigned to each pitch. This is based on whether or not drainage is adequate and considers the presence of an operational system. The figures are based upon a pipe drained system at 5m centres that has been installed in the last eight years and a slit drained system at 1m centres that has been installed in the last five years.

Table 5.4: Definition of drainage categories

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

An overall quality based on both drainage and maintenance can then be generated on a scale of good, standard and poor as shown below.

Table 5.5: Quality ratings based on maintenance and drainage scores

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

Please see Appendix 2 for the full assessment criteria.

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## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

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Of the community available pitches in Stoke-on-Trent, two are assessed as good quality, seven are assessed as standard quality and four as poor quality. The good quality pitches are located at Trentham Rugby Club (two are good and one is standard), whilst all pitches at Longton Rugby Football Club are considered standard.

The community available poor quality pitches are located at Birches Head Academy, Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy, St Thomas More Catholic Academy and Trentham Community Sports Centre.

When compared to 2020/2021 findings, the only difference is the two good quality pitches identified at Trentham Rugby Club as these were previously standard. The improvement is a result of a PitchPower assessment being undertaken at the site.

A detailed breakdown of such provision can be seen in the tables overleaf, with the club-based and education-based pitches separated for clarity.

## STOKE-ON-TRENT CITY COUNCIL

### PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Table 5.6: Site quality ratings (club sites)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Community use?	No. of pitches	Pitch type	Sports lighting?	Assessment score	Quality rating
50	Longton Rugby Football Club	South	Yes	5	Senior	Yes	M1/D2	Standard
					Senior	Yes	M1/D2	Standard
					Senior	No	M1/D2	Standard
					Age grade	No	M1/D2	Standard
					Age grade	No	M1/D2	Standard
115	Trentham Rugby Club	South	Yes	3	Senior	Yes	M2/D2	Good
					Senior	No	M2/D2	Good
					Senior	No	M1/D1	Standard

## STOKE-ON-TRENT CITY COUNCIL

### PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Table 5.7: Site quality ratings (education sites)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Community use?	No. of pitches	Pitch type	Sports lighting?	Assessment score	Quality rating
2	Abbey Hill School & College	South	No	1	Senior	No	M0 / D1	Poor
9	Birches Head Academy	Central	Yes-unused	1	Junior	No	M0 / D0	Poor
68	Ormiston Meridian Academy	South	Yes-unused	1	Senior	No	M1 / D1	Standard
82	Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy	South	Yes-unused	1	Senior	No	M1 / D0	Poor
83	Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre	South	No	1	Senior	No	M2 / D1	Good
95	St Thomas More Catholic Academy	South	Yes-unused	1	Junior	No	M0 / D1	Poor
114	Trentham Community Sports Centre	South	Yes-unused	1	Senior	No	M0 / D1	Poor

### ***Ancillary facilities***

Trentham RUFC has submitted a planning application for the extension and modernisation of its clubhouse. The Club indicates that it will likely need to improve the facilities in order to meet future demand, for example through enlarging and upgrading its changing rooms to be more appropriate for women, girls and age grade rugby.

It should be noted that since the original information was collated above, the Club has had planning permission granted (68563/FUL) with conditions for a two-storey side and front extension of its clubhouse and extension of carparking.

The quality of ancillary facilities at Longton Rugby Football Club is good with Longton RUFC frequently investing in provision in order to sustain its condition. The Club raises no issues with its facilities.

Facilities at education sites vary, although with none of them currently in use for rugby this is presently a non-factor.

### **5.3: Demand**

Demand for rugby pitches in Stoke-on-Trent tends to fall within the categories of organised competitive play and organised training.

### ***Competitive play***

There are two community rugby union clubs based in Stoke-on-Trent providing a total of 33 teams (2022/2023 season). Both are large clubs collectively catering for five

# STOKE-ON-TRENT CITY COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

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senior men's, nine junior boys' and two junior girls' and 17 mini teams. The two dedicated girls' teams play out of Longton RUFC.

*Table 5.8: Summary of club demand (number of teams)*

Club	Senior men's	Senior women's	Age grade boys'	Age grade girls'	Age grade mixed
Longton RUFC	3	-	7	2	6
Trentham RUFC	2	-	7	-	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>

The demand remains unaltered since original data was captured in the 2020/2021 season; however, it should be noted that Longton RUFC began fielding a senior women's team before this folded.

Out of the two clubs, Longton RUFC is bigger with a total of 18 teams (55%) in comparison to Trentham RUFC which has 15 teams (45%). Both clubs provide a complement of age grade mixed and age grade boys' demand.

In addition to the above, there are also two senior men's and one senior women's team playing in BUCs competitions for Staffordshire University, with all competitive and training demand located at Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre. The University reports that this level of demand generally remains consistent on an annual basis.

### *Training*

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

Both Longton RUFC and Trentham RUFC train on sports-lit grass pitches at their home venues, amounting to approximately four match equivalent sessions per week each. This is outlined in greater detail later on in this section of the report (Table 5.10).

The teams from Staffordshire University train on a dedicated sports-lit area at Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre.

### *Use of artificial pitches*

Nationally, clubs identify the use of 3G pitches for training as a method of protecting the match pitches and providing a high-quality surface for full contact practice. Competitive play continues to take place on grass pitches for the most part, with ad hoc use of 3G pitches for fixtures in the case of unsuitable pitches due to waterlogging or frost.

There are currently no World Rugby compliant 3G pitches in Stoke-on-Trent, both clubs express a demand to access such provision to better accommodate training demand, alleviate overplay and to protect pitch quality. The RFU reports that Longton RUFC in particular has been in dialogue over plans to replace its current training pitch with a 3G surface.

Further detail on the use of and need for 3G pitches can be found in Part 3 of this report.

### ***Additional demand***

Staffordshire Surge American Football Club plays its home matches at Trentham Rugby Club on one of grass rugby union pitches. Whilst this does not impact on capacity for rugby use (as the seasons do not overlap), it can impact on post-season remedial work. The Club previously trained at Longton Rugby Football Club (in 2021).

In addition, pitches at both Longton Rugby Football Club and Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre are used for touch/tag rugby throughout the playing season. This, however, has less of an impact on quality as the play is less intensive.

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

There is no known exported or imported demand in relation to rugby union in Stoke-on-Trent.

### ***Future demand***

Future demand can be defined through multiple ways, including through participation increases and by using population forecasts. In addition, the proceeding Strategy & Action Plan document will contain housing growth scenarios that can be used to estimate additional demand for rugby union arising from housing developments across Stoke-on-Trent.



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## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

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### *Participation increases*

In 2020/2021 consultation, both Trentham RUFC and Longton RUFC express future demand to increase women and girls' participation at their clubs, with each stating that they want to create a dedicated senior women's team and an age grade girls' team. Further to this, Trentham RUFC aspires to create two additional age grade boys' teams to operate as the Club's colt section.

As neither club has achieved any growth since the original PPS (outside of a senior women's team temporarily being fielded by Longton RUFC), the above future demand is still considered to be relevant, particularly given its links to the RFU's current targets in regard to increasing female participation. In total, the future demand amounts to three match equivalent sessions, all located in the South Analysis Area.

### *Population increases*

Team generation rates are used below as the basis for calculating the number of teams likely to be generated in the future based on population growth (2040).

*Table 5.9: City-wide team generation rates and future demand for rugby union*

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams	Team Generation Rate	Future population within age group (2040)	Predicted future number of teams	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population
Senior Men's (19-45)	47,277	7	1:6,754	52,428	7	0
Senior Women's (19-45)	44,267	1	1:44,267	45,409	1	0
Junior Boys (13-18)	8,806	9	1:978	9,235	9	0
Junior Girls (13-18)	8,205	2	1:4,103	8,726	2	0
Mini rugby mixed (7-12)	19,796	17	1:1,164	4,359	4	0

As seen in the table above, there is not a significant enough growth across the City to forecast any additional rugby union demand. However, as indicated above, consultation with the RFU suggests that the development of female rugby in the City is particularly likely as it is currently a focus area for the NGB. This is especially the case due to the upcoming 2025 Rugby World Cup.

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

In order to fully establish actual spare capacity, the peak period needs to be established for all types of rugby. For senior teams, it is considered to be Saturday PM as all senior men's teams play at this time. Peak time for age grade rugby is Sunday AM.

### **5.4: Capacity analysis**

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

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

- ◀ All sites that are used for competitive rugby matches (regardless of whether this is secured community use) are included on the supply side.
- ◀ In order to account for curricular and extra-curricular activity on school pitches by schools a total of one match equivalent session has been added to each pitch.
- ◀ All play takes place on posted pitches unless it is known otherwise.
- ◀ All competitive play is on senior sized pitches (except for where posted age grade pitches are provided).
- ◀ From U13 upwards, teams play 15 v15 and use a full pitch.

- ◀ For senior and age grade boys/girls teams, the current level of play per week is set at 0.5 for each match played based on all teams operating on a traditional home and away basis (assumes half of matches will be played away).
- ◀ Age grade mixed teams (U6s-U12s) play on half of a senior pitch, meaning two matches and four teams can be accommodated at any one time.
- ◀ For age grade mixed teams playing on a senior pitch, play per week is set at 0.25 for each match played based on all teams operating on a traditional home and away basis and playing across half of one senior pitch.
- ◀ Training that takes place on marked pitches is reflected by the addition of match equivalent sessions to current usage levels (one training session is one match equivalent session).
- ◀ Internal use of school pitches is added to current play, where community availability is offered, as determined on a site-by-site basis depending on levels of activity.
- ◀ Other usage of pitches (e.g., by football teams) is added as match equivalent sessions based on the level and regularity of play.

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

*Table 5.10: Pitch capacity (matches per week) based on quality assessments*

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

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Table 5.10: Capacity table for rugby pitches in Stoke-on-Trent (club-based)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Number of pitches	Pitch type	Quality rating	Sports-lit?	Non-tech score	Competitive demand (Match equivalent sessions per week)	Training demand (Match equivalent sessions per week)	Pitch Capacity (sessions per week)	Capacity rating	Comments
50	Longton Rugby Football Club	South	Yes	2	Age grade	Standard	No	M1 / D2	4.5	-	5	0.5	Pitch has potential spare capacity.
50	Longton Rugby Football Club	South	Yes	1	Senior	Standard	Yes	M1 / D2	1.5	-	2.5	1.5	Pitch has potential spare capacity.
50	Longton Rugby Football Club	South	Yes	1	Senior	Standard	Yes	M1 / D2	2	4	2.5	3.5	Pitch is overplayed by 3.5 match equivalent sessions. This is from competitive and training demand from Longton RUFC.
50	Longton Rugby Football Club	South	Yes	1	Senior	Standard	No	M1 / D2	2	-	2.5	0.5	Pitch has potential spare capacity.
115	Trentham Rugby Club	South	Yes	1	Senior	Good	No	M2 / D2	1	-	3.25	2.25	Pitch has potential spare capacity.
115	Trentham Rugby Club	South	Yes	1	Senior	Good	Yes	M2 / D2	1	4	3.25	1.75	Pitch is overplayed by 1.75 match equivalent sessions. This is from competitive and training demand from Trentham RUFC.
115	Trentham Rugby Club	South	Yes	1	Senior	Standard	No	M1 / D2	2.5	-	2.5	0	Pitch is played to capacity.

Table 5.11: Capacity table for rugby pitches in Stoke-on-Trent (education-based)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Number of pitches	Pitch type	Quality rating	Sports-lit?	Non-tech score	Competitive demand (Match equivalent sessions per week)	Training demand (Match equivalent sessions per week)	Pitch Capacity (sessions per week)	Capacity rating	Comments
2	Abbey Hill School & College	South	No	1	Senior	Poor	No	M0 / D1	1	-	1.5	0.5	Pitch has potential spare capacity.
9	Birches Head Academy	Central	Yes	1	Junior	Poor	No	M0 / D0	0.5	-	0.5	0	Pitch is played to capacity from curricular and extracurricular demand.
68	Ormiston Meridian Academy	South	Yes-unused	1	Senior	Standard	No	M1 / D1	1	-	2	1	Pitch has potential spare capacity.
82	Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy	South	Yes	1	Senior	Poor	No	M1 / D0	1	-	1.5	0.5	Pitch has potential spare capacity.
83	Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre	South	No	1	Senior	Standard	No	M2 / D1	3	-	3	0	Pitch is played to capacity from curricular and extracurricular demand.
95	St Thomas More Catholic Academy	South	Yes-unused	1	Junior	Poor	No	M0 / D1	1	-	1.5	0.5	Pitch has potential spare capacity.

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**PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Number of pitches	Pitch type	Quality rating	Sports-lit?	Non-tech score	Competitive demand (Match equivalent sessions per week)	Training demand (Match equivalent sessions per week)	Pitch Capacity (sessions per week)	Capacity rating	Comments
114	Trentham Community Sports Centre	South	Yes	1	Senior	Poor	No	M0 / D1	1	-	1.5	0.5	Pitch has potential spare capacity.

#### *Spare capacity*

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

Furthermore, there are numerous rugby pitches in Stoke-on-Trent at education sites that are unused by clubs despite being reported as available. Whilst these may theoretically provide some spare capacity, it would not be reasonable to equate this as actual spare capacity as school usage itself is likely to limit what additional activity should take place on the provision. Moreover, the nature of club rugby generally means that clubs are generally unwilling to utilise secondary venues, making community use unlikely. Ancillary facilities are also often inappropriate, whilst minimal security of tenure is generally offered.

In addition, any pitches that are used by clubs to capacity at peak time, that are poor quality or that provide unsecure tenure are not considered to have actual spare capacity. As such, the table below ascertains whether or not any identified 'potential capacity' can be used to accommodate an increase in play on a site-by-site and pitch-by-pitch basis. This is regarding senior demand.

*Table 5.12: Summary of actual spare capacity*

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Pitch quality	Potential capacity	Actual spare capacity	Comments
2	Abbey Hill School & College	South	Senior	1	Poor	0.5	0.5	Unavailable for community use.
50	Longton Rugby Football Club	South	Senior	1	Standard	1.5	-	Pitches played to capacity at peak time.
50	Longton Rugby Football Club	South	Senior	1	Standard	0.5	-	Pitches played to capacity at peak time.
68	Ormiston Meridian Academy	South	Senior	1	Standard	1	1	Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
82	Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy	South	Senior	1	Poor	0.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
114	Trentham Community Sports Centre	South	Senior	1	Poor	0.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
115	Trentham Rugby Club	South	Senior	1	Standard	2.25	-	Pitch is played to capacity at peak time.

As seen, there are seven sites which display potential spare capacity to accommodate additional senior play in Stoke-on-Trent; however, in practice, there is no actual spare capacity for an increase in demand. This is due to sites either not having secure tenure, not being community available, not having actual spare capacity at peak time, or being poor quality. This is unchanged since 2021 findings.

For age grade rugby, ascertaining actual spare capacity can be unclear with regards to the programming of matches as it can vary weekly. This is because junior and mini sections tend to enter cup competitions or play organised friendlies, with clubs arranging for a number of their age groups to play those from another club all at once, home or away. Then when fixtures are not scheduled, clubs will generally hold training sessions, which means that clubs may require use of home pitches for consecutive weeks, or not at all for the same time period.

Given the above, it is generally assumed that no pitches used by age grade teams have significant actual spare capacity for an increase in demand (over and above what actual spare capacity has been identified for senior play). However, it is acknowledged that some capacity does exist during weekend when the pitches are not in use.

### **Overplay**

There are two pitches on two sites in Stoke-on-Trent which are overplayed by a total of 5.25 match equivalent sessions per week. These are the two sites in use by the two clubs.

*Table 5.12: Summary of supply and demand balance on senior rugby union pitches*

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	Number of pitches	Overplay (match equivalent sessions per week)
50	Longton Rugby Football Club	South	Senior	1	3.5



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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	Number of pitches	Overplay (match equivalent sessions per week)
115	Trentham Rugby Club	South	Senior	1	1.75
<b>Total</b>				<b>2</b>	<b>5.25</b>

All overplay is in the South Analysis Area and is located on the respective dedicated training pitches of Longton RUFC and Trentham RUFC. Compared to 2021 findings, overall overplay has reduced, with this being a result of quality improvements and capacity increasing at Trentham Rugby Club.

### 5.5: Supply and demand analysis

Having considered supply and demand, the table below identifies the overall spare capacity in each of the analysis areas for senior rugby union pitches based on match equivalent sessions per week. Future demand is based on reported club development plans.

Table 5.13: Summary of supply and demand balance on senior rugby union pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Central	-	-	0	-	0
North	-	-	0	-	0
South	-	5.25	5.25	3	8.25
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>5.25</b>	<b>5.25</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8.25</b>

As seen, there is a current shortfall of 5.25 match equivalent sessions per week to accommodate rugby union demand in Stoke-on-Trent, increasing to 8.25 match equivalent sessions per week when incorporating future demand. This is all located in the South Analysis Area due to the location of Longton and Trentham rugby clubs.

When compared to 2021 findings, the current and future shortfall has reduced by 0.75 match equivalent sessions. This is solely due to quality improvements at Trentham Rugby Club, with no other significant supply and demand data altering.

### 5.6: Conclusion

There is a clear shortfall of rugby union capacity in Stoke-on-Trent for both Longton RUFC and Trentham RUFC.

Where shortfalls are present, these could be alleviated through providing new pitches, although the number required is dependent on the quality they are provided to and whether they can accommodate training needs or not. However, there are also alternatives to reducing the deficits, for example via improving the quality of the existing stock, increasing the presence of sports lighting and enabling access to World Rugby compliant 3G pitches. These will be further explored in the proceeding strategy document.

#### Rugby union summary

- ◀ **No pitches provide actual spare capacity for an increase in demand, whereas pitches at both Longton Rugby Football Club and Trentham Rugby Club are overplayed by a total of 5.25 match equivalent sessions per week.**
- ◀ **Overall, there is a current shortfall of 5.25 match equivalent sessions per week on senior rugby union pitches to meet current demand, increasing to 8.25 when incorporating future demand.**
- ◀ **There is a clear shortfall of rugby union capacity in Stoke-on-Trent for both Longton RUFC and Trentham RUFC.**
- ◀ Within Stoke-on-Trent, there are 12 senior and three age grade pitches provided, with all but two being available for community use.
- ◀ The unavailable pitches are located at Abbey Hill School and College and Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre.
- ◀ Of the community available pitches, two are assessed as good quality, seven are assessed as standard quality and four as poor quality.
- ◀ Trentham RUFC has secure tenure at its home venue via a freehold, whilst Longton RUFC is considered to have secure tenure through a long-term lease from the City Council running until 2056.
- ◀ Trentham RUFC has submitted a planning application for the extension and modernisation of its clubhouse, whereas Longton RUFC has no ancillary facility issues.
- ◀ There are two community rugby union clubs based in Stoke-on-Trent collectively providing a total of 33 teams.

- ◀ Both clubs train on their sports-lit match pitches, which increases usage and impacts on quality, and both cite an aspiration to instead have access to World Rugby compliant 3G provision.
- ◀ Both clubs express future demand to increase women and girls' participation at their clubs, with each stating that they want to create a dedicated women's team and an age grade girls' team.

### PART 6: HOCKEY

#### 6.1: Introduction

Hockey in England is governed by England Hockey (EH).

Competitive league hockey matches and training can only be played on sand filled, sand dressed or water based artificial grass pitches (AGPs). Although competitive, adult and junior club training cannot take place on third generation turf pitches (3G), 40mm pitches may be suitable at introductory level, such as school curriculum low level hockey. EH's Artificial Grass Playing Surface Policy details suitability of surface type for varying levels of hockey, as shown below.

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

Category	Surface	Playing Level	Playing Level
England Hockey Category 1	Water surface approved within the FIH Global/National Parameters	<b>Essential</b>  International Hockey - Training and matches	<b>Desirable</b>  Domestic National Premier competition  Higher levels of EH Player Pathway  Performance Centres and upwards
England Hockey Category 2	Sand dressed surfaces within the FIH National Parameter	<b>Essential</b>  Domestic National Premier competition  Higher levels of player pathway: Academy Centres and Upwards	<b>Desirable</b>  All adult and junior League Hockey  Intermediate or advanced School Hockey  EH competitions for clubs and schools (excluding domestic national league)
England Hockey Category 3	Sand based surfaces within the FIH National Parameter	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>

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Category	Surface	Playing Level	Playing Level
		All adult and junior club training and league Hockey  EH competitions for clubs and schools  Intermediate or advanced schools hockey	
England Hockey Category 4	All 3G surfaces	<b>Essential</b>  None	<b>Desirable</b>  Lower level hockey (Introductory level) when no category 1-3 surface is available.

In addition to the above pitch types, EH reports that it is currently trialling a different multi-sport surface in order to better accommodate lower levels of hockey demand and other sports such as netball and tennis. The surface type (known as Gen 2<sup>17</sup>) is a versatile sand-dress synthetic surface with a compatible shock pad that ensures that sports do not need to compromise on the playing experience. The concept is designed to provide facilities, including schools, with a dynamic surface which reduces the amount of space required and can be utilised to full potential.

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

It is considered that a hockey pitch can accommodate a maximum of four matches on one day (peak time) provided that the pitch has sports lighting. Training is generally midweek and requires access to a pitch and lights.

### **Consultation**

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<sup>17</sup> <http://www.englishockey.co.uk/page.asp?section=2596&sectionTitle=Gen+2+Playing+Surface>

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There were no community hockey clubs based within Stoke-on-Trent when the original study took place in 2021, resulting in no consultation taking place. However, North Stafford HC will be moving into the City, with detail surrounding this gathered through discussions with EH.

### 6.2: Supply

There are three full size hockey suitable AGPs in Stoke-on-Trent, all of which are sports-lit, available for community use and located in the North Analysis Area.

*Table 6.2: Full size hockey suitable pitches in Stoke-on-Trent*

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Sports lit?	Size (metres)
67	Ormiston Horizon Academy	North	Yes	Yes	94 x 55
105	The Co-Operative Academy of Stoke-On-Trent	North	Yes	Yes	100 x 60
155	The Excel Academy	North	Yes	Yes	100 x 62

In addition, there are three smaller size sand-based AGPs, although only one is available to the community (at St Joseph's Catholic Academy). None of these are serviced by sports lighting.

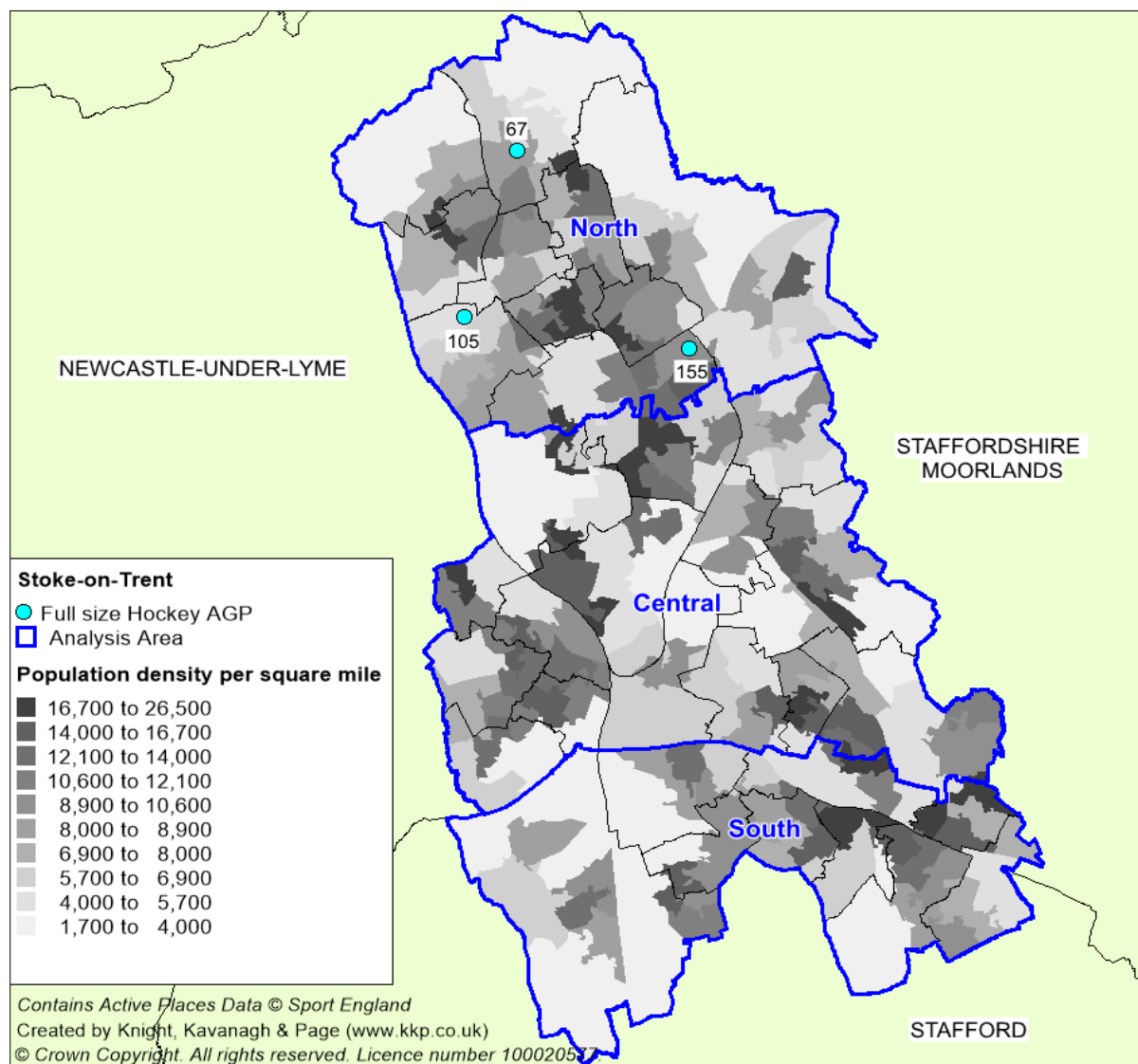
*Table 6.3: Small size hockey suitable pitches in Stoke-on-Trent*

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Sports lit?	Size (metres)
98	St. Joseph's Catholic Academy	North	Yes	No	35 x 20
106	The Crescent Academy	South	No	No	20 x 12
154	St Pauls CofE Primary School	South	No	No	40 x 24

Although too small to host competitive matches, smaller size pitches can be used to accommodate some hockey training demand if they are of a large enough size, available to the community and serviced by sports lighting. However, none of the provision in Stoke-on-Trent meets all this criteria. As a result, the pitches are discounted from this point forward from a hockey perspective as they are not considered able to accommodate purposeful activity.

When compared to 2021 findings, the provision of full size pitches remains unaltered, whilst there is one fewer smaller sized pitch following the conversion of provision at Hanley Park to 3G. For the location of the pitches, see Figure 6.1 overleaf.

Figure 6.1: Location of full size hockey suitable AGPs in Stoke-on-Trent



### Future provision

Planning permission has been granted (March 2023) for the creation of a full size sand-based pitch at Trentham Community Sports Centre. In addition, a partnership has been established between the School and North Stafford HC, which identifies that the development is an essential step in enabling the Club's future progression and extending its hockey footprint across Stoke-on-Trent. EH also adds that the provision will ensure all demand emanating from the City can be adequately catered for.



In addition, it is also reported that other clubs in the area could have interest in accessing the pitch as a secondary venue. This includes Stone HC.

Since the production of the original PPS in 2021, a separate Mitigation Strategy has been commissioned on behalf of the Council regarding the potential disposal of the three former school sites (Edensor Technology College, Berry Hill High School and Mitchell High School). This is currently under development and will seek to present a comprehensive overview as to how the playing pitch and outdoor sports provision at the sites can be collectively and adequately mitigated to meet planning policy and how a positive strategy for sports investment can be developed as a result.

At Berryhill High School and Edensor Technology College, redgra areas were provided that were previously utilised for hockey. However, this surface is no longer considered to be appropriate for the sport, meaning replacement provision is not considered suitable. EH identifies that mitigation should go towards sustaining the provision at Trentham Community Sports Centre (e.g., through contributing towards a sinking fund).

### ***Disused provision***

There are two disused smaller size sand-based AGPs in Stoke-on-Trent located at Abbey Hulton United and St Peters Academy (Queens Road).

Abbey Hulton United FC reports that its disused AGP has not been used for several seasons due to its quality, whilst provision at St Peters Academy (Queens Road) has not been used since it relocated in 2013. This site has planning approval for a residential development (65020/RES).

### ***Management***

All current hockey suitable AGPs in Stoke-on-Trent are managed within the education sector with one pitch each at Ormiston Horizon Academy, The Co-Operative Academy

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of Stoke-on-Trent and The Excel Academy. The new pitch at Trentham Community Sports Centre will also fall within this category.

### **Quality**

The quality of hockey suitable artificial grass pitches across Stoke-on-Trent has been assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments as determined by EH) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◀ Good
- ◀ Standard
- ◀ Poor

This was originally undertaken across 2020/2021 for the original study, with findings revisited for this update. See Appendix 2 for the full assessment criteria.

Two pitches are considered to be standard quality (at Ormiston Horizon Academy and The Co-Operative Academy of Stoke-on-Trent), whilst one is poor quality (at the Excel Academy). Whilst this is unaltered since 2021, the overall ratings for each of the pitches has worsened on account of the surfaces now being older and without refurbishment taking place.

*Table 6.4: Full size hockey suitable pitches in Stoke-on-Trent*

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Year built / refurbished	Quality
67	Ormiston Horizon Academy	North	2013	Standard
105	The Co-Operative Academy of Stoke-On-Trent	North	2013	Standard
155	The Excel Academy	North	2001/2010	Poor

At Ormiston Horizon Academy and The Co-Operative Academy Stoke-on-Trent, it should be noted each pitch is now 10 years old and therefore close to the end of their recommended lifespans. It is anticipated that each pitch will need refurbishing in the near future.

The pitch at The Excel Academy is poor quality due to being significantly over its recommended lifespan.

### ***Ancillary provision***

The ancillary facilities at each site are considered to be either standard or good quality with no specific issues identified.

### **6.3: Demand**

There are currently no community hockey clubs based in Stoke-on-Trent, although as referenced, North Stafford HC is to transfer some demand into the City once the pitch at Trentham Community Sports Centre has been developed. It currently uses a pitch at Newcastle-under-Lyme School, in Newcastle-under-Lyme and has previously on an ad hoc basis utilised provision at The Excel Academy.

The Club currently fields five senior men's and three senior women's as well as 11 dedicated junior teams and two badgers' groups that play in tournaments. This leads to it using the pitch at Newcastle-under-Lyme School to capacity, with no room for growth. Moreover, if fixtures are not appropriately arranged, it also necessitates the need for a secondary venue (hence occasional use of the pitch at The Excel Academy).

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

With no hockey demand currently utilising provision within Stoke-on-Trent on a regular basis, all demand from the City is exported to neighbouring authorities. As such, the development at Trentham Community Sports Centre and the linked transfer of demand from North Stafford HC will provide a resource for this to return.

Elsewhere, two hockey teams from Staffordshire University export their demand to Stone Hockey Club in the neighbouring authority of Stafford. The University states that the teams have no issue with this, and it is therefore likely to remain the same for the foreseeable future. It does not have its own hockey suitable provision.

### ***Pitch usage***

As there are no hockey clubs currently playing regularly in Stoke-on-Trent, it must be noted that the community demand received on the three existing full size pitches is almost exclusively football related. This is most common during midweek for training activity, although some spare capacity remains, which is not the case across the majority of the 3G pitches in the City (see Part 3). At weekends, very little capacity is taken up.

Although 3G is the preferred surface for football training, it is important to consider football use of sand-based pitches as such usage is required to ensure that the provision remains sustainable in the long-term. Whilst the transfer of demand to 3G provision would be beneficial to the users and to the FA, it could impact on the viability of the sand-based stock.

An alternative is to convert the pitches to 3G if this aligns to where shortfalls are present and if hockey is not adversely affected. To that end, as identified in Part 3 of this report, all 3G shortfalls in Stoke-on-Trent are identified in the North Analysis Area, which is where the hockey suitable pitches are all located.

### 6.4: Supply and demand analysis

As none of the three existing full size hockey suitable AGPs in Stoke-on-Trent accommodate any regular hockey users, it is evident that there is an oversupply of hockey suitable provision across the City. In addition, the upcoming development at Trentham Community Sports Centre will further add to the stock and will provide a venue that will cater for club demand via North Stafford HC (and potentially others, such as Stone HC). No other demand is perceived to exist.

Given the above, it is evident that there is not currently a requirement for four hockey suitable AGPs in Stoke-on-Trent on a community sport level, with only the pitch that is to be created at Trentham Community Sports Centre required. Furthermore, it is clear that quality issues exist on the three pitches that are currently provided, with resurfacing required or soon to be required at each venue.

Given that football is the biggest current community user of the AGPs and that sand is not the preferred surface for football, resurfacing should be considered within the context of the need for 3G pitches as explored within Part 3 of this report. If 3G pitches are developed without sand-based pitches being converted, there is a danger that usage of the sand-based pitches could decrease to unsustainable levels. There is, however, also a need to consider the presence of any curricular hockey demand on the pitches prior to any conversion to ensure that this is not adversely affected.

### 6.5: Conclusion

There is currently an oversupply of hockey suitable pitches for club hockey, with only one pitch needed and with this to be provided at Trentham Community Sports Centre. The remaining three pitches require imminent resurfacing, which creates an opportunity to consider this against 3G pitch shortfalls as a means to providing a sustainable stock of AGPs across Stoke-on-Trent. This is especially the case given that the sand-based pitches are located where all 3G shortfalls exist (the North Analysis Area).

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Compared to 2021, the overall findings differ due to the development at Trentham Community Sports Centre and the demand that will be received by North Stafford HC. However, the requirement for the remaining three pitches is unaltered as they are not impacted upon by this.

### Hockey summary

- ◀ **It is evident that there is an oversupply of hockey suitable provision across the City, with only the pitch that is to be created at Trentham Community Sports Centre required from a community perspective.**
- ◀ **With resurfacing works required on the three remaining pitches, an opportunity exists to consider this against 3G shortfalls as a means to providing a sustainable stock of AGPs, especially given that the provision is located where all 3G shortfalls exist.**
- ◀ There are three full size hockey suitable AGPs in Stoke-on-Trent, all of which are sports-lit, available for community use and located in the North Analysis Area.
- ◀ In addition, there are three smaller size sand-based AGPs, although none are suitable for purposeful hockey demand.
- ◀ Trentham Community Sports Centre has received planning approval for the development of a full size hockey suitable AGP and this will be utilised by North Stafford HC via a partnership agreement.
- ◀ All existing pitches as well as the proposed pitch at Trentham Community Sports Centre are managed by education providers.
- ◀ All three existing pitches are at end the end of their recommended lifespan; two are considered to be standard quality (at Ormiston Horizon Academy and The Co-Operative Academy of Stoke-on-Trent), whilst one is poor quality (at the Excel Academy).
- ◀ There are no hockey clubs currently based within Stoke-on-Trent.
- ◀ North Stafford HC is to transfer some demand into the City once the pitch at Trentham Community Sports Centre has been developed; it currently uses a pitch at Newcastle-under-Lyme School and has previously on an ad hoc basis utilised provision at The Excel Academy.
- ◀ The Club currently fields five senior men's and three senior women's as well as 11 dedicated junior teams and two badgers' groups that play in tournaments.
- ◀ Elsewhere, two hockey teams from Staffordshire University export their demand to Stone Hockey Club in the neighbouring authority of Stafford, although this is not reported to be a problem.
- ◀ As there are no hockey clubs currently playing regularly in Stoke-on-Trent, it must be noted that the community demand received on the three existing full size pitches is almost exclusively football related, although spare capacity remains on each.

### **PART 7: GOLF**

#### **7.1: Introduction**

Golf is the fifth largest participation sport in England, with around 730,000 members belonging to one of 1,800 Affiliated clubs and a further two million people playing independently outside of club membership. There are an estimated 3,000 golf courses across the Country, with approximately 90 designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest because apart from the intensively managed trees and greens they have other habitats with high wildlife value. Many other courses also exist within designated Heritage Coast sites, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, or listed Historic Parklands.

Nationally, the sport is governed by England Golf. Its role includes providing competitions for players of all ages and abilities, identifying and developing the most talented golfers, maintaining a uniform system of handicapping, administering and applying the rules, and introducing new golfers via its initiatives such as 'Get into Golf'.

#### ***Consultation***

The section was informed via consultation with England Golf, which provided information relating to all facilities and clubs within Stoke-on-Trent. This was done for the original study in 2021 and again for this update (2023).

#### **7.2: Supply**

There are three different types of golf facilities recognised by Sport England and governed by England Golf, as defined in the table below. Facilities such as pitch and putt courses and miniature/crazy golf courses are not included as these are not considered to be traditional formats of the game and are not comparable offerings.



*Table 7.1: Definitions of golf facilities*

<b>Facility type</b>	<b>Description</b>
Standard	A standard par course, with a minimum of 9 holes but normally associated with 18-hole courses; many 9-hole courses have different tee boxes which allow the provision to be played as an 18-hole course. Some courses provide 27 holes, with any two loops of 9-holes played to make up an 18-hole round.
Par 3	Shorter length of holes than a standard course, with no hole longer than Par 3. Most likely to be a 9-hole course although 18-hole offerings do exist. Does not include pitch and putt courses, which are even shorter offerings and are not considered to be a traditional version of the sport.
Driving Range	Includes covered and uncovered driving range bays but not practice areas within golf courses; ranges are based on the hiring of balls, with users not required to retrieve, whereas practice areas are generally for members to use with their own balls (although a growing number have dispensers). Does not include 'entertainment' ranges or virtual offerings, although some driving ranges have expanded to also provide these features.

Within Stoke-on-Trent there are three golf venues that provide facilities conforming with the above definitions, as identified in Table 7.2 below. It should be noted that Burslem Golf Club and Trentham Golf Club are affiliated to England Golf whereas Lightwood Golf Driving Range is unaffiliated. This is normal for standalone driving ranges as, generally, membership schemes are not offered.

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Figure 7.1: Location of golf courses in Stoke-on-Trent

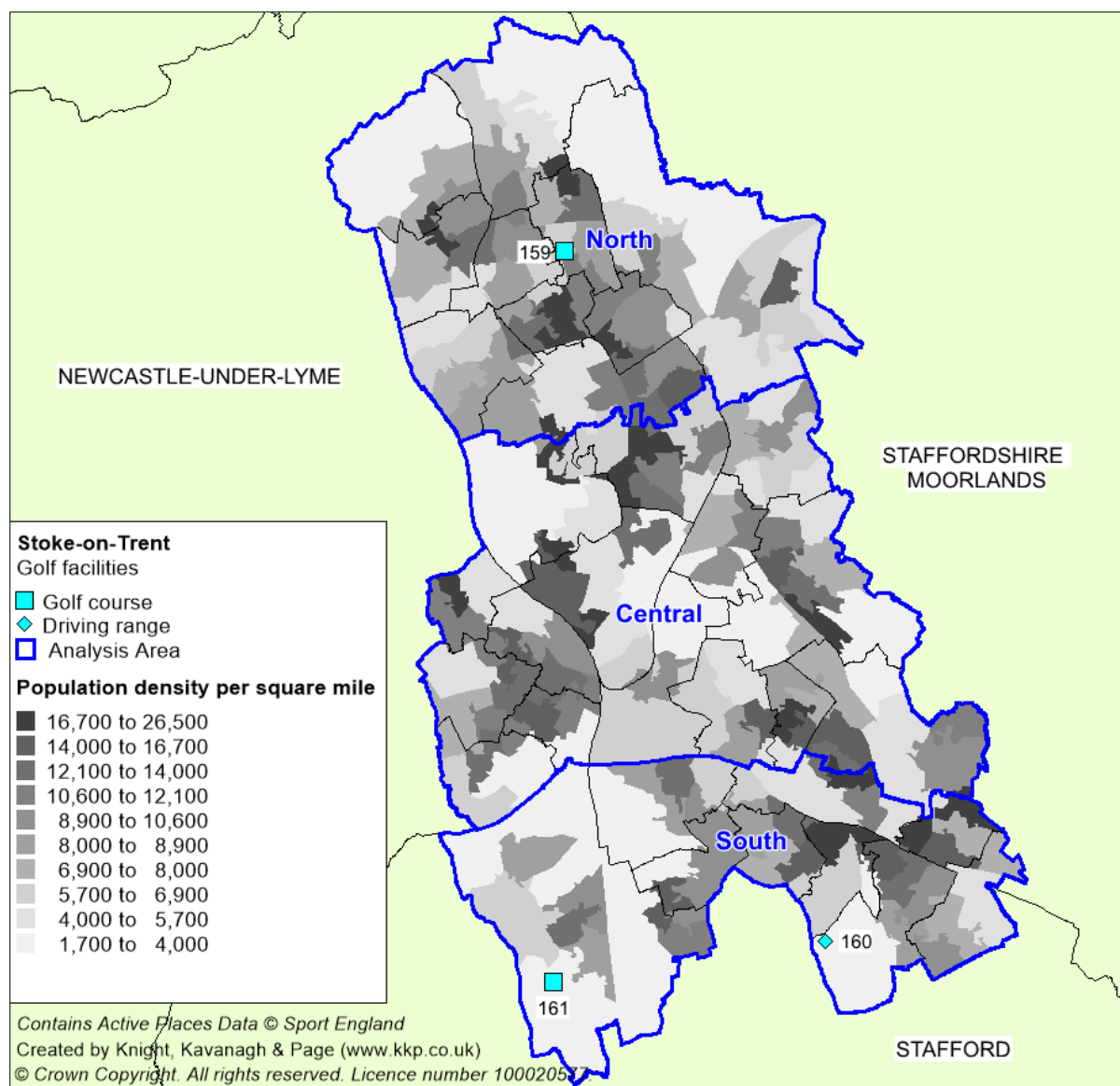


Table 7.2: Golf facilities within Stoke-on-Trent

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area
159	Burslem Golf Club	ST6 7JT	North
160	Lightwood Golf Driving Range	ST3 4AD	South
161	Trentham Golf Club	ST4 8HB	South

### Disused provision

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Goldenhill Golf Course closed to public in 2011 and has since been accessed as open space by surrounding residents. The site was identified to potentially reopen *circa* 2019; however, a deal could not be finalised and it has remained shut.

### **Standard hole golf courses**

Two of the golf sites within Stoke-on-Trent provide one standard hole course each. With Trentham Golf Club providing an 18-hole course and Burslem Golf Club providing a 9-hole course.

*Table 7.3: Summary of standard hole provision*

Site ID	Site name	Holes	Par	Yardage <sup>18</sup>		
159	Burslem Golf Club	9	33	2,635	2,635	2,309
161	Trentham Golf Club	18	72	6,663	6,333	5,831

Trentham Golf Club provides an Open Championship Qualifying course and is considered to be one of the finest golf offerings across Staffordshire, the Midlands and North West. It has hosted Open Championship Qualifying, England Golf and Staffordshire County events for both men, ladies and juniors. This makes it a particularly prestigious and high-end site.

Nationally, many 9-hole courses are shorter than the front or back nine of an 18-hole course, primarily to attract and cater for a different userbase. This is the case at Burslem Golf Club, although it is comparably long for a 9-hole course. The site also offers users the opportunity to play it through twice via a slightly altered configuration to provide an 18-hole offering.

### **Par 3 golf holes**

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<sup>18</sup> White denotes Championship tees, yellow denotes men's tees and red denotes ladies' tees.

There are currently no purpose-built Par 3 courses within Stoke-on-Trent with the closest being Queens Park Golf Course (in Crewe), The Staffordshire Golf Club (in South Staffordshire) or Lichfield Golf Course (in Lichfield). As such, any residents will have to travel outside of the City to access such provision.

Par 3 courses can be beneficial to golf venues and local authorities as they can provide a pathway for users who may not be ready or confident enough to play on a longer course. They can also provide added income through attracting players that would not necessarily be interested in playing the more traditional form of the sport.

### ***Driving range bays***

There are 20 driving range bays provided in the City at Lightwood Golf Driving Range. The site provides a mixture of open air and covered bays that are serviced by sports lighting to allow for all-year round and late-evening usage.

*Table 7.4: Summary of driving range bays in Stoke-on-Trent*

Site ID	Site name	No. of bays	Sports-lit?	Pay and play?
160	Lightwood Golf Driving Range	20	Yes	Yes

Nationally, many driving range providers are updating their facilities with modern technology in a bid to increase demand, such as through the installation of automatic tees or via entertainment systems such as TopTracer and FlightScope. Such provision allows for users to simulate playing on courses across the world and provides ball tracking and statistical feedback. However, nothing of this kind has been identified in Stoke-on-Trent.

### ***Management and ownership***

There are three main types of ownership and management models of golf facilities in England; members clubs, proprietary clubs and municipal facilities. Each of these is summarised in the table below.

*Table 7.5: Types of ownership and management of golf facilities*

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Management type	Description
<b>Members</b>	Traditionally owned by members and run by committees. They are likely to hire caterers and green staff. Most members' clubs offer some level of pay and play and encourage golf societies but are mostly focused on membership numbers.
<b>Proprietary</b>	Owned or managed by businesses or individuals, these can include country club type facilities at the high end of the golfing market alongside more localised facilities. Many have clubs operating within them but can also take a much more relaxed attitude to dress and traditions of golf. Pay and play opportunities tend to be a key feature of the business plan.
<b>Municipal</b>	These are generally owned by a local authority, although in a growing number of instances, management has been contracted and externalised to private companies. Due to a lack of financial viability, many have closed across the Country in recent years and many that remain are under threat.

It is recognised that members clubs and visitors to such clubs are normally expected to dress appropriately, have a registered handicap certificate (a certificate issued by the Council of National Golf Unions (CONGU)) and be familiar with the rules and etiquette of the game. This is not uncommon at some proprietary clubs, but municipal courses tend to be more relaxed with regard to dress codes and do not require people to have handicaps, making golf much more accessible.

Consequently, municipal courses are, in many instances, seen as entry level facilities, with players using them before having the confidence to move on to a members' or high-end proprietary club (although many people can and do stay attached to a particular course). They also tend to offer a more affordable golfing experience.

The business model for members clubs tends to rely heavily on income through membership subscriptions and use of ancillary facilities, rather than from pay and play usage, although attention has somewhat switched at many sites in recent years due to demand falling. The same can be said for some proprietary clubs, although, in general, more emphasis is placed on supplementing regular activity with green fee sales. Conversely, municipal sites have always been heavily reliant on visitors even though membership packages are normally available (often in the shape of season tickets). On occasion, these can be linked to access to other local authority operated sports facilities, such as leisure centres and swimming pools.

Despite the above generalisations, each golf facility, regardless of management type, will have its own processes in terms of how much focus is placed on membership and

pay and play usage, or whether it equally encourages both. There is no correct way to run a site. A club that focuses on members has guaranteed income, but this can often deter more casual players or nomadic golfers through, for example, a lack of peak time availability. In contrast, a site that depends on visitors can struggle to be viable if there are spells of inclement weather during summer months and can discourage people that want to be part of a club environment. On the other hand, more income can be brought in through regular users compared to what would be the case had they been part of a membership scheme.

In Stoke-on-Trent, there are no municipal or propriety courses as both standard hole courses are members' clubs. Conversely, Lightwood Golf Driving Range is proprietary managed, as is standard for standalone driving ranges.

*Table 7.6: Summary of ownership/management*

Site ID	Site name	Management type
159	Burslem Golf Club	Members
160	Lightwood Golf Driving Range	Proprietary
161	Trentham Golf Club	Members

### **Pricing**

A key issue for the wider golf population is whether golf courses are available to the general population at a price point which is accessible to the majority of residents. Better quality courses tend to cost more to use, whilst 18-hole provision is generally more expensive to access than 9-hole provision.

Nationally, over the past few years, many facilities have altered their pricing structure to allow for discounts following a decline in golf membership. England Golf has positively encouraged this as its view is that clubs are more likely to experience growth when flexible packages are available. For instance, some now offer five and/or six day memberships (whereby members can access the course on specific days but not on one or both weekend days), whilst others provide discounts that are no longer limited solely to junior players (e.g. discounts for those aged 18-21 and 21-30 or for those

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aged 65 and over). In the past, it was common for many clubs to have waiting lists in place for membership, but this has become rare in the present day.

England Golf reports that the average cost of a full adult membership across the Country is currently £901.00. In Stoke-on-Trent, membership to Trentham Golf Club is significantly more than this at £1,991 per annum, in addition to a £1,500 one off joining fee. This reflects the high-end nature of the site.

Burslem Golf Club is significantly cheaper than the national average at £605 per year (with no joining fee.). However, this accounts for it being a 9-hole course.

In regards to green fees, the cost at Burslem Golf Club is £12 for a 9-hole round or £20 for an 18-hole round. However, access is reserved for membership from 11:00-15:00 on Tuesdays and Thursday, from 14:00 onwards on Wednesdays and Fridays and from 07:00-16:00 on Saturdays and Sundays.

At Trentham Golf Club, a round costs £90 on weekdays and £105 at weekends. These costs are significant and reflect the high-end nature of the site.

*Table 7.7: Pricing structures at golf facilities within Stoke-on-Trent*

Site ID	Site name	Joining fee	Full membership (per year)	Green fee (per round)	
				Weekday	Weekend
159	Burslem Golf Club	N/A	£605	£12	£12
161	Trentham Golf Club <sup>19</sup>	£1,500	£1,991	£90	£105

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<sup>19</sup> Fees were unknown at the time of the 2021 study but have now been disclosed.



No membership scheme is offered at Lightwood Golf Driving Range given the nature of the site. Ball hire is £3.50 for 50 balls or £5.00 for 100.

### ***Quality***

There are no official national or county golf facility rankings. Generally, the better course quality and supporting infrastructure is, the higher the joining/membership and green fees are likely to be. Some sites gain status through hosting county, national and international golf events and some tend to feature in ranking articles put together by golf magazines.

In terms of the quality of the golf courses in Stoke-on-Trent, both are considered to be relatively good with no significant issues identified and with both sites having dedicated green keeping staff which provide maintenance regimes that operate all-year round. The facilities at Trentham Golf Club are particularly high end and all-encompassing.

The ancillary facilities are also good across both sites, with each accompanied by good quality and well-equipped clubhouses.

The quality of facilities at Lightwood Golf Driving Range are considered to be standard, with a small onsite bar and shop offered as well as toilets. It is, however, considered that there are elements which require modernisation.

### **7.3: Demand**

Golf participation considerably increased across the Country following the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions, both initially in 2020 and again following the later lockdown period in 2021. As one of the first sports to be allowed on both occasions, people were able to play whilst maintaining social distancing and England Golf provided very clear guidance as to how this should manifest itself (e.g., by not allowing the flag to be taken out or rakes to be used). Some courses report a near doubling of demand, highlighting

that a significant opportunity now exists to increase participation in the long-term. However, to what level this may apply remains unclear as retention may be challenging as more users return to normal working/ living conditions and with ongoing economic issues.

Prior to the recent growth in demand, participation in golf had generally been in decline, with only recent signs showing that the reduction may have been levelling off. The landscape of demand has also changed, with fewer users taking up membership packages and more golfers becoming nomadic and using a range of courses on a pay and play basis.

The following section examines current demand for golf in Stoke-on-Trent as well as recent trends and potential future demand.

### **Membership**

England Golf suggests that the average membership of a golf club nationally is 386, which is based on a central national handicap platform. In Stoke-on-Trent, the average membership across the two courses (as of 2023) is 316, although the 18-hole equivalent it is 422 (at Burslem Golf Club only provides 9-holes). This is therefore higher than the national average.

*Table 7.8: Summary of golf membership within Stoke-on-Trent*

Site ID	Site name	Average membership	18-hole equivalent
159	Burslem Golf Club	316	422
161	Trentham Golf Club		

### **Pay and play**

Whilst pay and play usage has generally increased across England in recent years, usage figures at the sites within Stoke-on-Trent are not known as it is not something that is tracked by England Golf. However, given the nature of both courses provided, it is not expected to be particularly high as emphasis is more so on member access. This is reflected with green fee usage being restricted at certain times of the day.

Any golfer within Stoke-on-Trent seeking regular and affordable pay and play access of a golf course may need to travel outside of the City in order to do so. Sites such as Malkins Bank Golf Course in Cheshire East offer a viable option where the focus is more so on green fee usage.

At Lightwood Golf Driving Range, only pay and play access exists, although this does not take away from the above point given that it does not provide a course.

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

Cross-boundary demand for golf is common nationally due to the nature of the sport. Golfers do not necessarily recognise local authority borders, and many will choose a facility for a whole range of reasons other than where it is located, with factors including quality, availability, cost and where friends/family play. This can be especially pronounced at venues located close to neighbouring authorities and if there is a comparative lack of provision within those authorities.

For Stoke-on-Trent, imported demand is expected to exist, particularly in regards to Trentham Golf Club. Any golfer from a nearby authority that wants to access a high-end offering would likely travel into the City in order to do so. Lightwood Driving Range is also likely to attract demand from elsewhere as a standalone driving range.

In contrast, exported demand is likely to be considerably higher due to only two courses being provided within Stoke-on-Trent and given that neither are geared towards pay and play usage.

However, there is no data to evidence this clearly.

### ***Unmet demand***

Unmet demand is existing demand that is not getting access to golf facilities. This could be reflected via a waiting list at a club, although it is likely that people on a waiting list are still playing golf elsewhere due to the nature of the sport, either via membership of

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another club or through pay and play access. As such, unmet demand is considered to be very minimal in Stoke-on-Trent.

Notwithstanding the above, it must be noted that Trentham Golf Club reports that it has very limited availability remaining for new members. As such, it is operating close to capacity. This means that there could be unmet demand for this particular facility, rather than unmet demand for golf provision in general.

Recent analysis carried out by England Golf indicates an increasing number of clubs now operate a waiting list nationwide (approximately one third of all clubs).

### ***Latent demand***

Latent demand is demand for golf that is not currently being realised. This could be for numerous reasons, such as time constraints, financial reasons and a lack of suitable, available provision. To that end, Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in golf but 'are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 10,027 people within Birmingham.

In addition, England Golf also has a mapping tool that enables an assessment of potential demand within a 20-minute drive time of each golf facility (which is considered to be a reasonable travel distance). This is based on research undertaken that identifies that 24% of adults in England are potential players, amounting to circa 9.6 million people and equating to 9% current players, 8% lapsed (former) players and 7% latent players. It can be used by providers to identify what demand may exist for their facilities, thus helping inform marketing, development and investment decisions.

Using the tool across Stoke-on-Trent, Burslem Golf Club is identified as having the largest potential demand, with 73,459 people falling within the segments within a 20-minute drive time, following by Trentham Golf Club with 72,825 people. These figures are relatively high when compared nationally.

Whilst the reasoning for the latent demand is unknown and is likely to be varied, the data does show relatively high demand which would significantly increase membership and/or pay and play usage across facilities if realised. England Golf is supportive of clubs/sites that proactively target new audiences in an attempt to tap into such demand i.e., through developing a variety of golfing offers, coaching programmes and a range of membership options.

### ***Future demand***

England Golf has an aim to increase membership of clubs nationally; however, after reaching its previous target, it no longer has a fixed goal in terms of growth. Nationally, many clubs, especially the most established ones, will be happy to retain current demand levels, whilst others will be open to growing and some considerably so. In that regard, England Golf reports that many providers are proactively targeting new audiences through coaching programmes and a wider range of membership and playing options.

At Trentham Golf Club, future demand is likely to be minimal given its current capacity pressures, whilst it is expected to be higher at the remaining two venues.

### 7.4: Supply and demand analysis / conclusion

Stoke-on-Trent currently has sufficient levels of golf provision in correlation to demand, although it is slightly higher than the national average, due to a good mix of provision with an 18-hole course, a 9-hole course and a standalone driving range facility provided. However, there is a lack of a course with a focus on pay and play usage, which likely leads to high levels of exported demand. There are also capacity pressures at Trentham Golf Club that could further exacerbate this.

Based on the above, in principle, there is a need for all three of the facilities to be protected as each site caters for a different, specific type of demand and market that cannot be accommodated elsewhere, with no similar provision existing.

The above analysis is unaltered compared to 2021 findings.

#### **Golf summary**

- ◀ **Stoke-on-Trent currently has sufficient levels of golf provision in correlation to demand, and also a good mix of provision; however, there is a lack of a course with a focus on pay and play usage, which likely leads to high levels of exported demand.**
- ◀ **In principle, there is a need for all three of the facilities to be protected as each site caters for a different, specific type of demand and market that cannot be accommodated elsewhere.**
- ◀ Within Stoke-on-Trent, there are three golf venues.
- ◀ Burslem Golf Club offers a 9-hole standard course, Trentham Golf Club provides an 18-hole standard course and Lightwood Golf Driving Range is a standalone driving range (20 bays).
- ◀ Trentham Golf Club provides an Open Championship Qualifying course and is considered to be one of the finest golf offerings across Staffordshire, the Midlands and North West, marking it as a particularly high-end facility.
- ◀ Goldenhill Golf Course closed to public in 2011 and has since been accessed as open space by surrounding residents (disused provision).
- ◀ Both Burslem and Trentham golf clubs are members clubs (Lightwood Golf Driving Range is proprietary).
- ◀ Pricing is particularly high at Trentham Golf Club, reflecting the high end nature of the site.

- ◀ Quality is generally good across the venues, although modernisation is required at Lightwood Golf Driving Range.
- ◀ Trentham Golf Club has 423 members, which is higher than the national average (386), whereas Burslem Golf Club has a lower membership, although this correlates with it providing less capacity given that it is a 9-hole course.
- ◀ Pay and play opportunities are likely to be limited with neither Burslem Golf Club nor Trentham Golf Club focusing on this (only pay and play access is allowed at Lightwood Golf Driving Range but no course is provided).
- ◀ Imported demand is expected to exist, particularly in regards to Trentham Golf Club given its status, although exported demand is expected to be higher, especially for pay and play usage.
- ◀ Unmet demand is considered to be very minimal, although Trentham Golf Club reports that it only has very limited capacity remaining for new members.
- ◀ At Trentham Golf Club, future demand is likely to be minimal given its current capacity pressures, whilst it is expected to be higher at the remaining two venues.

### PART 8: BOWLS

#### 8.1: Introduction

Outdoor bowls in Stoke-on-Trent is played on crown greens. The British Crown Green Bowling Association (BCGBA) is the NGB with overall responsibility for ensuring effective governance of the sport. The sport is managed on a local level by the Staffordshire County Bowls Association and the Potteries and District Bowls Association.

#### **Consultation**

There are 18 bowling clubs within Stoke-on-Trent. Through telephone consultation, a total response rate of 67% (12/18 clubs) was achieved for the original study in 2021.

*Table 8.1: Summary of consultation*

Club name	Analysis area	Responded?
Baddeley Green BC	North	Yes
Birches Head Hotel BC	Central	Yes
Bucknall BC	Central	No
Bucknall Park BC	Central	Yes
Burslam CC	North	No
Etruria Park BC	Central	No
Fenton Private BC	Central	Yes
Florence Colliery BC	South	Yes
Florence Tennis & Bowling Club	South	Yes
Goldenhill WMC BC	North	No
Hem Heath BC	South	Yes
Lightwood BC	South	Yes
Milton Bowling Recreation Club	North	Yes
Norton Central BC	North	Yes
Northwood Park BC	Central	No



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Oakhill Bowling & Recreation Club	Central	No
Pittshill WMC BC	North	Yes
Trent Vale BC	Central	Yes

For this update, consultation took place with the BCGBA.

In addition, please note that Bucknall Park BC has recently folded.

### 8.2: Supply

There are 22 bowling greens in Stoke-on-Trent located across 20 sites. This includes two double greens sites at Florence Tennis & Bowling Club and Tunstall Park, with the remaining 18 sites accommodating one green each.

The Central Analysis Area accommodates the greatest number of greens with nine, whilst eight greens are in the North Analysis Area and five are in the South Analysis Area. This is summarised in the following table.

*Table 8.2: Summary of community available greens by analysis area*

Analysis area	Number of greens
North	8
Central	9
South	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>

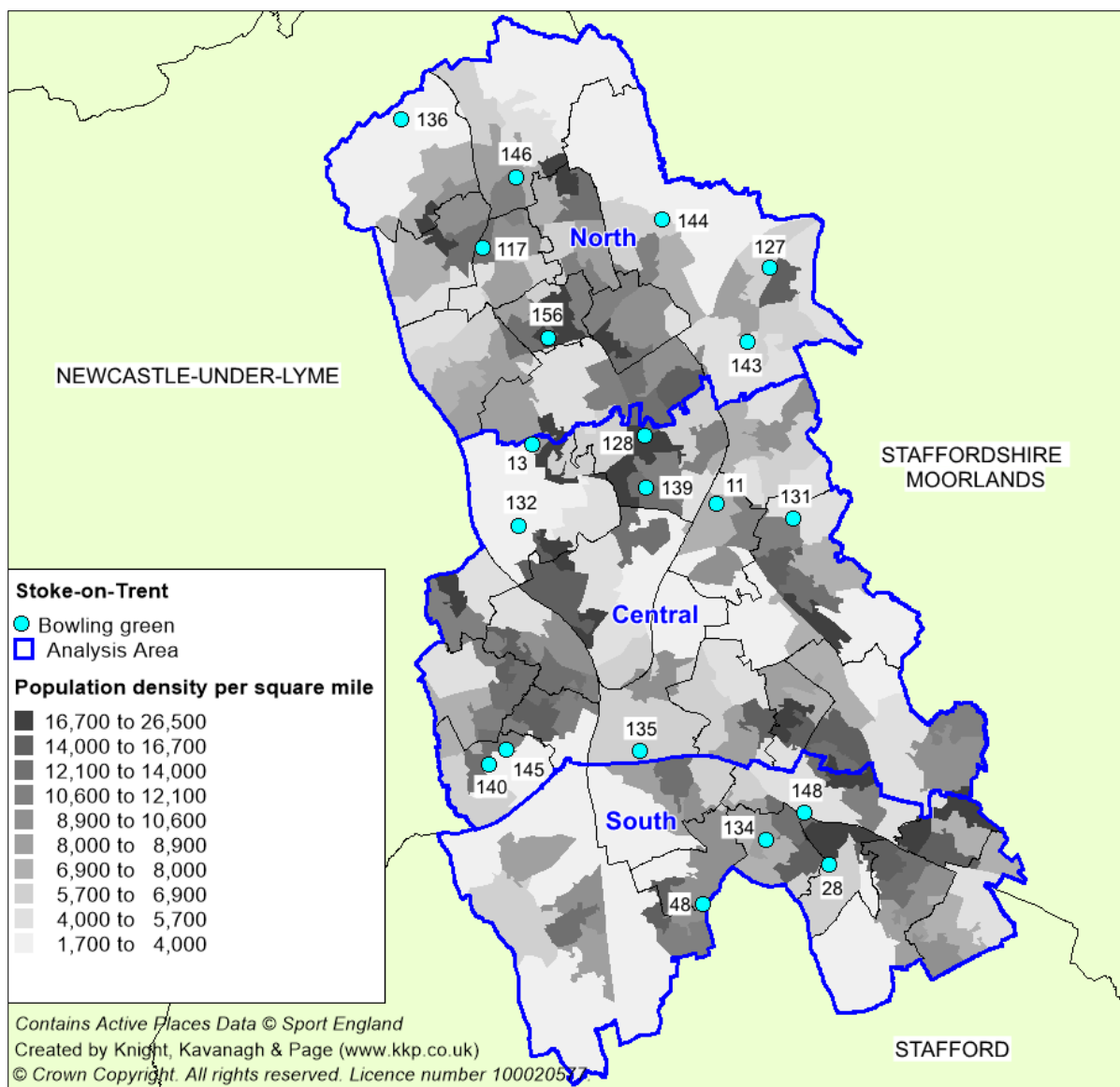
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The number of greens provided remains unaltered since 2021 findings.

Figure 8.1 below highlights the location of all outdoor bowling greens in Stoke-on-Trent. For a key to the map, see Table 8.3.

Figure 8.1: Location of bowling greens in Stoke-on-Trent



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Table 8.3: Breakdown of bowling greens in Stoke-on-Trent

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Users	Management
11	Bucknall Park	Central	Bucknall Park BC <sup>20</sup>	Local authority
13	Burslem Cricket Club	Central	Burslem BC	Sports club
28	Florence Colliery Social Welfare Centre	South	Florence Colliery BC	Community organisation
48	Longton Cricket Club	South	Hem Heath BC	Sports club
117	Tunstall Park	North	Tunstall Park BC	Local authority
127	Baddeley Green	North	Baddeley Green BC	Sports club
128	Birches Head Hotel	Central	Birches Head Hotel BC	Private
131	Bucknall Bowls Club	Central	Bucknall BC	Sports club
132	Etruria Park	Central	Etruria Park BC	Local authority
134	Florence Tennis & Bowling Club	South	Florence BC	Sports club
135	Fenton Private Bowling Club	Central	Fenton Private BC	Sports club
136	Goldenhill Working Mens Club	North	Goldenhill WMC BC	Sports club
139	Northwood Park	Central	Northwood Park BC	Local authority
140	Watson Road Recreation Ground (Mace Street Park)	Central	Trent Vale BC	Local authority
143	Milton Bowling Recreation Club	North	Milton BC	Sports club
144	Norton Central Social Club	North	Norton Central BC	Sports club
145	Oakhill Bowling & Recreation Club	Central	Oakihill BC	Sports club
146	Pitts Hill Working Mens Club	North	Pitts hill WMC BC	Sports club
148	Lightwood Bowling Club	South	Lightwood BC	Local authority
156	Burslem Park	North	-	Local authority

### Future provision

<sup>20</sup> Recently folded.

At Florence Tennis & Bowling Club, the Club is looking at development options in relation to one of its greens, which is said to be no longer required for bowls. This is to provide an additional income stream, with a tennis related development (e.g., an indoor facility) part of the considerations.

### ***Disused/lapsed provision***

An additional 19 bowling greens across 13 sites are considered to be disused or lapsed. These are shown in the table below.

*Table 8.4: Summary of disused bowling greens*

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Number of greens
11	Bucknall Park	Central	1
27	Fenton Park	Central	2
35	Hanley Park	Central	1
49	Longton Park	South	3
56	Mount Pleasant Park (Smithpool Park)	Central	1
126	Anchor Road	Central	1
129	Birches Head Gardeners Bowls Club	Central	1
130	Bucknall ESM Club	Central	1
133	Fegg Hayes Sports & Social Club (Lapsed)	North	1
138	New Stoke Park Bowls Club	Central	2
141	Meir 45 Club (Lapsed)	South	2
142	Middleport Park	North	2
165	Bakewell Street Park	Central	1
<b>Total</b>			<b>19</b>

All the disused/lapsed greens are overgrown and are therefore unable to currently be used for bowls. However, it should be noted that there are two greens at Bucknall Park, of which only one is considered to be disused (the other is included in Table 8.3). That being said, Bucknall Park BC has recently folded, which means that both greens are now unused.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the closure of many of the aforementioned greens are the result of decreasing levels of demand and the costs of maintenance programmes becoming unsustainable.

### ***Ownership/management***

There are 11 bowling greens in Stoke-on-Trent that are owned and managed by the respective bowls club. Seven of the remaining greens are managed by the Council, with one operated through private ownership by a brewery (Birches Head Hotel) and one by the community organisation CISWO (Florence Colliery Social & Welfare Centre).

The clubs which use greens at Bucknall Park, Lightwood Bowling Club and Watson Road Recreation Ground (Mace Street Park) all have leases on their greens from the Council. In contrast, the agreements that clubs using greens at Tunstall Park, Burslem Park, Northwood Park and Etruria Park are unknown.

The green at Birches Head Hotel is leased by Birches Head BC, whilst the green at Florence Colliery Social Welfare Centre is also leased, by Florence Colliery BC.

### ***Quality***

Following a non-technical assessment of greens in Stoke-on-Trent in 2021, and cross referencing the findings against club consultation, the majority of greens (13 or 59%) were assessed as good quality, with seven greens assessed as standard quality and two greens assessed as poor quality. These quality ratings have been revisited as part of this update via consultation with the Council and BCGBA, although it has not been considered necessary to make any changes.

*Table 8.5: Summary of bowling green quality*

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Site ID	Site name	Number of greens	Quality of green
11	Bucknall Park	1	Standard
13	Burslem Cricket Club	1	Standard
28	Florence Colliery Social Welfare Centre	1	Good
48	Longton Cricket Club	1	Good
117	Tunstall Park	2	Poor
127	Baddeley Green	1	Good
128	Birches Head Hotel	1	Good
131	Bucknall Bowls Club	1	Good
132	Etruria Park	1	Good
134	Florence Tennis & Bowling Club	1	Good
		1	Standard
135	Fenton Private Bowling Club	1	Good
136	Goldenhill Working Men's Club	1	Standard
139	Northwood Park	1	Standard
140	Watson Road Recreation Ground (Mace Street Park)	1	Good
143	Milton Bowling Recreation Club	1	Good
144	Norton Central Social Club	1	Good
145	Oakhill Bowling & Recreation Club	1	Good
146	Pitts Hill Working Men's Club	1	Standard
148	Lightwood Bowling Club	1	Good
156	Burslem Park	1	Standard

The greens at Bucknall Park, Burslem Cricket Club, Goldenhill WMC, Northwood Park, Pitts Hill WMC and Burslem Park are considered standard quality. It was highlighted by clubs using these sites that there is a need for new equipment to maintain the grass to a higher level. In addition, the length of grass, quality of ditches, overhanging trees and unofficial use were all cited as being problematic.

One of the greens at Florence Tennis & Bowling Club has also been assessed as standard, primarily due to it being of a lower quality to the main and good quality green at the site. The Club states that it requires significant work doing to it at the end of each season.

The greens at Tunstall Park are assessed as poor quality. This is due to levels of overgrowth as well as bare patches with no growth. Along with this, there is also

evidence of wear and tear as well as bike track marks due to unofficial use on the greens.

All other greens are assessed as good quality with no significant issues identified. A green is considered good quality if it has a high percentage of grass coverage, an even playing surface and limited signs of wear and tear on surrounding ditches/boarding and hard standing areas. In addition, there has to be little to no evidence of litter, dog fouling, leaves and inappropriate usage of the green.

### ***Ancillary facilities***

Most clubs have access to some form of clubhouse/pavilion on site or through an adjoining public house. The quality of these ranges from purpose-built, good quality brick pavilions to basic wooden huts and shelters. It is important to recognise the importance of ancillary provision to bowling clubs as, if the facilities onsite are of suitable quantity/quality and meet user needs, this can help sustain and increase membership levels. This is acknowledged by BCGBA as it offers potential grants for clubs looking to making ancillary improvements.

Florence Colliery BC has in recent years fitted new toilets on its site at Florence Colliery Social Welfare Centre. It aspires to continue more developments at the site, but due to lack of funding it is unable to do so at present.

The green at Birches Head Hotel is serviced by facilities from an adjacent pub, although the Club also has a small clubhouse which it is looking to refurbish. It has secured funding from Red Industries to help enable this.

The clubhouse at Norton Central Social Club has issues with its roof leaking. Norton Central BC reports that it is looking into fixing the roof, but that it would prefer to start again from the shell of the current clubhouse and revamp it. However, it understands the limitations of funding to complete such a project.

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Baddeley Green BC and Lightwood BC are looking to gain funding in order to establish sports lighting at their sites (Baddley Green and Lightwood Bowling Club, respectively) in order to extend the number of hours both greens can be accessed.

### *BCGBA grants*

Provided a club is subscribed to the BCGBA it can apply for a small grant (up to £350) for a range of ancillary issues, providing it has not already received one in the previous five years. Grants available to clubs include the following:

- ◀ New bowling green
- ◀ New floodlights
- ◀ New Pavilion
- ◀ Irrigation for the bowling green
- ◀ Toilets
- ◀ New Shelter
- ◀ Fencing and paths
- ◀ Extending a bowling green
- ◀ Legal fees to fight a green closure

### ***Sports lighting***

A total of seven greens in Stoke-on-Trent are serviced by sports lighting, which represents a high number given the rarity of such greens nationally. This means that there are increased opportunities for access for training and matches during evenings outside of the summer months.

The sports lights at Florence Tennis & Bowling Club are dated, with the Club stating that it would like to build new ones in order to continue providing a good standard of



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lighting to serve the greens. It also states the need for a security gate at the entrance of the property to keep any vandalism off the site.

Birches Head Hotel BC also wants to upgrade the sports lights at Birches Head Hotel as they are over 30 years old.

### 8.3: Demand

#### ***Current demand***

There are 17 bowling clubs playing in Stoke-on-Trent. Membership of these clubs equates to 722, as broken down club-by-club in the table below.

The figures are based on 2021 findings as updated data is unavailable. It should also be noted that BCGBA provided membership figures for the non-responsive clubs in 2021.

*Table 8.6: Membership for bowls clubs across Stoke-on-Trent*

<b>Club name</b>	<b>Current membership (2021)</b>
Baddeley Green BC	24
Birches Head Hotel BC	40
Bucknall BC	29
Bucknall Park BC	Folded
Burslem CC	39
Etruria Park BC	22
Fenton Private BC	120
Florence Colliery BC	50
Florence BC	90

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<b>Club name</b>	<b>Current membership (2021)</b>
Goldenhill WMC BC	62
Hem Heath BC	14
Lightwood BC	55
Milton Bowling Recreation Club	31
Norton Central BC	25
Northwood Park BC	22
Oakhill Bowling & Recreation Club	39
Pittshill WMC BC	40
Trent Vale BC	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>722</b>

The largest club in the City is currently Fenton Private BC, with 120 members, followed by Florence BC with 90 members. The smallest club is Hem Heath BC with 14 members.

The average club membership is 42.

Fenton Private, Trent Vale, Norton Central and Hem Heath bowling clubs all highlight a slight decrease in players over recent years (the period leading up to 2021), following a national trend of declining membership. In comparison Birches Head Hotel BC, Baddeley Green BC and Lightwood BC have seen an increase in membership, with the remaining clubs remaining static.

### ***Latent/unmet demand***

None of the bowling clubs in Stoke-on-Trent are reported as operating at capacity, with all clubs willing to accept new members. As such, it is considered that anyone within Stoke-on-Trent that would like to start participating, could do so at the clubs and greens already in existence, meaning no latent demand is identified.

### ***Future demand***

The BCGBA is actively working to negate the stereotype that bowls as a sport is for the older generation. As such, it is taking active steps at a County and National level to encourage younger players. The future growth for the sport is therefore in a state of flux due to the growing professionalism of the NGB.

All 12 clubs consulted with for the original study, completed in 2021, highlight their aspirations to increase their membership and it should be documented that Lightwood BC have received community investment money from the Council. With this, it is investing money to try and start a junior section.

### *Play Bowls*

Play Bowls is a new product designed to assist clubs in attracting more casual, pay and play users. Clubs are able to sign up to the scheme, with booking slots for access then secured and paid for via the Play Bowls website. The aim is for this to help greens become more accessible whilst making it easy for clubs to evolve and manage the demand from the casual audience.

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

The capacity of a bowling green is very much dependent on the leagues and the day that they operate. A green may have no spare capacity on an afternoon or evening when a popular league operates but may be unused for the rest of the week. However, in many cases, greens are used during the afternoons by club members who bowl socially, with access a potential issue during peak times if membership is particularly high.

The BCGBA does not have any specific guidance on bowling green capacity, although it states that any green used by at least 20 members is generally considered to be sustainable, whilst any green operating with a membership of over 80 may need additional resource to ensure that it is meeting the required level of demand. However, it is also agreed that capacity should be assessed on a site-by-site and club-by-club

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basis as the club-orientated nature of the sport means that demand cannot and does not easily transfer.

Two clubs in Stoke-on-Trent are operating with over 80 members:

- ◀ Fenton Private BC (120 members)
- ◀ Florence BC (90 members)

This is not an issue for Florence BC as it has access for two greens (meaning it could theoretically accommodate up to 160 members), although it reports that it only requires one. In addition, Fenton Private BC does not indicate that it has any capacity pressures, noting that many of its members only play occasionally.

At the other end of the spectrum, six clubs are operating below or close to 20 members. The clubs are:

- ◀ Baddeley Green BC (24 members)
- ◀ Etruria Park BC (22 member)
- ◀ Hem Heath BC (14 members)
- ◀ Northwood Park BC (22 members)
- ◀ Norton Central BC (25 members)
- ◀ Trent Vale BC (20 members)

These clubs should be closely monitored to ensure membership figures do not decrease to a level where they cannot effectively maintain green and ancillary provision quality. This being said, none of the clubs' report issues regarding becoming unsustainable and all indicate plans to increase membership.

### 8.5: Conclusion

Whilst there are some capacity pressures on the bowling greens in Stoke-on-Trent, this is relatively minimal, with only one club operating above recommended limits. Furthermore, no affected clubs report any issues, with all responders suggesting that existing provision can meet both current and future demand. As such, supply is considered sufficient to meet both current and future demand, with no additional greens required.

Whilst no provision shortfalls are identified, with all but two greens in current club use (discounting disused provision), it is also clear that most of the supply requires protection to ensure that demand can continue to be accommodated. Clubs operating with a low membership also require support to ensure continued sustainability.

The above position is unchanged compared to 2021 findings, with the exception of Bucknall Park BC folded and the implications that this has had.

### **Bowls summary**

- ◀ **There is an adequate supply of greens in Stoke-on-Trent, providing that all those in use are protected.**
- ◀ **Baddeley Green, Hem Heath, Norton Central and Trent Vale bowling clubs should be supported to ensure that they remain sustainable despite a low membership base.**
- ◀ **Fenton Private BC is operating above recommended capacity levels, with usage needing to be monitored to ensure that supply remains adequate.**
- ◀ There are 22 bowling greens in Stoke-on-Trent located across 20 sites.
- ◀ At Florence Tennis & Bowling Club, the Club is looking at development options in relation to one of its greens, which is said to be no longer required for bowls.
- ◀ In addition, there are 13 sites containing 19 disused/lapsed greens.
- ◀ Of the active greens, 11 are owned and managed by clubs, with seven managed by the Council, one through private ownership one via a community organisation.
- ◀ 13 of the greens are assessed as good quality, seven as standard quality and two as poor quality.
- ◀ Seven are serviced by sports lighting, which is a large number.
- ◀ Ancillary facility issues are noted at Florence Colliery Social Welfare Centre, Birches Head Hotel and Norton Central Social Club.
- ◀ There are 17 bowling clubs playing in Stoke-on-Trent, with membership equating to 722 members (2021 data).
- ◀ Bucknall Park BC has recently folded.
- ◀ Five clubs have seen a reduction in membership over recent years, whereas three have experienced an increase.
- ◀ No clubs report latent/unmet demand in that all can accommodate their current usage and are willing to accept new members.

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◀ All clubs that have been consulted with highlight their aspirations to increase their membership.

### **PART 9: TENNIS**

#### **9.1: Introduction**

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) is the organisation responsible for the governance of tennis and administers the sport locally across Kingston-upon-Thames. The LTA's Strategy is Tennis Opened up and its mission is to grow tennis by making it more relevant, accessible, welcoming and enjoyable.

The recent joint LTA and UK Government Parks Tennis Project investment (£30 million) is designed to open up tennis to people of all backgrounds, improve access to tennis across the nation, and provide greater opportunities for children and adults to be active. Park tennis courts are particularly important in providing affordable, engaging and accessible opportunities for more female players and those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, as well as being the most popular venue for women to play after they have left education.

#### ***Consultation***

There is one tennis club in Stoke-on-Trent. Florence TC (otherwise known as Florence Tennis & Bowls Club) was consulted with via phone consultation in 2021 resulting in a 100% response rate. The information has since been checked and challenged through dialogue with the LTA for this update.

#### **9.2: Supply**

There are a total of 64 tennis courts identified in Stoke-on-Trent across 22 sites. Of these courts, 46 are categorised as being available for community use, whilst 18 are categorised as being unavailable for community use.

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*Table 9.1: Summary of the number of outdoor courts by analysis area*

Analysis area	Number of courts available for community use	Number of courts unavailable for community use
North	8	13
South	19	2
Central	19	3
<b>Stoke-on-Trent</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>18</b>

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

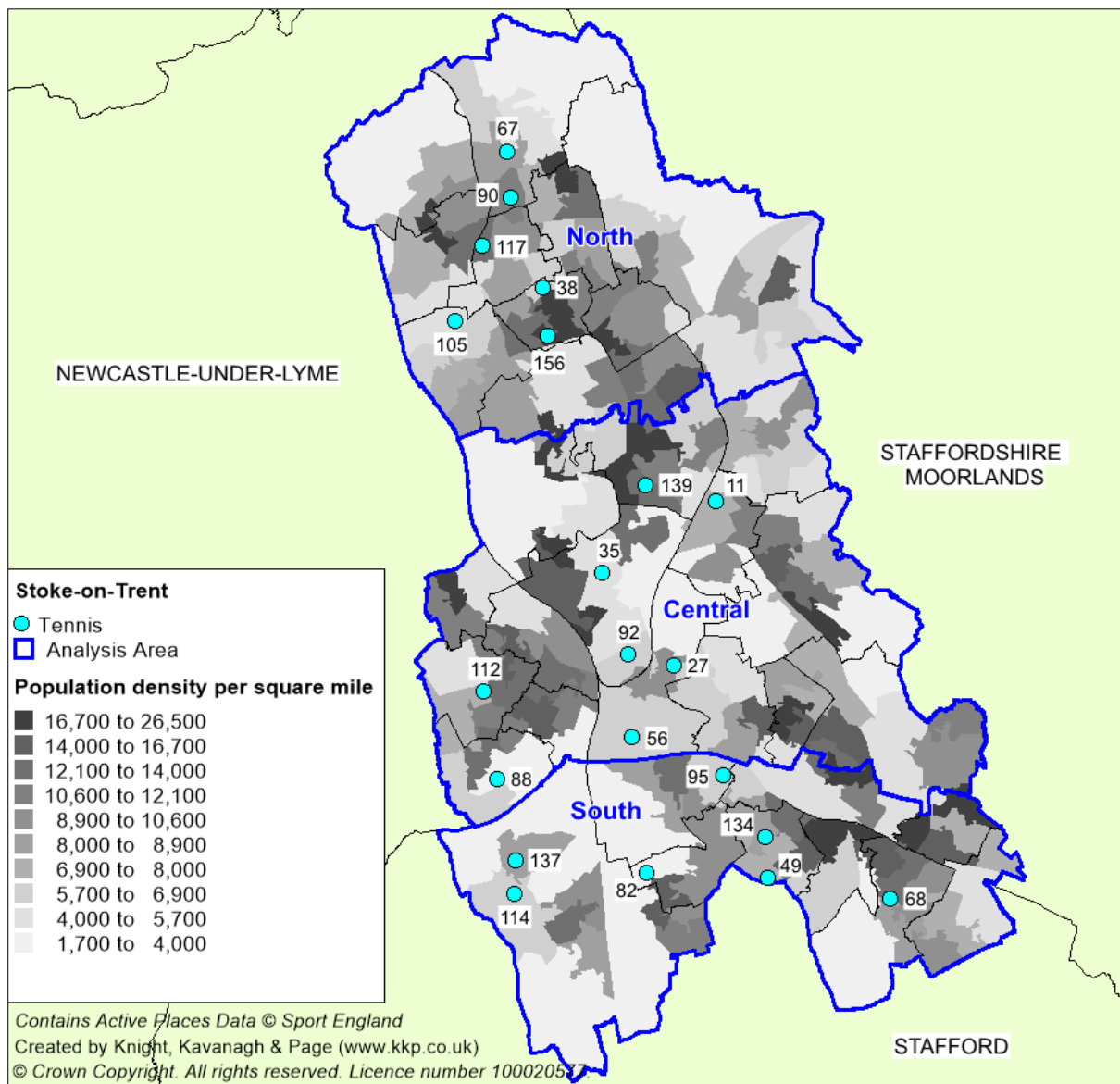
As seen in the table above, most community available courts are located in the South and Central analysis (19 in each), whereas the fewest are in the North Analysis Area (eight).

The level of supply remains unaltered since 2021 findings.

Figure 9.1 shows the location of courts servicing Stoke-on-Trent that are included within the study. For a key to the map, see Table 9.2.



Figure 9.1: Location of tennis courts in Stoke-on-Trent



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Table 9.2: Breakdown of outdoor tennis courts in Stoke-on-Trent

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Ownership	Community use?	No. of courts	Sports lighting?	Court type	Court quality
11	Bucknall Park	Central	Local Authority	Yes	3	No	Concrete	Poor
27	Fenton Park	Central	Local Authority	Yes	2	No	Concrete	Poor
35	Hanley Park	Central	Local Authority	Yes	4	Yes	Macadam	Standard
38	Haywood Academy	North	Education	No	4	No	Concrete	Poor
49	Longton Park	South	Local Authority	Yes	3	No	Macadam	Poor
56	Mount Pleasant Park	Central	Local Authority	Yes	2	No	Concrete	Poor
67	Ormiston Horizon Academy	North	Education	No	4	No	Concrete	Standard
68	Ormiston Meridian Academy	South	Education	No	2	No	Macadam	Standard
82	Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy	South	Education	Yes	3	No	Macadam	Good
88	St Joseph's College	Central	Education	No	3	Yes	Macadam	Standard
90	St Margaret Ward Catholic Academy	North	Education	No	5	No	Concrete	Poor
92	St Peters Academy	Central	Education	Yes	3	No	Concrete	Standard
95	St Thomas More Catholic Academy	South	Education	Yes	4	No	Macadam	Standard
105	The Co-Operative Academy of Stoke-On-Trent	North	Education	Yes-unused	2	No	Macadam	Standard
112	Thistley Hough Academy	Central	Education	Yes-unused	4	No	Concrete	Standard
114	Trentham Community Sports Centre	South	Education	Yes-unused	4	No	Concrete	Standard
117	Tunstall Park	North	Local Authority	Yes	2	No	Macadam	Poor

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Ownership	Community use?	No. of courts	Sports lighting?	Court type	Court quality
117	Tunstall Park	North	Local Authority	Yes	2	No	Macadam	Standard
134	Florence Tennis & Bowling Club	South	Sports club	Yes	4	Yes	Artificial turf	Good
137	Hanford Park	South	Local Authority	Yes	1	No	Macadam	Poor
139	Northwood Park	Central	Local Authority	Yes	1	No	Concrete	Poor
156	Burslem Park	North	Local Authority	Yes	2	No	Concrete	Poor

### ***LTA Youth provision***

LTA Youth provides children with an opportunity to learn the fundamentals of tennis at an early age. It utilises smaller courts, nets and rackets as well as lower-bouncing tennis balls to develop vital tennis skills and techniques. This has five levels, with the LTA stating that each stage has key aims and goals as follows:

- ◀ Blue: Learn the Basics – tennis lessons for ages 4-6
- ◀ Red: Serve, Rally and Score – tennis lessons for ages 6-8
- ◀ Orange: Develop a Rounded Game - tennis lessons for ages 8-9
- ◀ Green: Test your Skills - tennis lessons for ages 9-10
- ◀ Yellow: Take your Skills Further – tennis lessons for ages 10+

In Stoke-on-Trent, there are five smaller courts overmarked onto the courts at Hanley Park, one marked on each of the full-size courts. These courts are designed for players aged 5-8.

### ***Padel provision***

Padel tennis is relatively new to Great Britain and is growing in popularity, particularly since its recognition as a sport and integration within the LTA. It is played mainly in a doubles format on an enclosed court about a third of the size of a tennis court and can be played in groups of mixed ages and abilities. The rules are broadly the same as tennis, although you serve under-arm and the walls are used as part of the game with the ball allowed to bounce off them.

In order to grow the sport, the LTA is focused on improving the infrastructure and the coach education pathway. At the end of 2020, there were 87 courts, whereas there are now 275, with a projected growth to 450 in 2023. It is therefore envisaged that the infrastructure and participation in padel will increase significantly in the next five years.

There are currently no padel tennis specific courts within Stoke-on-Trent. However, the LTA indicates that padel tennis is one of the fastest growing sports across the Country and it therefore will support its development. It notes that padel court development at leisure centre sites can be particularly beneficial as provision can be tied into other sports facilities and profit from an already established operating model. Furthermore, it identifies that they can benefit clubs and particularly those that may be otherwise struggling due to the additional revenue that they can provide.

Notwithstanding the above, the LTA also states that it is not encouraging clubs to convert existing tennis courts to padel courts, unless it can be shown that they have the capacity to support this. This is to ensure that the provision of traditional tennis courts remains sufficient.

#### ***Indoor provision***

Whilst not included within the remit of this study, it should be noted that indoor tennis is supported at Northwood Stadium via its sports hall. This is therefore capable of accommodating some tennis demand, especially recreational demand and demand during winter months when many outdoor courts are inaccessible.

In addition, the LTA and Florence TC report future plans to develop a four-court indoor centre in Stoke-on-Trent, with interest shown by the Club for several years. The LTA believes that such provision will increase the demand for tennis across the City, noting that a venue to that can accommodate tennis demand all year-round would help to sustain and support growth. However, the Club's existing site is unlikely to be suitable for this given how constrained it is.

#### ***Disused/lapsed provision***

There are three disused tennis courts located at New Stoke Park Bowling Club that have not been formally used for several years. It is unknown when the provision was last formally used.

There are also two disused courts at Bakewell Street Park which have not be formally used for over 30 years.

In addition, disused provision is identified at Edensor Technology College and Berryhill High School (see section below).

### ***Future supply***

Since the production of the original PPS in 2021, a separate Mitigation Strategy has been commissioned on behalf of the Council regarding the potential disposal of three former school sites (Edensor Technology College, Berry Hill High School and Mitchell High School). This is currently under development and will seek to present a comprehensive overview as to how the playing pitch and outdoor sports provision at the sites can be collectively and adequately mitigated to meet planning policy and how a positive strategy for sports investment can be developed as a result.

Edensor Technology College closed in 2013 and provided four tennis courts, whereas Berryhill High School closed in 2011 and previously accommodated three tennis courts. No formal tennis courts were in place at Mitchell High School.

Elsewhere, a new high school (Florence MacWilliams Academy) is planned to be built on Whitcombe Road Playing Fields. If approved, it sets to come online in 2024, with current plans including the provision of a multi-use games area that contains four tennis courts (dual use netball).

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

The table below highlights the ownership of tennis courts within Stoke-on-Trent. Most are operated by educational sites (38), with 20 of these are available for community use. A total of four courts are club-operated as Florence TC has freehold of its

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provision, whilst 22 are managed by the Council. All club and council courts are community available.

*Table 9.3: Outdoor tennis courts by management type*

Community use	Number of courts		
	Club	Council	Education
Available	4	22	20
Unavailable	-	-	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>38</b>

### ***Court type***

Most outdoor tennis courts in Stoke-on-Trent have a concrete surface, with 37 being of this type. There are ten sites which do not have concrete courts:

- ◀ St Thomas More Catholic Academy (macadam)
- ◀ The Co-Operative Academy of Stoke-On-Trent (macadam)
- ◀ Hanley Park (macadam)
- ◀ Longton Park (macadam)
- ◀ Tunstall Park (macadam)
- ◀ Florence Tennis & Bowling Club (artificial)
- ◀ Hanford Park (macadam)
- ◀ Ormiston Meridian Academy (macadam)
- ◀ Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy (macadam)
- ◀ St Joseph's College (macadam)

Nationally, other tennis surface types include clay and grass; however, no such provision has been identified in Stoke-on-Trent. Such courts are generally more difficult to maintain.

### *Sports lighting*

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

In total, 11 of the 64 tennis courts in Stoke-on-Trent are serviced by sports light, representing just 17% of the provision and including only eight that are available for community use. This is a relatively low amount when compared to other local authorities nationally.

Courts with sports lighting are identified at Florence Tennis & Bowling Club, Hanley Park and St Joseph's College. Those at Florence Tennis & Bowling Club and Hanley Park are available for community use, whilst at St Joseph's College they are unavailable.

Access to sports-lit courts is considered particularly key for clubs as it allows for more usage of provision, which in turns can help accommodate more members. To that end, Florence TC is well catered for given that all of its courts are serviced.

### *LTA Quick Access Loan Scheme<sup>21</sup>*

The LTA's mission is to grow tennis and padel by making them accessible, welcoming, and enjoyable. Ensuring local communities have access to quality facilities is critical to attracting and retaining more players. As such, the LTA's Quick Access Loan

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<sup>21</sup> [Quick Access Loan Scheme for tennis facilities \(lta.org.uk\)](https://lta.org.uk)



Scheme aims to provide interest-free loans to support venues investment in facilities, prioritising the installation and construction of covered courts.

The objectives of the fund are to:

- ◀ Provide covered or lit playing facilities to encourage community accessible play all year.
- ◀ Retain and increase the number of participants at the venue.
- ◀ Offer and increase both non-members pay and play usage and coaching opportunities.
- ◀ Grow the numbers of adults and juniors on the coaching programme.
- ◀ Provide seamless booking of tennis courts and lessons through an [online booking system](#).

As part of the fund, the LTA will fund:

- ◀ Lighting upgrades to LED (outdoor and indoor)
- ◀ New sports lights
- ◀ New court provision
- ◀ Outdoor padel courts
- ◀ Covered padel (courts and cover)
- ◀ Covered tennis courts

### ***Over markings***

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

In Stoke-on-Trent, 35 courts are over marked, 30 by netball provision, four with mini tennis courts and one with basketball. Of these, 30 out of the 35 are located at school sites, where curriculum activity makes this more necessary.

### **Quality**

The quality of tennis courts has been informed through non-technical site assessments and consultation with providers to assign each court a rating of good, standard or poor. Key aspects informing the findings include surface quality, grip underfoot, line marking quality, evenness and evidence of inappropriate use (e.g., vandalism and/or littering). For the full assessment criteria, please refer to Appendix 2.

The quality assessments were carried out across 2020/2021 and have been reviewed as part of this update via dialogue with the Council and the LTA. However, there has been no evidence to suggest that any alterations are required.

Of the courts in Stoke-on-Trent, a total of 25 are assessed as poor quality (39%), 30 as standard quality (47%) and seven as good quality (14%). This is further summarised in the following table.

*Table 9.4: Quality of community available outdoor tennis courts*

Community use?	Quality		
	Good	Standard	Poor
Available	7	21	17
Unavailable	-	9	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>25</b>

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

- ◀ Bucknall Park

- ◀ Fenton Park
- ◀ Haywood Academy
- ◀ Mount Pleasant Park
- ◀ St Margaret Ward Catholic Academy
- ◀ Burslem Park
- ◀ Hanford Park
- ◀ Longton Park
- ◀ Northwood Park
- ◀ Tunstall Park

Across these sites, 16 poor quality courts are located at park sites and nine are located at education sites. A common issue with these sites is that they do not have sufficient or any nets, meaning tennis demand cannot be met. Maintenance also tends to be basic and infrequent.

The poor quality courts at Haywood Academy and St Margaret Ward Catholic Academy are unavailable for community use, which may in part be due to the quality issues.

In contrast, the good quality courts are located at Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy and Florence Tennis & Bowling Club, both of which are available for community use. Florence Tennis TC reports that its artificial turf courts were resurfaced in 2015, before fresh sand was laid to combat drainage issues that the courts had in 2020. The courts are considered to have a further four years before they need to be resurfaced again.

The Club reports that the courts are often used for county matches due to them being of a high quality. However, it should also be noted that the site is located on a flood zone. The LTA, working with Sport England, has produced a set of information for clubs that have been affected by adverse weather in England<sup>22</sup>. Sport England, when

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<sup>22</sup> <https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/sustainability>

necessary, can also offer various funding options for clubs that have been affected by flooding.

*LTA's Parks Tennis Investment Fund* <sup>23</sup>

Improving local authority courts is currently a national priority for the LTA. There is a focus on suitable sites that cater for high levels of recreational demand or that have the potential to do so, especially if the provision is serviced (or could be serviced) by changing facilities and sports lighting.

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

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

Courts at the following sites are identified for improvement within Stoke-on-Trent, linked to the investment fund:

- ◀ Bucknall Park
- ◀ Burslem Park
- ◀ Hanley Park
- ◀ Longton Park
- ◀ Mount Pleasure Park

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<sup>23</sup>[Link to LTA investment plans](#)

### ◀ Tunstall Park

These are to have a gate access system and Clubspark implemented and will be managed by a national operator. It is expected that works will be complete by Spring 2024.

### ***Ancillary provision***

Florence TC indicates that the current ancillary provision it has on site is sufficient for its demand and it believes that it does not require any improvements in order to encourage more members to join.

For non-club courts, ancillary provision is generally considered to be problematic. Whilst most sites do provide changing facilities and/or toilets, they are not always specific for tennis and are generally too far away from the courts to be considered available to use for tennis participants. Often, the facilities predominately service football/cricket pitch users and therefore are not readily available or suited to tennis court users. In some instances, quality is also poor. In Stoke-on-Trent, only the courts at Hanley Park are directly serviced by changing facilities.

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

### **9.3: Demand**

#### ***Competitive tennis***

There is only one tennis club in Stoke-on-Trent; Florence TC. Its overall membership is reportedly around 120, which broken down amounts to 80 senior and 40 junior

members. This has remained relatively unaltered since 2020, although prior to this the Club stated that it had seen growth.

#### *Participation trends*

Nationally, the LTA has announced participation figures for 2022 showing sustained success in getting more people playing tennis more often, with growth across all demographics, regions and nations of Great Britain. This is particularly amongst 16-34 year-olds and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

The number of adults reporting that they had played tennis during the year increased 43% compared to the previous year (2021), rising from 3.3 million to 4.7 million from January through to December. This is the highest total recorded since 2017 and has continued the growth seen in 2018-19 before being interrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

In addition, more than two million adults play monthly, and this is the highest level recorded since the LTA started tracking this measure seven years ago. This means that the LTA has achieved the targets set out in its five-year 2018-23 strategy for adult annual and monthly participation one year ahead of schedule.

Finally, children's weekly participation in tennis has seen positive growth in the past year with over three and a half million children playing tennis and with an extra 328,000 children playing tennis in schools.

#### ***Informal and parks tennis***

The LTA has a support package for local authorities to grow use of tennis courts by removing key barriers to participation; products known as ClubSpark, Play (previously Rally) and Gate Access have been established. These represent what the LTA calls a major improvement to the customer journey and provide a clear revenue stream to reinvest into court provision.

The use of the LTA products at these sites allows official use of the courts to be tracked, thus providing data on how often provision is being accessed and by who. They are not currently implemented across Stoke-on-Trent, although previously referenced investment would see it established at the relevant sites.

The products are further summarised below.

#### *ClubSpark – Improving the booking process*

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

- ◀ Managed website - create and manage a mobile friendly website tailored to LA/club requirements to promote events and activities.
- ◀ Managed coaching – set up coaching lessons and courses online.
- ◀ Membership management - improve membership engagement by making it easier for the venue and for members to pay, renew and keep in touch (includes online payments, direct debits and the monitoring of revenue streams; membership modules can also be used to take season ticket payments for venues operating a non-traditional annual facility fee).
- ◀ Organise payments - set the way payments are taken, whether it's immediate pay and play, or bookable as part of a membership package.
- ◀ Court bookings – reduced administration for bookings; give staff, coaches, members and the general public access to book and pay for courts, classes or other resources online.
- ◀ Scheduling - set unique booking and price rules to suit the venue and enable lights to switch on/off automatically when linked to the LTA Premium Gate Access system.
- ◀ Book and pay remotely - customers can make bookings and payments for a venue anytime, anywhere via the real-time booking app.
- ◀ Reporting - ClubSpark allows administrators to view reports highlighting income, court usage, revenue and number of members; this allows for identification of trends and patterns and evidence to demonstrate participation levels and impact.

### *Play*

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

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

### *Gate access*

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

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

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



### *Local Tennis Leagues*

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

The Potteries Parks Tennis League operates primarily out of four parks, one of which is located in Stoke-on-Trent at Hanley Park. It also uses Bucknall Park, Longton Park, Tunstall Park, Burslem Park, Fenton Park and St Peter's Academy although this is less frequent.

### *Free Parks Tennis*

The LTA is due to launch the LTA Free Parks Tennis offer (replacing its partnership with the Tennis for Free programme). This is due to the following needs:

- ◀ Player Trends:
  - ◀ 35% of people who play tennis once per year or more do so in a park.
  - ◀ The most common type of play for park players is socially with friends or family.
- ◀ Barriers:
  - ◀ 25% of players cite not having anyone to play with as a barrier to playing more tennis.
  - ◀ 24% of players cite having nowhere to play or difficulty in accessing local courts as reasons why they do not play tennis more often
  - ◀ 32% of these players say local courts are not affordable.

- ◀ 75% of parks players consider themselves to be of beginner (41%) or improver (36%) standard, which is significantly lower than club players
- ◀ 22% of players state that a lack of equipment prevents them from playing tennis.

The key points of a free park tennis session are:

- ◀ Free for all players to book and attend
- ◀ Run by a minimum of two trained and DBS checked Activators
- ◀ Sessions should run all year round (weather depending)
- ◀ Run on a Saturday or Sunday morning at 10.00-11.00am

Court requirements are for three courts minimum in parks that have this many, or two courts at two court sites – a three court site can have up to 34 players attending. The sessions are designed for those aged eight and over, but under eights can attend when accompanied by a parent.

Future consideration should be given to offer Free Parks Tennis in Parks across Stoke-on-Trent once the initiative is established.

#### ***Padel demand***

Currently 90,000 people reportedly play padel more than once a year in England - a 493% year on year increase compared to 2021 (15,000). This exemplifies the continued growth of the sport and the need to ensure that such demand is being adequately catered for. Furthermore, the LTA reports that Surrey is one of the biggest growing counties in terms of padel demand and development.

As there are no padel courts currently provided in Stoke-on-Trent, any demand arising from the City will either be unmet or will be exported.

### ***Latent/unmet demand***

Latent demand for tennis nationally is reported to be high by the LTA, which has an insight tool that suggests that 18% of the five million players that pick up a racket each year would play more often if key barriers such as poor promotion of opportunities to get on court, unclear booking journeys (especially those that are 'offline') and low quality facilities were addressed. Such demand is therefore likely to exist in Stoke-on-Trent, especially given the volume of poor quality courts in Stoke-on-Trent as well as courts without sports lighting. As such, there is a potential opportunity for the Council and other providers to address such barriers, whilst also bettering understanding of court usage.

For club-based tennis, Florence TC reports no latent or unmet demand.

### ***Future demand***

Florence TC reports wanting to increase its level of demand but does not quantify its aspirations, noting that it will not turn members away. In addition, as previously mentioned, it has an aspiration to develop indoor provision which it feels will help drive participation growth.

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

### ***Club tennis***

The LTA suggests that a hard court without sports lighting can accommodate 40 members, whereas a sports-lit hard court can accommodate 60 members. Using this guide, Florence TC has capacity for 240 members (four sports-lit courts), suggesting ample spare capacity based on its current membership of 120.

Notwithstanding the above, it is worth reiterating that the provision servicing the Club will require refurbishment within four years to ensure that demand can continue to be adequately met.

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

All publicly available non-club courts are deemed to have spare capacity based on current usage levels, although this is difficult to monitor. However, when factoring in the latent demand that is known to exist nationally, there is a clear need to actualise further usage of the provision. To that end, it is likely that existing quality issues (both court and ancillary facilities) as well as a general lack of sports lighting is preventing potential demand from being realised, especially at park sites. This links to ongoing discussions between the Council and the LTA regarding its investment fund.

### **9.5: Conclusion**

There is a sufficient level of tennis provision within Stoke-on-Trent, although it is clear that existing demand can be better catered for and that improvements can help drive increased participation. This position is unchanged compared to 2021 findings, although with update latent demand figures from the LTA incorporated, the needs could be considered more pressing.

#### **Tennis summary**

- ◀ **Current club demand can be accommodated on existing provision, although the courts at Florence Tennis & Bowling Club will require resurfacing within the next four years.**
- ◀ **All publicly available non-club courts are deemed to have spare capacity, with there being a clear need to utilise this to actualise latent demand.**
- ◀ **There is a sufficient level of tennis provision within Stoke-on-Trent, although it is clear that existing demand can be better catered for and that improvements can help drive increased participation.**
- ◀ There are 64 tennis courts identified in Stoke-on-Trent across 22 sites, with 46 of these being available for community use (there are no padel tennis courts).

- ◀ There are disused courts located at New Stoke Park Bowling, Bakewell Street Park, Edensor Technology College and Berryhill High School.
- ◀ A new high school (Florence MacWilliams Academy) is planned to be built on Whitcombe Road Playing Fields, with current plans including four courts (dual use netball).
- ◀ Of the existing courts, 38 courts are operated by educational providers, 22 by the Council and four by a club (Florence TC).
- ◀ Only 11 courts in total and eight community available courts are serviced by sports lighting, representing a significantly low number.
- ◀ Most community available courts in Stoke-on-Trent have a concrete surface (52%), with the remaining being macadam or artificial turf.
- ◀ Following a non-technical assessment, of the 48 community available courts, seven are assessed as good quality, 30 as standard quality and 18 as poor quality.
- ◀ Courts at Bucknall, Burslem, Hanley, Longon, Mount Pleasant and Tunstall parks are earmarked for improvement via the LTAs Parks Tennis Investment Fund.
- ◀ The only club in Stoke-on-Trent, Florence TC, has 120 members, equating to 80 seniors and 40 juniors.
- ◀ It is considered that all local authority courts available for community use in Stoke-on-Trent have spare capacity for a growth in recreational demand, although this is difficult to quantify as use is not currently monitored.
- ◀ The Potteries Parks Tennis League operates primarily out of four parks, one of which is located in Stoke-on-Trent at Hanley Park.
- ◀ High levels of latent demand are known to exist nationally and this is likely to be the case in Stoke-on-Trent due to the presence of some barriers such as poor quality courts and courts without sports lighting.
- ◀ Florence TC reports wanting to increase its level of demand but does not quantify its aspirations, although it links this to an aspiration to develop indoor provision.

### PART 10: OTHER SPORTS

#### 10.1: Cycling

British Cycling is the NGB for all forms of cycling. It oversees six sporting disciplines, with each having a dedicated facility type:

- ◀ Track cycling – Velodrome
- ◀ Road cycling – Closed Road Circuits
- ◀ Mountain Bike – Trails
- ◀ BMX – Race/Pump tracks
- ◀ Cycle Speedway – Cycle speedway tracks
- ◀ Cyclocross – non-dedicated, non-permanent venues

British Cycling aids in the development of all six formats, helping to safeguard those that wish to participate in a competitive and compelling environment. The popularity of cycling has increased since elite sporting success in the Olympics, Paralympics and major championships.

A new program of highway and infrastructure improvements was approved by the Council in the first half of 2022. The Local Transport Plan Capital Programme will be delivered between 2022/24 and will see the development of a major junction in addition to enhancements into cycling and walking infrastructure across the City.

As part of the work, to encourage safe, sustainable transport, a program of cycling schemes is also planned which will encourage greater use of cycling as an alternative to car use and improve safety for cyclists in the City. Improvement schemes will be carried out to improve both cycling and walking routes to the Etruria Valley, Festival Park Trentham Lakes Business Park and Chatterley Valley Business Park.

In addition to this, Staffordshire County Council has a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) which identifies around £31 million of investment required up to 2030/31 on the cycle network and walking zones across the County. This identifies 200 potential schemes, some of which impact on provision within Stoke-on-Trent, albeit most schemes are allocated for other authorities within Staffordshire. This is due to the fact the City had a sizable investment in its cycling infrastructure in 2012 when it was designated as a Cycling Town.

#### ***Consultation***

Information for cycling was gathered through online research and via consultation with British Cycling for both the original study in 2021 and this update (2023).

#### ***Supply***

There are two purpose built cycling facilities within Stoke-on-Trent which are both basic looped tracks at Etruria Park. The track located closest to the onsite bowling green is better quality having been built *circa* 2012, with the other track being poor quality. It should be noted that these tracks are primarily used for recreational purposes as well as by the clubs referenced below.

Apart from the above, many users tend to utilise the pre-established cycle routes, the road network or designated open spaces for their demand.

The supply remains unchanged from 2021 data.

#### ***Demand***

The table below identifies British Cycling affiliated clubs operating within Stoke-on-Trent. There are eight designated clubs with six of these being identified as a standard

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club, one being a commercial club and one being an accredited Go-Ride club. Membership data is acquired for British Cycling.

*Table 10.1: Summary of cycling demand across Stoke-on-Trent (where known)*

Club name	Club type	2021 membership	2023 membership
Lyme RC	Accredited Go-Ride	332	267
Alsager Harlequins Cycling Club	Club	29	50
Black Horse Velo	Club	35	35
Congleton Cycling Club	Club	<i>Unknown</i>	147
Leek Cyclists Club	Club	60	80
Newcastle Track CA	Club	2	11
Spokes Bikeshop MTB Club	Club	140	140
Pro Vision	Commercial Club	67	67

In total, across Stoke-on-Trent, there are a total of 797 declared cycling members. This is a growth of 132 members compared to 2021 data, although a large proportion of that is made up of figures at Congleton Cycling Club now being known. Nevertheless, all but one club has seen a growth in demand or seen no change, with only Lyme RC seeing a reduction.

### *Go-Ride*

Go-Ride is a British Cycling's development programme for young people. It offers a fun and safe way to introduce young people to the sport and provides a platform to improve cycling skills. People can get involved through holiday coaching programmes or through their local accredited club which allows them to sample the various disciplines of the sport. Progression is obtainable with Go-Ride Racing, offering competition for riders to transition from school or club coaching to inter club and open regional competitions.

In Stoke-on-Trent, Lyme RC is part of the initiative.



### *Breeze*

Breeze is a British Cycling's development programme for women. It offers three categories easy going, steady and challenging to allow women of all abilities to get involved. The programme offers exercise whilst also creating a comfortable environment to meet new people. There are currently no HSBC UK Breeze events taking place in Stoke-on-Trent.

### *Latent/future demand*

Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in cycling but are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 9,581 people who would like to participate in the sport within Stoke-on-Trent, representing 3.7% of the City's population. This is compared to a national average of 3.4% and therefore suggests that unmet demand is marginally higher than what would otherwise be expected.

Notwithstanding the above, the nature of cycling likely means that most of the latent and future demand will not require space within a club or at a dedicated facility. Instead, most new participants will likely take up cycling by themselves (or with friends) on a recreational basis and will utilise the local road network to fulfil this.

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

High demand for cycling is identified within Stoke-on-Trent through both current and latent demand. Therefore, assistance should be provided to help the Council achieve its ambitions for improving the cycling infrastructure within the City. This is unchanged to 2021.

## **10.2: American Football**

American football in the UK is governed and administered by the British American Football Association (BAFA). Adult men's contact teams play within its National Leagues (BAFANL) on Sunday afternoons and play five home fixtures per regular season with a playoff system to follow for those which qualify. Junior (U19) contact football is played as a full 11v11 format league season whilst youth (U17) contact football is played as a 5v5 format with full equipment and tackling based across a series of day tournaments as part of a festival structure.

The American football season in England generally runs from May until August.

### ***Supply***

In Stoke-on-Trent there are two American football clubs that compete, Staffordshire Surge and the Staffordshire University Stallions.

Staffordshire Surge plays its home matches at Trentham Rugby Club on a grass rugby union pitch having previously used Longton Rugby Club (as identified in the previous study). Its training sessions generally take place at on the 3G pitch at St Peters Academy, although Trentham Rugby Club is also occasionally used depending on weather and pitch availability.

Staffordshire University Stallions is based at Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre, utilising the 3G pitch for training and a dedicated grass pitch on the same site for matches. This is unchanged since 2021.

### ***Demand***

Staffordshire Surge has a single team that competes in the BAFA NFC 2 West Division.

Staffordshire University Stallions compete in the BUCS league structure playing in the BUCS Division 2A Midlands Division.

The level of demand remains unchanged since 2021.

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

For Staffordshire University Stallions, supply is considered to be sufficient to meet demand with a dedicated American football pitch provided and with the 3G pitch accommodate training demand. This ensures the grass provision is not overplayed.

For Staffordshire Surge, the pitch used at Trentham Rugby Club is not overplayed during the American football season as it only utilises the provision for match play. However, the site is overused during the rugby union season, and the dual use nature of the provision can impact on the maintenance and remedial work carried out despite the seasons not overlapping.

The above is generally unchanged since 2021, despite Staffordshire Surge changing venues (as a rugby union provision is still being used).

#### **10.3: Touch and Tag Rugby**

England Touch Association (ETA) is the governing body of Touch (sometimes referred to as Touch Rugby) in England. Its role is to promote, encourage, foster, develop and grow the sport of Touch in England, under the Federation of International Touch (FIT) rules and guidelines. It is a non-profit organisation primarily funded by membership fees, led by a volunteer-run Executive Committee. The Association operates the National Touch Series (NTS) leagues as well as National squads and teams.

#### ***Supply***

There are currently two known sites where Touch Rugby is played within Stoke-on-Trent. These are Longton Rugby Union Club and Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre, with play taking place on the rugby union pitches at each site. This is unchanged since 2021.

### ***Demand***

#### *Touch rugby*

To actively encourage participation in rugby union, clubs may provide alternative offers to traditional club competition. Touch rugby is one possible format which clubs can use; touch rugby is non-contact rugby sessions, during which participants compete in teams to score tries, following similar laws to traditional rugby union formats. Clubs, schools or community organisation can establish their own touch rugby sessions or can become hosts of O2 Touch rugby sessions.

O2 Touch sessions are 90 minutes long and combine music, fitness and rugby skills. Sessions are of mixed gender, ability and age and are based on touch rugby being a social activity. Both Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre and Longton Rugby Club currently cater for this, with sessions running once a week on Sunday afternoons. Longton RUFC also has a competitive side that plays in the North Staffordshire Touch Rugby Competition.

#### *Tag rugby*

Try Tag Rugby (TTR) runs mixed, men's and women's leagues and events throughout the UK. Tag Rugby is a minimal contact version of rugby, generally played in the 7-a-side format. The closest TTR league to provide Tag Rugby for Stoke-on-Trent is South Manchester.

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

Due to the nature of the sport being low impact, the levels of supply are considered suitable for the level of demand received as they have little impact on grass pitches. However, it must be noted that overplay is evident at Longton Rugby Union Club and this will not be helped by the additional use, regardless of how minimal it is.

The above position is unchanged compared to 2021 findings.

### **10.4: Ultimate (frisbee)**

UK Ultimate (UKU) is the NGB for Ultimate frisbee, commonly known as Ultimate. Its role is to assist and encourage both players and teams at all levels of the sport. The sport can be played both indoor (winter) and outdoor (summer).

The rules of Ultimate are a combination of two sports: American football and basketball. Two teams of seven compete to score points in the opponents 'end zone' located at either side of the pitch. Players cannot run with the disk or allow it to hit the ground and must throw it to a teammate located in the opposing end zone to score. This non-contact sport is played on a pitch 100x37 metres in size. Competitive outdoor matches occur between the months of April and August with matches lasting approximately one hour.

#### ***Supply and demand***

In Stoke-on-Trent, the only Ultimate demand to be identified is fielded by Staffordshire University (aka Staffordshire Spartans). It competes in the Ultimate BUCS League, with training and matches mainly taking place on the grass pitches located at Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre, as well as via the 3G pitch and indoor sports hall at the campus. The Club facilitates men's, women's and mixed teams, with this demand unchanged since 2021.

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

With only the University fielding Ultimate demand and with it managing its own provision, supply is considered sufficient to meet its needs. This is unchanged compared to 2021 findings.

### 10.5: Rugby League

There is currently no rugby league demand within Stoke-on-Trent with the closed clubs located in Telford & Wrekin (Telford Raiders RLFC) or in Wolverhampton (Wolves Warlords RLFC). However, the RFL has aspirations to develop and increase levels of participation within the City, in particular within education and more specifically at Staffordshire University.

#### Other sport summary

- ◀ There are two purpose built cycling facilities within Stoke-on-Trent which are both basic looped tracks at Etruria Park.
- ◀ There are eight designated cycling clubs operating in the City, with demand growing recently.
- ◀ With high demand for cycling identified, assistance should be provided to help the Council achieve its ambitions for improving the cycling infrastructure within the City.
- ◀ There are two American football clubs that compete, Staffordshire Surge and the Staffordshire University Stallions, with both fielding a single team.
- ◀ Staffordshire Surge plays its home matches at Trentham Rugby Club, whereas Staffordshire University Stallions is based at Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre.
- ◀ The pitch used by Staffordshire Surge is overplayed during the rugby union season, and the dual use nature of the provision can impact on the maintenance and remedial work carried out.
- ◀ There are currently two known sites where Touch Rugby is played within Stoke-on-Trent; Longton Rugby Union Club and Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre.
- ◀ Due to the nature of the sport being low impact, the levels of supply are considered suitable for the level of demand, although it must be noted that overplay is evident at Longton Rugby Union Club and this will not be helped by the additional use.
- ◀ Ultimate demand is fielded by Staffordshire University (aka Staffordshire Spartans) at Sir Stanley Matthews Sports Centre.
- ◀ With only the University fielding Ultimate demand and with it managing its own provision, supply is considered sufficient to meet its needs.
- ◀ No current rugby league supply or demand is identified.
- ◀ The RFL has aspirations to increase levels of participation within the City, in particular within education and more specifically at Staffordshire University.

### APPENDIX 1: SPORTING CONTEXT

The following section outlines a series of national, regional and local policies pertaining to the study and which will have an important influence on the Strategy.

#### National context

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

#### ***Department of Media Culture and Sport Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation (2015)***

The Government published its strategy for sport in December 2015. This strategy confirms the recognition and understanding that sport makes a positive difference through broader means and that it will help the sector to deliver five simple but fundamental outcomes: physical health, mental health, individual development, social and community development and economic development. In order to measure its success in producing outputs which accord with these aims it has also adopted a series of 23 performance indicators under nine key headings, as follows:

- ◀ More people taking part in sport and physical activity.
- ◀ More people volunteering in sport.
- ◀ More people experiencing live sport.
- ◀ Maximising international sporting success.
- ◀ Maximising domestic sporting success.
- ◀ Maximising domestic sporting success.
- ◀ A more productive sport sector.
- ◀ A more financially and organisationally sustainable sport sector.

- ◀ A more responsible sport sector.

### ***Sport England: Uniting the Movement 2021***

Sport and physical activity has a big role to play in improving the physical and mental health of the nation, supporting the economy, reconnecting communities and rebuilding a stronger society for all. From this notion, Sport England has recently released its new strategy, *Uniting the Movement*, its 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity.

It seeks to tackle the inequalities long seen in sport and physical activity. Providing opportunities to people and communities that have traditionally been left behind, and helping to remove the barriers to activity, has never been more important.

There are three key objectives to the Strategy:

- ◀ Advocating for movement, sport and physical activity.
- ◀ Joining forces on five big issues
- ◀ Creating the catalyst for change

In particular, the five big issues are identified where the greatest potential is seen for preventing and tackling inequalities in sport and physical activity. Each one is a building block that, on its own, would make a difference, but together, could change things profoundly:

***Recover and reinvent:*** Recovering from the biggest crisis in a generation and reinventing as a vibrant, relevant and sustainable network of organisations providing sport and physical activity opportunities that meet the needs of different people.

***Connecting communities:*** Focusing on sport and physical activity's ability to make better places to live and bring people together.



**Positive experiences for children and young people:** Unrelenting focus on positive experiences for all children and young people as the foundations for a long and healthy life.

**Connecting with health and wellbeing:** Strengthening the connections between sport, physical activity, health and wellbeing, so more people can feel the benefits of, and advocate for, an active life.

**Active environments:** Creating and protecting the places and spaces that make it easier for people to be active.

The specific impact of the Strategy will be captured through programmes funded, interventions made, and partnerships forged. For each specific area of action, a set of key performance indicators will be developed. This hybrid approach will help evidence the overall progress being made by all those involved in supporting sport and physical activity.

### ***National Planning Policy Framework (updated 2021)***

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

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

The 'promoting healthy communities' theme identifies that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and

recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficiencies or surpluses in local areas should also be identified. This information should be used to inform what provision is required in an area.

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

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

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

### ***The FA National Football Facilities Strategy (2018-28)***

The Football Association's (FA) National Football Facilities Strategy (NFFS) provides a strategic framework that sets out key priorities and targets for the national game (i.e., football) over a ten-year period.

The Strategy sets out shared aims and objectives it aims to deliver on in conjunction with The Premier League, Sport England and the Government, to be delivered with support of the Football Foundation.

These stakeholders have clearly identified the aspirations for football to contribute directly to nationally important social and health priorities. Alongside this, the strategy is clear that traditional, affiliated football remains an important priority and a core component of the game, whilst recognising and supporting the more informal environments used for the community and recreational game.

Its vision is: *“Within 10 years we aim to deliver great football facilities, wherever they are needed”*

£1.3 billion has been spent by football and Government since 2000 to enhance existing football facilities and build new ones. However, more is needed if football and Government’s shared objectives for participation, individual well-being and community cohesion are to be achieved. Nationally, direct investment will be increased – initially to £69 million per annum from football and Government (a 15% increase on recent years).

The NFFS investment priorities can be broadly grouped into six areas, recognising the need to grow the game, support existing players and better understand the different football environments:

- ◀ **Improve 20,000 Natural Turf pitches**, with a focus on addressing drop off due to a poor playing experience;
- ◀ **Deliver 1,000 3G AGP ‘equivalents’** (mix of full size and small sided provision, including MUGAs - small sided facilities are likely to have a key role in smaller / rural communities and encouraging multi-sport offers), enhancing the quality of playing experience and supporting a sustainable approach to grass roots provision;
- ◀ **Deliver 1,000 changing pavilions/clubhouses**, linked to multi-pitch or hub sites, supporting growth (particularly in women and girls football), sustainability and providing a facility infrastructure to underpin investment in coaching, officials and football development;
- ◀ **Support access to flexible indoor spaces**, including equipment and court markings, to support growth in futsal, walking football and to support the education and skills outcomes, exploiting opportunities for football to positively impact on personal and social outcomes for young people in particular;
- ◀ **Refurbish existing stock to maintain current provision**, recognising the need to address historic under-investment and issues with refurbishment of existing facilities;
- ◀ **Support testing of technology and innovation**, building on customer insight to deliver hubs for innovation, testing and development of the game.

### *Local Football Facility Plans*

To support in delivery of both the current and superseding FA National Games Strategy (NGS), the FA commissioned a nationwide consultancy project which was completed (in 2020). Each plan is unique to its area as well as being diverse in its representation.

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

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

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

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

#### ***The FA: Time for Change Strategy (2020-24)***

The FA launched its new National Game Strategy in January 2021 which aims to 'unite the game and inspire the nation'. It will do this in two ways, by 'changing the game to maximise its impact' and by 'serving the game to deliver football for all'.

To achieve this, the strategy will focus on six Game Changer objectives, to change the fabric of the game and tackle long-term issues, to make the largest possible impact in the years ahead:

- ◀ Win a major tournament
- ◀ Service > two million through a transformed media platform
- ◀ Ensure equal opportunities for every girl
- ◀ Delivery of 5,000 quality pitches
- ◀ A game free of discrimination

These are underpinned by eight Serve objectives, ensuring maintenance of brilliant business-as-usual services to support the growing and evolving needs of the game:

- ◀ Trusted, progressive regulation and administration
- ◀ Safe and inclusive football pathways and environment
- ◀ Personalised and connected learning experiences
- ◀ Maximum investment into the game
- ◀ Diverse, high-performing workforce and inclusive culture
- ◀ World class venues and events
- ◀ Strong reputation and clear brand identity
- ◀ Technology enabled and insight driven

#### ***England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) Inspiring Generations (2020-2024)***

The England and Wales Cricket Board unveiled a new strategic plan in 2019. The strategic plan aims to connect communities and improve lives by inspiring people to discover and share their passion for cricket

The plan sets out six important priorities and activities, these are:

### ◀ ***Grow and nurture the core***

- ◀ Create an infrastructure investment fund for First Class County Clubs (FCCs)
- ◀ Introduce a new Community Investment Funding for FCCs and County Cricket Boards (CCBs)
- ◀ Invest in club facilities
- ◀ Develop the role of National Counties Cricket
- ◀ Further invest in County Competitions

### ◀ ***Inspire through elite teams***

- ◀ Increase investment in the county talent pathway
- ◀ Incentivise the counties to develop England Players
- ◀ Drive the performance system through technology and innovation
- ◀ Create heroes and connect them with a new generation of fans

### ◀ ***Make cricket accessible***

- ◀ Broaden crickets appeal through the New Competition
- ◀ Create a new digital community for cricket
- ◀ Install non-traditional playing facilities in urban areas
- ◀ Continue to deliver South Asian Action Plans
- ◀ Launch a new participation product, linked to the New Competition

### ◀ **Engage children and young people**

- ◀ Double cricket participation in primary schools
- ◀ Deliver a compelling and coordinated recreational playing offer from age five upwards
- ◀ Develop our safeguarding to promote safe spaces for children and young people

### ◀ **Transform women's and girls' cricket**

- ◀ Grow the base through participation and facilities investment
- ◀ Launch centres of excellence and a new elite domestic structure
- ◀ Invest in girls' county age group cricket
- ◀ Deliver a girls' secondary school programme

### ◀ **Support our communities**

- ◀ Double the number of volunteers in the game
- ◀ Create a game-wide approach to Trust and Foundations through the cricket network
- ◀ Develop a new wave of officials and community coaches
- ◀ Increase participation in disability cricket

### ***The Rugby Football Union Strategy (2021 Onwards)***

Through the strategy, the RFU aims to enrich lives, introduce more people to rugby union and develop the sport for future generations. The goal is to achieve this by strengthening and uniting rugby union in England and producing consistently winning England teams.

Eight key strategic priorities are identified with all investment decisions aligned to these. The strategy also outlines the RFU's core activities which form the backbone of its business operations and services to the game.

The priorities include four ‘Game Objectives’ and four ‘Driving Objectives’ as detailed below.

### Game Objectives:

- ◀ Enjoyment – enable positive player experiences on and off the field
- ◀ Winning England – create the best possible high-performance system for England Rugby
- ◀ Welfare – enhance player welfare to protect and support the wellbeing of players
- ◀ Flourishing rugby communities – support clubs to sustain and grow themselves and to reflect society

### Driving Objectives:

- ◀ Diversity & Inclusion – drive rugby union in England to reflect the diversity of society
- ◀ Understand – build a deep understanding of players, volunteers and fans to shape the future of the game
- ◀ Connect – connect with and grow the rugby community and create exceptional experiences
- ◀ Commercial and operational excellence – ensure a sustainable and efficient business model delivered by an inspired workforce

### ***The Rugby Football League Facility Strategy***

The RFL’s Facilities Strategy was published in 2011. The following themes have been prioritised:

- ◀ Clean, Dry, Safe & Playable
- ◀ Sustainable clubs



- ◀ Environmental Sustainability
- ◀ Geographical Spread
- ◀ Non-club Facilities

The RFL Facilities Trust website [www.rflfacilitiestrust.co.uk](http://www.rflfacilitiestrust.co.uk) provides further information on:

- ◀ The RFL Community Facility Strategy
- ◀ Clean, Dry, Safe and Playable Programme
- ◀ Pitch Size Guidance
- ◀ The RFL Performance Standard for Artificial Grass Pitches
- ◀ Club guidance on the Annual Preparation and Maintenance of the Rugby League Pitch

Further to the 2011 Strategy detail on the following specific programmes of particular relevance to pitches and facility planning are listed below and can be found via the trust link (see above):

- ◀ The RFL Pitch Improvement Programme 2013 – 2017
- ◀ Clean, Dry and Safe programmes 2013 - 2017

#### ***Rugby League World Cup ‘Inspired by 2021’ Legacy Programme***

The Rugby League World Cup 2021 will develop a £10 million legacy programme with funds driven into local clubs and community projects. The government investment, delivered by Sport England, is part of RLWC 2021’s ambitious plan to grow the sport and make it more visible, engaging and welcoming to current and potential participants.

The funding will be split into large transformational community projects, such as changing room improvements and new artificial grass pitches with the remaining funding used for smaller scale initiatives such as supplying new kit and equipment to promote club and community development. The investment will focus on the following four key areas:

- ◀ Creating welcoming environments
- ◀ Encouraging participation growth
- ◀ Building community engagement
- ◀ Cultivating further investment

#### ***England Hockey (EH) - A Nation Where Hockey Matters 2013***

The vision is for England to be a 'Nation Where Hockey Matters'.

We know that delivering success on the international stage stimulates the nation's pride in their hockey team and, with the right events in place, we will attract interest from spectators, sponsors and broadcasters alike. The visibility that comes from our success and our occasions will inspire young people and adults to follow in the footsteps of their heroes and, if the right opportunities are there to meet their needs, they will play hockey and enjoy wonderful experiences.

Underpinning all this is the infrastructure which makes our sport function. We know the importance of our volunteers, coaches, officials, clubs and facilities. The more inspirational our people can be, the more progressive we can be and the more befitting our facilities can be, the more we will achieve for our sport. England Hockey will enable this to happen and we are passionate about our role within the sport. We will lead, support, counsel, focus and motivate the Hockey Nation and work tirelessly towards our vision.

As a governing body, we want to have a recognisable presence to participants of the game, be that through club or association website or their communications, or through the work of the many outstanding coaches in our game, so that players understand that their club is part of a wider team working together to a common goal.

The core objectives are as follows:

1. Grow our Participation
2. Deliver International Success
3. Increase our Visibility
4. Enhance our Infrastructure
5. For England Hockey to be proud and respected custodians of the sport

### *Club participation*

Our club market is well structured and clubs are required to affiliate to England Hockey to play in community leagues. As a result only relatively few occasional teams lie outside our affiliation structure. Schools and Universities are the other two areas where significant hockey is played.

Hockey is clearly benefiting from a double Olympic legacy. After Great Britain's women won bronze in front of a home crowd in London in 2012 the numbers of young girls playing the sport doubled and a historic gold in Rio 2016 saw more than 10,000 players promptly joining clubs. These triumphs have inspired the nation to get active and play hockey. Thanks to the outstanding work of the network of clubs across the country, England Hockey has seen unprecedented growth at both ends of the age range. There has been an 80% increase in the number of boys and girls in clubs, as well as a 54% increase in players over the age of 46.

Hockey clubs have reaped the rewards of the improved profile of the sport, focussing on a link with schools to provide excellent opportunities for young players. Programmes such as Quick sticks – a small-sided version of hockey for 7-11 year olds – in Primary Schools have been hugely successful in allowing new players to take part in the sport from an early age. The growth in the sport since the eve of London 2012 has been seen across the country, examples being a 110% increase in under 16s club participation in London, and a 111% growth in the North West in the same age bracket.

### *England Hockey Strategy*

England Hockey's Facilities Strategy can be found [here](#).

**Vision:** For every hockey club in England to have appropriate and sustainable facilities that provide excellent experiences for players.

**Mission:** More, Better, Happier Players with access to appropriate and sustainable facilities

The 3 main objectives of the facilities strategy are:

#### **1. PROTECT: To conserve the existing hockey provision**

- There are currently over 800 pitches that are used by hockey clubs (club, school, universities) across the country. It is important to retain the current provision where appropriate to ensure that hockey is maintained across the country.

#### **2. IMPROVE: To improve the existing facilities stock (physically and administratively)**

- The current facilities stock is ageing and there needs to be strategic investment into refurbishing the pitches and ancillary facilities. England Hockey works to provide more support for clubs to obtain better agreements with facilities providers & education around owning an asset.

- 3. DEVELOP: To strategically build new hockey facilities where there is an identified need and ability to deliver and maintain. This might include consolidating hockey provision in a local area where appropriate.**

England Hockey has identified key areas across the country where there is a lack of suitable hockey provision and there is a need for additional pitches, suitable for hockey. There is an identified demand for multi pitches in the right places to consolidate hockey and allow clubs to have all of their provision catered for at one site.

### ***LTA Facilities Investment Strategy – Vision for 2020 and beyond***

The LTA has developed a programme of action based on seven core strategies. These are:

- ◀ Visibility – Broaden relevance and increase visibility of tennis all year round to build engagement and participation with fans and players.
- ◀ Innovation – Innovate in the delivery of tennis to widen its appeal.
- ◀ Investment – Support community facilities and schools to increase the opportunities to play.
- ◀ Accessibility – Make the customer journey to playing tennis easier and more accessible for anyone.
- ◀ Engagement – Engage and collaborate with everyone involved in delivering tennis in Britain, particularly coaches and volunteers, to attract and maintain more people in the game.
- ◀ Performance – Create a pathway for British champions that nurtures a diverse team of players, people and leaders.
- ◀ Leadership – Create a pathway for British champions that nurtures a diverse team of players, people and leaders.

The LTA Facilities Investment Framework sets out how it intends to deliver the investment to support community accessible tennis facilities. The focus will be on:

- ◀ New and existing indoor tennis centres
- ◀ Park tennis

- ◀ Tennis clubs
- ◀ Schools and other educational establishments

The key principles of the framework are to:

- ◀ Help fund projects through interest free loans.
- ◀ Invest in venues that have a proven record of increasing participation.
- ◀ Invest where there is thorough community engagement.
- ◀ Support venues that encourage participation growth.
- ◀ Targeted investment that is demand-led.
- ◀ Support venues that have successfully sourced partnership funding.

### ***British Crown Green Bowling Association***

Please note there is no current facility guidance provided by British Crown Green Bowling Association responsible for crown green bowls in England.

<http://bcgba.org.uk/index.html>

### ***England Golf Course Planner – Strategic Direction (2021-2025)***

England Golf has always had a mission to lead, support, inspire and deliver for its community of golfers, golf clubs and counties. To help enable this, its Course Planner forms the core of its strategy, with 18 guiding principles established that are designed to best position growth in the game:

- ◀ Strengthen governance in all aspects of the sport
- ◀ Deliver safeguarding throughout the golfing community

- ◀ Utilise data and technology to enhance decision making
- ◀ Drive equality and equity in everything it does
- ◀ Support golf clubs with member recruitment and retention
- ◀ Connect and engage with all golfers
- ◀ Inspire and educate golf's network of volunteers
- ◀ Increase golf's influence
- ◀ Advocate and inform on all elements of sustainability
- ◀ Drive diversity at all levels of golf
- ◀ Create more opportunities for junior and young adults
- ◀ Promote the health and wellbeing of golf
- ◀ Inspire more women and girls to play golf
- ◀ Develop greater access for disabled people
- ◀ Enthuse all golfers through relatable role models
- ◀ Communicate a positive perception change for golf
- ◀ Deliver an excellent talent development pathway
- ◀ Host best-in-class competitions for all golfers

<https://www.Englandgolf.org/Englandgolfstrategy/>

***England Athletics Strategic Plan – Athletics & Running: for everyone, forever – 2017 and beyond***

This plan sets out England Athletics' mission, vision and strategic priorities that will direct how they work as an organisation during the coming years: what they do and how they will do it.

**Vision:** Make athletics and running the most inclusive and popular sport in England, led by a network of progressive clubs and organisations and supported by a sustainable, respected and trusted governing body.

For England Athletics to achieve this vision, they will focus on three values:

- ◀ Pride – taking pride in their work and demonstrating to athletes that they recognise the importance of their role in bettering athletics.
- ◀ Integrity – demonstrate integrity to earn respect and to build effective partnerships.
- ◀ Inclusivity – promote inclusivity in all their actions.

**Mission:** To grow opportunities for everyone to experience athletics and running, to enable them to reach their full potential.

In order to achieve their mission, England Athletics will have three strategic priorities.

1. To expand the capacity of the sport by supporting and developing its volunteers and other workforce. The target is to achieve a 6% increase every year of licensed leaders, coaches and officials.
2. To sustain and increase participation and performance levels in our sport. To achieve this, England Athletics' current targets are to increase the number of club registered athletes from (149,000 to 172,000), engage 135,000 people through the RunTogether programme and to increase athlete performance levels across all events and disciplines by 1% every year.
3. To influence participation in the wider athletics market. Their target here is to increase the number of regular athletes or runners by at least one million.

#### ***England Athletics Facility Strategy (2018 – 2025)***

The purpose of this document is to set out our long term vision for athletics facilities in England. Facilities form a vital component of the overall England Athletics strategy.

The development, protection and enhancement of facilities will support our strategic plan and help England Athletics contribute to the delivery of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's Sporting Futures: A New Strategy for Sport and Sport England's strategy Towards an Active Nation. Appropriate facilities help to attract and inspire new participants and provide the foundation and focus for a significant proportion of the England Athletics family.



The England Athletics Strategic Plan notes that the sport increasingly needs to become financially sustainable and that a business-like and innovative approach is a vital component of its future success. Facilities are fundamental, but they are also expensive to create and to maintain. The sport therefore faces a significant challenge to develop, improve and maintain facilities, most of which are currently operated and funded by third parties.

This strategy sets out a challenge to all those involved with the delivery of the sport to be innovative and business like in the operation and development of facilities at a time of financial challenge, as it aims “To create an innovative and inspiring network of sustainable athletic facilities, with the capacity to meet both current and future demand across England”.

#### ***British Cycling Lead our Sports – Inspire our communities<sup>24</sup>***

British Cycling’s Strategy identifies seven key priorities for cycling before the Paris Olympics in 2024. These priorities are:

- ◀ Inspiring Performances
- ◀ Grow Communities
- ◀ Engage the Next Generation
- ◀ Flagship Events
- ◀ Cycling for Everyone
- ◀ Work Together
- ◀ Equipped for Success

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<sup>24</sup> [British Cycling Lead our Sports](#)

The seven priorities are not everything that British Cycling will do, but that can have the greatest impact over the next 36 months. The priorities are all interconnected and are cross interdependencies – achieving one strategic priority is often reliant upon achieving the other.

For each of the priorities, the Strategy sets out the measures of success:

Priority	Sub priority	Measures
Inspiring Performances	Sustain inspirational global elite cycling success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Win 10 Olympic and 15 Paralympic medals.</li> <li>◀ Creation of a development plan to support elite non Olympic and Paralympic disciplines.</li> <li>◀ Increase by 10% the number of riders in the talent pathway across ethnic communities, disability and low socioeconomic backgrounds.</li> </ul>
Grow Communities	Grow and serve our cycling communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Diversify and grow our cycling communities.</li> <li>◀ Grow membership from 150k to 250k.</li> <li>◀ Increase affiliated clubs and groups by 20%</li> </ul>
Engage the Next Generation	Encourage more children and young people to make cycling a lifelong habit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Increase the number of children and young people in clubs or groups by 20%.</li> <li>◀ Increase by 10% the number of children and young people participating across ethnic communities, disability and low socioeconomic backgrounds.</li> <li>◀ Increased awareness and perception of British Cycling in a younger audience through yearly tracking.</li> </ul>
Flagship Events	Host world class major events to excite and inspire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Achieve major event hosting targets across disciplines.</li> <li>◀ Support the legacy impact of both the 2022 Commonwealth Games and the Cycling World Championships 2023.</li> <li>◀ Increase the opportunities for British riders to perform on home soil.</li> </ul>
Cycling for Everyone	Ensure cycling is open to everyone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Put in place robust tracking and increased diversity in facilitators and governance.</li> <li>◀ 90% of our communities to believe cycling is an inclusive activity and a sport for them.</li> <li>◀ Increase participation in our sport across genders, ages, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation and low socioeconomic backgrounds by 10%.</li> </ul>
Work Together	Work together with everyone who makes cycling happen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ A 25% increase in the percentage of cycling facilitators that feel appreciated for the work they do.</li> <li>◀ Retain, grow and diversify the range of partners in line with our strategic priorities.</li> </ul>

# STOKE-ON-TRENT CITY COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

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Priority	Sub priority	Measures
Equipped for Success	Deliver our strategy effectively and efficiently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>100% increase in the diversity of the industries represented in the British Cycling partnership portfolio.</li><li>Grow and diversify income streams.</li></ul>

APPENDIX 2: NON TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT SHEETS

Grass football pitch non-technical assessment sheet

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Football							
Please complete one form per pitch							
Site reference:			Site Name:				
6 figure grid reference			Pitch ID(s):				
Number of football pitches on site:			Pitch size:	(Adult 11v11, Youth 11v11, 9v9, 7v7 Mini, 5v5, 7v7)			
Availability			Are any other pitches marked out over this pitch?	<input type="checkbox"/>			
If yes, please indicate what pitches are overmarked? (i.e. one youth pitch is overmarked on a adult pitch) in Pitch Issues							
Weather at time of visit & date of visit							
Pitch Issues:							
Assessment Criteria (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)							
Element (Gathered via a non technical site assessment)	Rating			Guidance notes	Comments		
<b>Playing surface</b>							
Grass Cover	Good >80%	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate 60-80%	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <60%	<input type="checkbox"/>	Advice is to walk through the middle of the pitch
Does the pitch meet The FA minimum size?	Yes - as per the FA recommended size	<input type="checkbox"/>	Within FA recommended guidelines	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	See size chart below for recommended dimensions
Slope of pitch (gradient and cross fall)	Flat	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moderate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Severe	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Length of grass	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Too long	<input type="checkbox"/>	Too short	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good 30mm-50mm, Too long 51mm plus, Too short 29mm less
Evenness of pitch	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Problem Areas: Evidence of dog fouling/glass/litter/vehicle tracks	None	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes - some	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes - lots	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Problem Areas: Evidence of unofficial use/damage to the surface	None	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes - some	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes - lots	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Problem Areas: Evidence of poor drainage	No evidence of standing water or poor drainage	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some evidence of poor drainage	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, poor drainage	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Maintenance programme (information from maintenance schedule/grounds team/club survey)</b>							
<b>Section total</b>							
Grass cutting	Yes, as required	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, but not frequent enough	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Seeded	Yes, as required	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not known	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Aerated (per year)	Three or more times	<input type="checkbox"/>	Once/ twice	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sand dressed	Within the last 12 months	<input type="checkbox"/>	Within the last 2 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Fertilised	Within the last 12 months	<input type="checkbox"/>	Within the last 2 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Weed killed	Within the last 12 months	<input type="checkbox"/>	Within the last 2 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Section total</b>							
NB If none of this information is provided you should assume that only the grass is being cut and the rest of the maintenance items should be marked with the lowest score option.							
PITCH SCORE			0.0%	RATING		Poor	

*Cricket pitch non-technical assessment sheet*

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Cricket									
Please complete one form per pitch									
Site reference		Site Name							
6 figure grid reference		No of Pitches:							
Pitch ID		No of wickets:	Natural		Non turf				
Weather at time of visit:									
Availability									
Community Use - used, Community Use - unused, No Community Use, Available but Unused									
General comments/observations									
*You will need a cricket ball and ruler to assess wicket quality as indicated									
Assessment Criteria (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer).									
Element	Rating				Guidance notes	Site comments (use the guidance notes to help complete)			
About the cricket outfield									
Grass coverage	Good	Acceptable	Poor		<80% falls below the ECB basic standard				
Length of grass	Good	Acceptable	Poor		Ideally 12mm - 25mm				
Evenness	Even		Uneven		Ball should run without deviation or ramp				
Evidence of Dog fouling/glass/stones/litter?	None	Yes	Immediate action required		May also wish to refer to user survey. If yes, refer to contractor/site manager				
Evidence of Unofficial use?	None	Yes	Immediate action required		e.g. informal, casual use, unbooked use, kids kickabout etc. May also wish to refer to user survey. If yes, refer to contractor/site				
Evidence of Damage to surface?	None	Yes	Immediate action required		e.g. from vermin/animals - rabbit, gulls and foxes etc may also wish to refer to user survey				
Artificial Wickets									
Is the wicket and surrounds married in	Yes		No		There should be no trip points	<b>section total</b>			
Evenness of wicket	Even		Uneven		There should be no contours in surface levels				
Stump holes	Yes		No		Should be no wider than a standard cricket ball				
Moss or materials in the surface	Yes		No		There should be none				
Rips or surface lifting	Yes		No		If "yes" contact site manager				
Surface worn in high traffic areas - creases	Yes		No		If "yes" contact site manager				
Hardness - does the ball rebound when thrown straight down?	Yes		No						
Grass Wickets									
Presence of line markings	Yes		No			<b>section total</b>			
Evidence of rolling	Yes		No		i.e. is wicket smooth and uniform				
Evidence of straight cut and height	Yes		No		3mm on match wicket/12mm rest of square				
Evidence of repair work on old wickets	Yes		No						
Grass coverage (square and wickets)	Yes		No		Scale: 80%+ = Yes, 80%> = No Please note that <80% falls below the ECB basic standard				
Hardness - does a cricket ball thrown straight down into the surface rebound/bounce?	Yes		No						
Changing/ Pavilion									
Umpires provision	Yes		No			<b>section total</b>			
Toilets	Yes		No						
Hot/cold water	Yes		No						
Heating	Yes		No						
Condition of building	Good	Acceptable	Requires attention						
Non Turf Cricket Practice Nets									
Is the wicket and surrounds married in (no trip points)	Yes		No			<b>section total</b>			
Evenness of wicket (no contours in surface levels)	Even		Uneven						
Stump holes (no wider than a standard cricket ball)	Yes		No						
Moss or materials in the surface (should be none)	Yes		No						
No rips or surface lifting	Yes		No						
Surface worn in high traffic areas - crease	Yes		No						
Hardness - does the ball rebound when thrown straight down	Yes		No						
Is the steel frame/ posts upright?	Yes		No		Ideally assessed with a spirit level but can be achieved by eye.				
Are steel cross members detached?	Yes		No						
Are all posts and net fixings in place?	Yes		No						
Can a ball pass through any part of the netting?	Yes		No						
Is appropriate safety/ supervisory signage present?	Yes		No						
Summary									
Maximum score	180	Scoring	Score	Percentage Score	Facility Present?	Potential Rating: <span style="background-color: #ffc107; padding: 2px;">Poor</span>			
		Outfield	0	0%	No				
		Artificial Wickets	0	0%	No				
		Grass Wickets	0	0%	No				
		Changing/Pavilion	0	0%	No				
		Non Turf Practice	0	0%	No				
		<b>Overall score</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>					



Rugby union pitch non-technical assessment sheet

<b>Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Rugby Union</b> Please complete one form per pitch									
<b>Site reference</b>				<b>Site Name</b>					
<b>6 figure grid reference</b>				<b>Pitch ID(s)</b>					
<b>Date of assessment</b>				<b>Pitch size</b>	(Senior, Mini/Midi)				
<b>Number of pitches on site</b>				<b>Are any other pitches marked out over this pitch?</b>					
<b>Availability</b>				<small>If yes, please indicate what pitches are overmarked? (i.e. one mini/ midi pitch is overmarked on a senior pitch) in Pitch Issues</small>					
<small>Community Use - used, Community Use - unused, No Community Use, Available but Unused</small>									
<b>Weather at time of visit</b>									
<b>General comments/observations</b>									
<b>Assessment Criteria (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)</b>									
Qualitative information (gathered on site)	Rating					Guidance notes	Comments		
Grass Coverage	Good		Adequate		Poor		>90% = good. <80% = poor		
Size of pitch	Acceptable (between recommended minimum and maximum sizes)		Flag for further investigation (below recommended minimum size)		Unacceptable (above maximum size)		Maximum size = width 70m, goal line to goal line 100m, in goal area 22m, run offs 5m where practical. Recommended minimum size = width 68m, goal line to goal line 94m, in goal area 6m, run offs 5m where practical.		
Length of grass	Too Long		Good		Too short		Too long = >75mm. Too short = <50mm		
Problem Areas: Evidence of glass/litter/vehicle tracks/dog fouling	None		Yes - some		Yes lots				
<b>GOALPOSTS</b>									
Are goalposts installed?	Yes		No						
Is there any obvious danger on posts?	Yes		No						
Are the posts stable in the ground?	Yes		No						
Is the crossbar fixed securely?	Yes		No						
Is there evidence of rust on the posts?	Yes		No						
<b>ANCILLARY</b>									
Is the pitch floodlit?	Yes		No						
Is there changing accommodation for the pitch?	Yes		No						
Is an appropriate level of car parking available?	Yes		No						
<b>Pitch maintenance (information gathered via club survey/ pitch provider consultation) - refer to the guidance notes below</b>									
Aerated (per year)	three or more times		twice		once		never		
Sand dressed (per year)	three or more times		twice		once		never		
Fertilised (per year)	three or more times		twice		once		never		
Weed killed (per year)	three or more times		twice		once		never		
Chain harrowed	every week		fortnightly		monthly		never		
<b>Pitch Maintenance Score</b>									
<b>Drainage</b>	Natural (inadequate) <b>SCORE D0</b>		Natural (adequate) <b>SCORE D1</b>		Pipe drained <b>SCORE D2</b>		Pipe and slit drained <b>SCORE D3</b>		Unknown <b>SCORE D0</b>
<small>                     Natural (adequate) = 3 or less training/match cancellations per season                      Natural (inadequate) = 4 or more training match cancellations per season                      *Based on a <b>pipe drained</b> system at 5m centres that has been installed in the previous eight years                      **Based on a <b>slit drained</b> system at 1m centres completed in the previous five years.                 </small>									



Artificial grass pitches non-technical assessment (including third generation turf pitches)

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Artificial grass pitches									
Site reference			Site Name						
6 figure grid reference			Pitch ID						
Number of AGPs on site			Pitch size	Full (i.e., 100m x 60m)		Half (i.e., 60m x 40m)			
Availability			Community Use - used, Community Use - unused, No Community Use, Available but Unused						
Type of pitch	Long Pile 3G (65mm with shock pad)		Medium Pile 3G (55-60mm)		Short Pile 3G (40mm)				
		Sand Dressed				Sand Filled			
<b>Assessment Criteria</b> (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)									
Element	Rating					Guidance notes	Site comments		
Age of Surface	less than 2 years		2-5 years		5-10 years		over 10 years		
Evidence of moss/lichen (all surfaces)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Loose gravel (macadam surface)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Holes or rips in surface (macadam, art. grass or polymeric surfaces)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Grip underfoot	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Line markings - quality	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Problem Areas: Evidence of Glass/ stones/ litter	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Problem Areas: Evidence of inappropriate use	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Problem Areas: Evidence of damage to surface	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				If no evidence, assume none.
Access for disabled players. i.e.: ramps onto courts, width of gates	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Condition of posts/ nets/ goals	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Surrounding fencing	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Adequate safety margins (w here appropriate)	Yes - fully		No- but adequate		No - not adequate				
Is the AGP floodlit?	Yes		No						
Is the AGP left open at all times?	Yes		No						
Are there dug outs?	Yes		No						
Are there youth shelters/spectator seating around AGP?	Yes		No						
Is there changing accommodation for the AGP?	Yes		No						
Maximum score	<b>93</b>	Scoring:		Poor	<=50	Total Score		<b>0</b>	
				Standard	51-79	Potential Rating		<b>Poor</b>	
				Good	80+				



Tennis court non-technical assessment

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Tennis/ Netball/ Courts									
KKPref									
Site name:									
Number of courts -	Tennis	Netball	Basketball	Five-a-side					
General Playground or specific sports court area?									
Court surface	Management		Community Use?						
	Artificial turf, Clay, Grass, Macadam, Polymeric, Shale		Club, LA - Parks, Parish Council, Public, School						
<b>Assessment Criteria</b> (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)									
Element	Rating						Comments		
<b>About the courts</b>									
Evidence of moss/lichen (all surfaces)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Loose gravel (macadam surface)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Holes or rips in surface (macadam, art. grass or polymeric surfaces)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Grip underfoot	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Line markings - quality	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Surrounding fencing	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Size of courts	Yes - fully		No- but adequate		No - not adequate				
Adequate safety margins	Yes - fully		No- but adequate		No - not adequate				
Slope of courts	Flat		Slight		Gentle				
					Moderate				
					Severe				
Problem Areas: Evidence of Glass/ stones/ litter	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Problem Areas: Evidence of inappropriate use	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Access for disabled players - ie: ramps onto courts, width of gates	Good		Adequate		Poor				
<b>Changing Accomodation</b>									
Changing Accomodation	Yes		No						
<b>About the equipment</b>									
Posts and net	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Are the courts locked when not in use?	Yes		No						
Practice wall	Yes		No						

*Rugby league non-technical assessment*

<b style="color: red;">Non Technical Quality Assessment - Rugby League</b> Please complete one form per pitch									
Site reference		Site Name							
6 figure grid reference		Pitch ID(s)							
Number of rugby league pitches on site		Pitch size	(Senior, Junior, Primary)						
Availability?		Are any other pitches marked out over this pitch?							
Community Use - used, Community Use - unused, No Community Use, Available but Unused									
Weather at time of visit									
Pitch Issues:									
Assessment Criteria (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)									
Element	Rating					Guidance notes	Comments	Scores	
<b>Playing surface</b>									
Grass Coverage	Good		Adequate		Poor		>90% Good <80% Poor	0	
Size of pitch	Preferred size		Meets minimum Size		No - not adequate		See RFL Pitch Size Guidance: <a href="http://www.rffacilitiestrust.co.uk">www.rffacilitiestrust.co.uk</a>	0	
Slope of pitch (gradient and cross fall)	Good		Adequate		Poor			0	
Length of grass	Good		Adequate		Poor		20mm - 60mm: <a href="http://www.rffacilitiestrust.co.uk/">www.rffacilitiestrust.co.uk/</a>	0	
Evenness of pitch	Flat		Moderate		Severe			0	
Problem Areas: Evidence of dog fouling	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots			0	
Problem Areas: Evidence of glass/litter/vehicle tracks	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots			0	
Typical weekly usage (match equivalent sessions)	6 or less		7 - 9		10 plus		Refer to club surveys & other information gathered	0	
Does the maintenance schedule meet RFL requirements	Yes		In part		No		See RFL Annual Preparation and Maintenance of the Rugby League Pitch: <a href="http://www.rffacilitiestrust.co.uk/">www.rffacilitiestrust.co.uk/</a>	0	
<b>Section total</b>								<b>0</b>	
<b>Pitch ancillary facilities</b>									
Are goalposts safe?	Yes		No						0
Is the site secure or open	Secure		Open						0
Is the pitch floodlit?	Yes		No						0
Is the pitch enclosed by perimeter fence?	Yes		No						0
Is there a training area separate to match pitch(es)?	Yes		No						0
Is there a covered stand?	Yes		No						0
<b>Section total</b>								<b>0</b>	
<b>Ancillary facilities</b>									
Is there a clubhouse on site?	Yes		No						0
Is there changing accommodation for the pitch?	Yes		No						0
Adequacy of changing accommodation (exterior)?	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Adequacy of changing accommodation (interior)?	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Is there an officials room?	Yes		No						0
Is there a dedicated medical room?	Yes		No						0
Are accessible facilities provided?	Yes		No						0
Is an appropriate level of car parking available?	Yes		No						0
<b>Section total</b>								<b>0</b>	
					<b>Total score</b>	<b>0</b>			
					<b>Maximum score</b>	<b>95</b>			
					<b>Potential Rating</b>	<b>Poor</b>			



Bowling green non-technical assessment

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Bowling green						
KKPref						
Site name:						
Number of greens						
Flat/crown		Community Use?				
Assessment Criteria						
(please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)						
Element	Rating			Comments		
<b>About the greens</b>						
Grass cover	Over 70%		40-69%		less than 40%	
Evenness of surface	Good		Adequate		Poor	
Signs of wear and tear	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots	
Condition of ditches/boarding	Good		Adequate		Poor	
Surface of surrounding hard areas	Good		Adequate		Poor	
Is the green and surrounding area fenced?	Yes		No			
Fencing around the green and ancillaries	Good		Adequate		Poor	
Problem areas: litter, glass, fouling, leaf fall on the green	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots	
Problem Areas: Evidence of inappropriate use on the green	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots	
Access for disabled players/spectators - ie: ramps onto greens, width of gates	Good		Adequate		Poor	
<b>Ancillary facilities</b>						
Changing Accomodation	Yes		No			
Toilets	Yes		No			
Car parking	Yes		No			
<b>General comments about the site:</b>						

