



**GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL**

**PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

**ASSESSMENT REPORT**

**JUNE 2015**

Integrity, Innovation, Inspiration

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# GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

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## GLOSSARY

3G	Third Generation (artificial grass pitch)
AGP	Artificial Grass Pitch
BC	Bowling Club
CC	Cricket Club
CSP	County Sports Partnership
ECB	England and Wales Cricket Board
EH	England Hockey
FA	Football Association
FC	Football Club
FE	Further Education
FPM	Facilities Planning Model
GCC	Gloucester City Council
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
HC	Hockey Club
HE	Higher Education
JFC	Junior Football Club
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh and Page
GCB	Gloucestershire Cricket Board
LDF	Local Development Framework
LMS	Last Man Stands
LTA	Lawn Tennis Association
NGB	National Governing Body
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
ONS	Office of National Statistics
PQS	Performance Quality Standard
PF	Playing Field
RFL	Rugby Football League
RFU	Rugby Football Union
RFC	Rugby Football Club
RLFC	Rugby League Football Club
S106	Section 106
TC	Tennis Club
TGR	Team Generation Rate
U	Under

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# GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

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## PART 1: INTRODUCTION

This is the Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) Assessment Report prepared by Knight Kavanagh & Page (KKP) for Gloucester City Council (the Council).

This report presents a supply and demand assessment of playing pitch facilities in accordance with Sport England's Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance: An approach to developing and delivering a playing pitch strategy. It has been followed to develop a clear picture of the balance between the local supply of, and demand for, playing pitches and other outdoor sports facilities.

The guidance details a stepped approach to developing a Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS). These steps are 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-C are covered in this report.

### **Stage A: Tailoring the approach**

In order to meet the corporate priority of “encouraging participation in sport, physical activity and the arts, to promote physical and mental wellbeing”, the assessment has the following aims:

- ◀ To inform the emerging planning policy within the Local Development Framework, particularly the Allocations and Sustainable Development Local Plan;
- ◀ To inform the Council's future sports and health strategies and investment plans;
- ◀ Ensure the most efficient management and maintenance of sports facility provision in response to identified pressures
- ◀ To provide adequate planning guidance to assess development proposals affecting sport and leisure facilities;
- ◀ To inform land use decisions in respect of future use of existing sport and leisure facilities.
- ◀ Provide the basis for ongoing monitoring and review of the use, distribution, function, quality, and accessibility of outdoor sport, physical activity facility provision, and playing pitches.

### ***Scope of the project***

The Assessment Report provides detail in respect of what exists in the City, its condition, distribution and overall quality. It also considers the demand for facilities based on population distribution and planned growth. The full list of sports facilities covered is set out below:

- ◀ Football pitches
- ◀ Cricket pitches
- ◀ Rugby league pitches
- ◀ Rugby union pitches
- ◀ Artificial grass pitches (AGPs)
- ◀ Bowling greens
- ◀ Tennis courts
- ◀ Other grass pitch sports including American football and lacrosse

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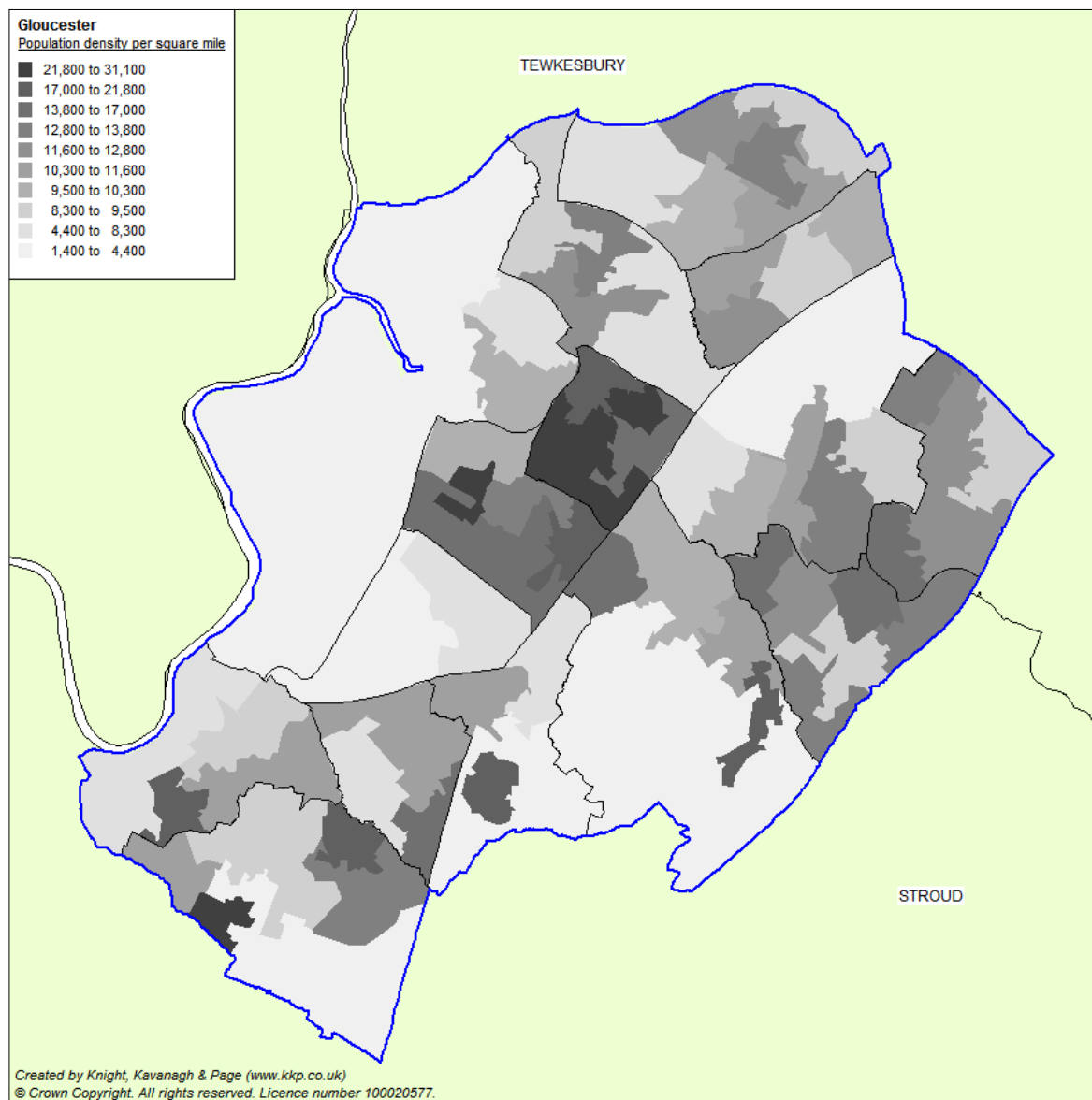
## ***The extent of the study area***

Gloucester is a city, district and county town of Gloucestershire in the South West region. It lies close to the Welsh border, and on the River Severn, approximately 32 miles north-east of Bristol, and 45 miles south-southwest of Birmingham.

The study area will not be broken down into analysis areas, instead it will comprise of the whole of the Gloucester City Council administrative area as a city wide approach including all 15 wards.

Gloucester City study area is bordered by Stroud to the South and Tewkesbury to the North. The wider 'travel to play' area includes Longford, Innsworth, Churchdown, Brockworth, Upton St Leonards, Hardwicke.

*Figure 1.1: Study Area*



## **What makes the study area different?**

### ***Nature of pitch sports***

Rugby union is a key sport in the area and there are a relatively large number of teams and sites. The Rugby Football Union (RFU) has a strong presence in the area and Gloucester is to be a host venue for the upcoming Rugby World Cup 2015. Various participation and promotional programmes leading up to the event are expected to further increase interest in the sport. Any legacy effect as a result may see increased demand for pitches.

Cricket is also a focus sport within Gloucestershire, as the level of club activity and participation has fallen in recent years. Gloucestershire Cricket Board acknowledges this and is keen to work with local clubs to develop both senior and junior cricket in the area in order to increase participation and the strength of local leagues.

Rugby League is a growing sport in Gloucestershire and the city is represented by Gloucestershire All Golds. The club is a semi-professional arm of the University of Gloucester but currently plays home games in nearby Cheltenham due to the lack of access to suitable facilities in Gloucester.

There are no private hockey club sites in Gloucester, with three of the four full sized, sand based AGPs based at education sites and the remaining one full sized, sand based AGP based at a local authority site.

One of the key drivers for the FA is to increase access to 3G pitches to meet demand from the Youth Review linked to priority for FA funding. There is currently no provision of full size 3G AGPs in Gloucester. It is also a priority to find a solution enabling Gloucester City FC to return to play in the City. Of all clubs, it plays at the highest level within the football pyramid structure and has been removed from the local community for the last eight years, exporting demand to nearby Cheltenham.

### ***Geography and topography***

The Gloucester landscape has experienced notably severe periods of flooding, the most recent in 2007. The presence of sites within flood zones may subsequently impact on pitch quality, maintenance regimes and capacity. Therefore, it is important to consider the potential and probability of flooding when looking at the strategic standing of such sites, in order to both protect surface quality and maintain use throughout the season for community teams.

### ***Higher and Further Education***

Gloucester University is looking to extend its sporting offering for students and representative teams alike, including plans for development to increase the number of facilities and subsequent level of community use. Several University teams currently play outside of the city in Cheltenham, or offsite in Gloucester across a range of sites.

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It is also important to acknowledge the presence of local colleges, particularly Hartpury College. Though it is situated outside of the study area boundary, the college is notably esteemed for its sporting reputation and achievements on a site with an extensive range of high quality facilities. As such, it proves a significant attraction for demand to be exported out of the city and facilities are used by Gloucester RUFC and Gloucester City FC for training amongst others.

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

It is essential that a PPS is based on the best and most accurate and up-to-date information available about the supply of and demand for playing pitches. This section provides detail about how this information has been gathered in Gloucester.

With regard to supply and demand information, it is important to note that it represents a snapshot in time. Supply and demand data was collated within the relevant 2014/2015 sport season.

### ***An audit of playing pitches***

PPS guidance uses the following definitions of a playing pitch and playing field. These definitions are set out by the Government in the 2010 'Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order'.<sup>1</sup>

- ◀ ***Playing pitch*** – a delineated area 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.

This PPS counts individual grass pitches (as a delineated area) as the basic unit of supply. The definition of a playing pitch also includes AGPs.

### *Quantity*

All playing pitches are included irrespective of ownership, management and use. Playing pitch sites were initially identified using Sport England's Active Places web based database. The Council and NGBs supported the process by checking and updating this initial data. This was also verified against club information supplied by local leagues. For each site the following detail is recorded in the project database. (It is supplied as an electronic file):

- ◀ Site name, address (including postcode) and location
- ◀ Ownership and management type
- ◀ Security of tenure
- ◀ Total number, type and quality of pitches
- ◀ A description and the quality of the ancillary facilities

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



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## Accessibility

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

- ◀ **Available for community use and used** - 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.
- ◀ **Secured community use** - 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.
- ◀ **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 use 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** – pitches 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’.
- ◀ **Lapsed** - last known use was as a playing field more than five years ago (these fall outside of Sport England’s statutory remit but still have to be assessed using the criteria in paragraph 74 of the National Planning Policy Framework).

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.

## Disused/lapsed sites

Site name	Sport(s)	Status	Comments
Meadow Park (Gloucester City FC)	Football	Lapsed	The stadium was ruined by severe flooding in 2007. Pitch is now overgrown and the ground has been left dormant. Club plans to restore the ground to use and hopes to develop a new stadium onsite.
Gloucester Civil Service Club	Football Cricket Rugby union	Lapsed	Previously a multi club site managed by the Civil Service Sports Council (CSSC) which became unable to afford the costs of running the site and closed it to use in 2010. Later sold to Redrow Homes for development in 2011 despite an unsuccessful campaign from the local community to twice have the site registered as a community asset. No planning application for development has been submitted to date.

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Site name	Sport(s)	Status	Comments
Debenhams Sports Field	Football Cricket	Disused	One cricket pitch previously overmarked with an adult football pitch. Recently bought by the University of Gloucestershire which has plans to develop the site though it is yet not clear whether this will include sporting provision.
Innsworth Lane Sports Ground	Football	Disused	Rendered unplayable by flooding. Changing facilities have since been restored and the pitch has potential to be repaired and brought back into use. Longlevens FC is keen to negotiate a lease on the site to mark a youth 9v9 pitch on which to accommodate some of its youth teams
Fielding & Platts (Sudmeadaow Road)	Football	Lapsed	Situated behind Meadow Park, the land forms plans Gloucester City FC have for the development of the site, therefore it is unlikely to be used for football in future.
Rear of Leven Close	Football	Lapsed	-
Saintbridge Dry Balancing Pond	Rugby union	Disused	Previously one senior rugby union pitch used some years ago by Coney Hill RFC. Designed to flood when River Twyver overflows and access suitable to car parking is difficult.

### *Quality*

The capacity for pitches 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 a pitch affects the playing experience and people's enjoyment of a sport. In extreme circumstances it can result in a pitch being unable to cater for all or certain types of play during peak and off peak times.

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

The quality of all pitches identified in the audit and the ancillary facilities supporting them is assessed regardless of ownership, management or availability. Along with capturing any details specific to the individual pitches and sites, a quality rating is recorded within the audit for each pitch.

The ratings are used to help estimate the capacity of each pitch to accommodate competitive and other play within the supply and demand assessment.

In addition to undertaking non-technical assessments (using the templates provided within the guidance and as determined by NGBs), users and providers were also consulted with regard to quality and in some instances the quality rating adjusted to reflect this.

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## ***Developing a picture of demand***

### *Current demand*

Presenting an accurate picture of current demand for playing pitches (i.e. recording how and when pitches are used) is important in order to carry out the full supply and demand assessment. Demand for playing pitches tends to fall within the categories:

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

In addition, unmet and displaced demand for provision is also identified on a sport by sport basis. Unmet demand is defined as the number of additional teams that could be fielded if access to a sufficient number of pitches (and ancillary facilities) was available. Displaced demand refers to teams that are generated from residents of the area but due to any number of factors do not currently play within the area.

### *Future demand*

Future demand is an informed estimate made of the likely future demand for pitches in the study area. This is generally based on the most appropriate current and future population projections for the relevant age and gender groupings for each sport. Key trends, local objectives and targets and consultation also inform this figure. Using population growth factors, an estimate can be made of the likely future demand for playing pitches in Gloucester.

### *Population growth*

The current resident population in Gloucester is 124,562. By 2031 (to reflect the Joint Core Strategy which shows how the area will develop during the period up to 2031) the City's population is projected to increase to 143,882<sup>3</sup> which is an increase of 19,320 (or equivalent to a percentage increase of 15.5%) according to ONS data.

Further to this there is predicted to be an increase across all team generation rate age groups in Gloucester ranging from just 2.3% increase for 18-55 year old men to 23% increase at mini age groups 10-15 year olds.

### *Team generation rates (TGR)*

TGRs provide an indication of how many people it takes to generate a single team (for all pitch sports) and can help with estimating the change in demand for pitch sports that may arise from any population change in the study area.

A TGR can be calculated by dividing the current population within an age group for a sport by the number of teams in the area within that age group. In order to calculate future demand for pitches, current team generation rates (TGRs) are used.

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<sup>2</sup>Source: ONS Mid-2013 Population Estimates for Lower Layer Super Output Areas in England and Wales by Single Year of Age and Sex and ONS 2012-based projections 2012-2032. Released: 29 May 2014

<sup>3</sup>Source: ONS 2012-based projections 2012-2037. Released: 29 May 2014

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Future demand for playing pitches is presented on a sport by sport basis within the relevant sections of this report.

### *Example*

An area may have 10 youth boys' football teams of a particular age category and a current population of 900 boys within the relevant age group. This would equate to a TGR of one team per 90 boys in the age group (i.e. suggesting that it currently takes 90 boys within the age group to generate one team). A PPS may be looking ten years into the future at which point the population of this age group is projected to total 1,440. The TGR would therefore suggest that the projected increase of 540 junior boys within this age group may generate an additional six teams.

If it assumed that the six teams will play home and away fixtures they will demand a home pitch for matches every other week, equating to 0.5 match equivalent sessions a week or three match equivalent sessions a week for the six teams. The breakdown of when matches are played in the study area suggests that two thirds take place on a Sunday morning and the other third on a Saturday morning. Allocating the six teams in line with this current breakdown would generate a demand for two match equivalent sessions during the peak period of Sunday morning and one elsewhere in the week (i.e. Saturday mornings). The project team should also indicate the likely training requirements for such teams based on knowledge of how teams currently train and any known changes in how training activity may take place (e.g. use of AGPs once a week).

### *Consultation*

A variety of consultation methods were used to collate demand information. Face to face consultation was carried out with key clubs from each sport. This allowed for collection of detailed demand information and exploration of key issues to be interrogated and more accurately assessed.

For data analysis purposes an online survey (converted to postal if required) was utilised. This was sent to all clubs not covered by face to face consultation.

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

Supply and demand information gathered within Section B was used to assess the adequacy of playing pitch provision. It focused on looking at how much use each site could potentially accommodate (on an area by area basis) compared to how much use is currently taking place.

### ***Understand how a site is being used***

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.

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

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

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

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

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

## ***Scenario testing***

It may be useful to take some time at the beginning of this stage to explore the key findings and issues from the assessment work (Stage C) in order to develop the recommendations and actions. This will help to understand the potential impact of any recommendations and actions along with ensuring they are study area, sport and site specific. Looking at a number of relevant scenario questions will help to do this.

## **Section D: Develop the strategy**

By completing Stages A, B and C it is possible to identify several findings and issues relating to the supply, demand and adequacy of playing pitch provision in Gloucester. This report seeks to identify and present the key findings and issues prior to development of the Strategy (Stage D).

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## PART 2: FOOTBALL

### 2.1: Introduction

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

This section of the report focuses on the supply and demand for grass football pitches. Part 6 captures supply and demand for artificial grass pitches (AGPs). In the future it is anticipated that there will be a growing demand for the use of AGPs for competitive football fixtures, especially to accommodate mini and youth football.

#### **Consultation**

In addition to face to face consultation with key clubs, an electronic survey was sent to all football clubs playing in Gloucester. Contact details were provided by the County FA which also distributed the invitation to complete the survey via email. Consultation (either through a survey or face to face interview) represents a 70% club response rate and 89% team response rate. The results are used to inform key issues within this section of the report. The following clubs were met with face to face:

- ◀ Abbeymead Rovers FC
- ◀ Gala Wilton FC
- ◀ Gloucester City FC
- ◀ Longlevens FC
- ◀ Tuffley Rovers FC
- ◀ Quedgeley Wanderers FC

Consultation was also undertaken with the Gloucester and District Sunday League (GDSDL) and the North Gloucestershire Football League, both of which responded by online survey.

### 2.2: Supply

The audit identifies a total of 92 grass football pitches in Gloucester City. Of these, 79 are known to be available, at some level, for community use. There are no 3G pitches on which competitive football matches can be played. The map overleaf identifies all pitches within Gloucester City regardless of community use. See Table 2.11 for the key to the map.

*Table 2.1: Summary of grass pitches available for community use*

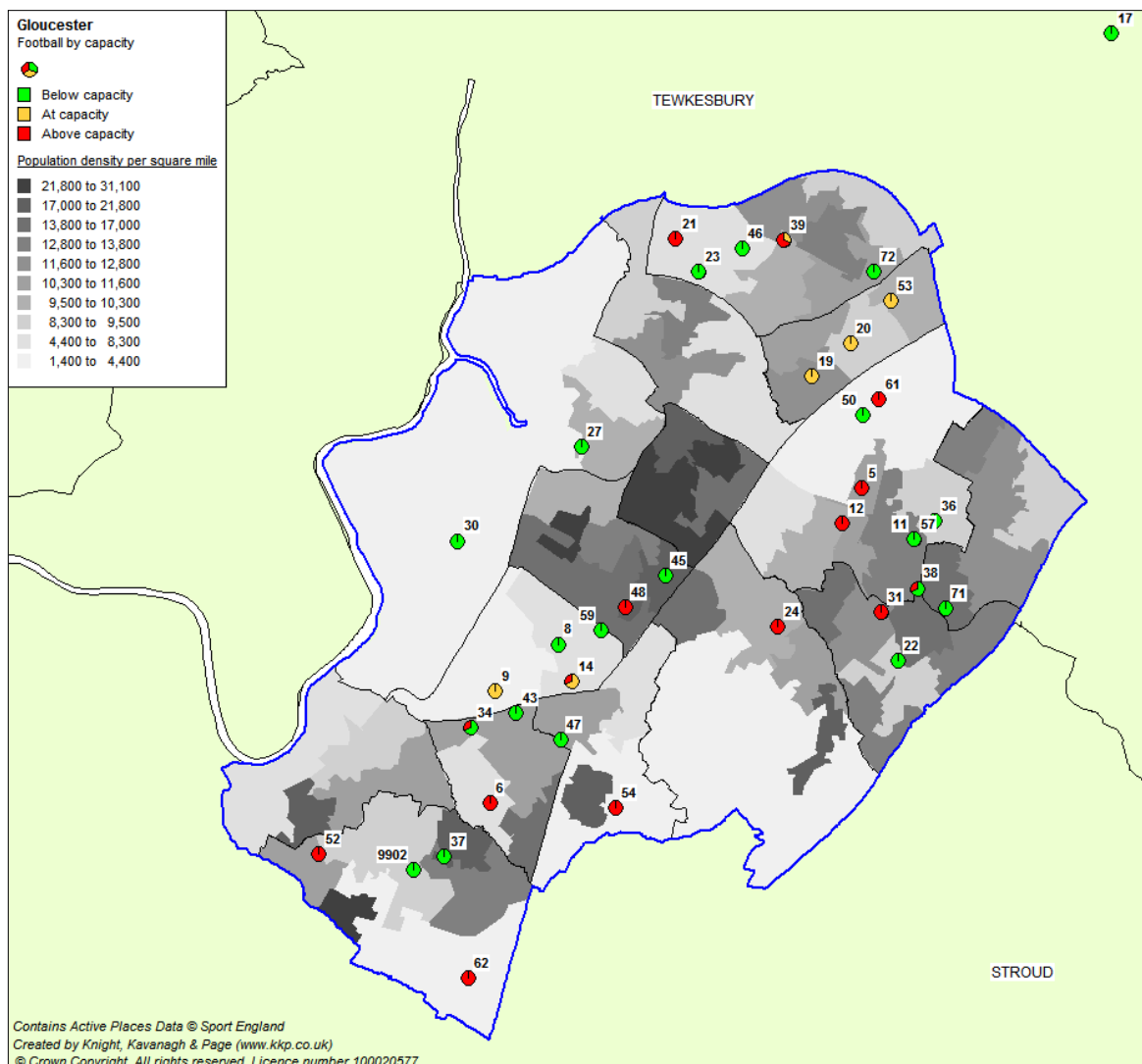
	Pitch type					Totals
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	
All pitches	47	5	15	18	7	92
Pitches available for community use	42	2	11	18	7	80

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Most pitches in Gloucester City are adult sized which is, in part, due to youth 11v11 teams playing on adult pitches. This is not ideal for youth players and is not in line with the recent FA Youth Review. Adult pitches most used by both adult and youth teams (pitch numbers in brackets) include:

- ◀ Heron Park
- ◀ Dowty Sports & Social Club
- ◀ Waterwells Sports Centre
- ◀ Longlevens Recreation Ground
- ◀ Plock Court
- ◀ Tuffley Park

Figure 2.1: Location and capacity of football pitches in Gloucester



See Table 2.9 for key to the map.



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## **Pitch quality**

The quality of football pitches in Gloucester City has been assessed via a combination of non-technical assessments (as determined by The FA) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◀ Good
- ◀ Standard
- ◀ Poor

Pitch quality is primarily influenced by the carrying capacity of the site; often pitches are over used and lack the drainage necessary to improve quality.

The percentage parameters used for the non-technical assessments were as follows; Good (>80%), Standard (50-80%), Poor (< 50%). It should be noted that all of the sites that received a 'standard' rating from the non-technical assessments scored between 50% and 57%.

The table below summarises the quality of grass pitches that are available for community use.

*Table 2.2: Pitch quality assessments (community use pitches)*

Management	Adult pitches			Youth pitches			Mini pitches		
	Good	Standard	Poor	Good	Standard	Poor	Good	Standard	Poor
City Council	-	5	13	-	1	3	-	2	13
Sports Club	7	4	4	-	1	1	3	2	-
County Council	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
School	-	1	4	-	3	2	-	4	-
Parish Council	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	1
Trust	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>GLOUCESTER</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>14</b>

The non-technical pitch quality audit shows that just over half (56%) of pitches available for community use are poor quality and a further 29% are standard quality, with 15% assessed as good. Most youth pitches (62%) are assessed as poor quality and the remaining are standard (38%), with no good quality pitches. Most mini pitches are also assessed as poor quality (56%), with 32% standard and 12% good.

Further to this just over half of responding clubs (54%) believe there has been no difference in pitch quality, many of which play at Council managed sites and only 4% report that pitch quality is much poorer.

Private sites (e.g. sports clubs) typically offer better quality facilities than Council parks/playing fields and school pitches. In general, such sports clubs tend to have dedicated ground staff or volunteers working on pitches and the fact that they are often secured by fencing prevents unofficial use. Private site hire is often at full cost recovery. The maintenance and use of Council sites tends to be less frequent and unofficial use of these sites can further exacerbate quality issues. Examples include Tuffley Park and Coney Hill which have in the past been subject to motorbikes ridden across the pitch.



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Specific comments relating to the pitch conditions at individual sites can be seen in the table below. The comments are a combination of club feedback and site assessment information.

*Table 2.3: Summary of pitch quality comments*

Site	Comments
Longlevens Recreation Ground	Pitches are uneven and are not cut frequently enough by the Council and they receive no remedial work.
Glevum Way Park	Very boggy pitches which are often waterlogged.
Saw Mills End Playing Field	The pitch is clay based which causes it to drain poorly.
Waterwells Sports Centre	Pitches have high clay content, inhibiting their ability to drain sufficiently. The surface requires de-compacting but the Club reports a lack of access to the required maintenance equipment.
Plock Court	Pitches drain poorly and water often gathers on the surface.

One of the main reasons cited by clubs for a decline in pitch quality is related to reports of limited pitch maintenance or a lack of available funds to carry out appropriate maintenance. Other reasons cited for the decline in pitch quality include:

- ◀ Overmarked pitches
- ◀ High amount of rainfall this season (2014/15)
- ◀ Uneven and hard surfaces
- ◀ Overplay in bad weather
- ◀ Casual use
- ◀ Dog foul/litter
- ◀ Lack of investment and limited maintenance including infrequent grass cutting
- ◀ Lack of remedial work i.e. seeding
- ◀ Adult matches churning up pitches before afternoon youth games

### **Ancillary facilities**

Changing facilities are an issue at some football sites. Some of the facilities are described as poor quality by users although all responding clubs stated they had access to changing rooms if required.

*Clubs response to quality of changing facilities:*

Good	Standard	Poor
53%	37%	10%

Of the clubs which provided a response to the question, most (53%) were of the opinion that changing facilities were good. A similar proportion (37%) report that provision was of standard or adequate quality. Just 10% suggest that changing room facilities are poor, most of which are located at Council owned sites such as Plock Court (not enough changing space) and Tuffley Park which was highlighted by clubs as particularly poor and that security was an issue.

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Changing facilities at Oxstalls Sports Park (which also service the grass pitches at both Plock Court and Bishop's College) are highlighted as a concern for a number of clubs using either site. Many clubs playing in the GDSL use Plock Court on Sunday mornings and along with the league report that the size and number of changing rooms available is inadequate. The centre reduced changing provision to one communal male changing room to be shared with centre users; however, the increase in teams playing in the League and using the Plock Court pitches has caused this to become more congested. The League reports that its growth is limited because pitches at Plock Court are unavailable to use, not due to a lack of capacity but because there is insufficient changing provision to service each pitch.

The ancillary facilities at Longlevens Recreation Ground are poor and in need of refurbishment. The Club states that it struggles to generate revenue because of the poor quality of the social space and bar area which is in need of improvement and the Club believes that the poor quality facilities discourage people from using them.

In some cases clubs may report a lack of access to changing facilities but in reality do not require access to them. For example, Tredworth Youth FC has no changing facilities at Ribston Hall School but reports that most teams at mini level and younger juniors don't and wouldn't use them anyway. This is a particular trend nationwide in that most mini and junior teams are using changing facilities increasingly less and that access to toilet facilities are of greater priority.

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

Only one club is considered to have unsecured tenure of its home site. Tuffley Rovers FC has three years remaining of a ten year rolling lease but is in the early stages of investigating opportunities to buy the land or negotiate a new long term lease. The Club is keen to develop the site and was recently successful in applying for Sport England Protecting Playing Fields funding of over £43,000 which will contribute towards securing tenure of the site.

Tenure of sites in Gloucester City is otherwise generally secure i.e. through a long term lease or a guarantee that the pitch will continue to be provided over the next three years at least, with most local authority sites ensuring community use is available whether owned by the Council or County Councils.

### ***Football pyramid facilities***

There are four clubs in Gloucester that play within the non-league football pyramid:

- ◀ Gloucester City FC (Step 2)
- ◀ Longlevens FC (Step 6)
- ◀ Tuffley Rovers FC (Step 6)
- ◀ Gala Wilton FC (Step 7)

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. Clubs cannot progress into the league/step above if the ground requirements do not meet the correct specifications. Ground grading, as it is referred to, assesses grounds from A to H, with 'A' being the requirements for Step 1 clubs.

## GLoucester City Council PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

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Gloucester City FC plays at Step 2 of the football pyramid system and is the highest ranked of all clubs in the City. The Club has been unable to play at its home ground Meadow Park since 2007 when the site was ruined by severe floods. Such is the requirement for FA Grade B facilities and the absence of any other compliant ground in the City, the Club now plays at Cheltenham Town FC. The Club is keen to return to Gloucester as it suggests that it has lost the opportunity to attract youth players and renting a ground is not financially sustainable in the long term. It is currently exploring opportunities alongside Gloucestershire FA for the development of a new stadium at Meadow Park in Gloucester.

Longlevens FC plays in the Hellenic Football League at Step 6 of the football pyramid structure. The Club uses several sites but football at this level is played at Saw Mills End Playing Field, regarded as its premier venue. In the 2014/15 season the Club qualified for promotion to the Hellenic Premier Division (Step 5) but facilities do not meet Grade F requirements. For example, existing floodlighting does not meet the required lux levels and the Club has recently applied for funding to make improvements needed for the club to be promoted in practice.

Tuffley Rovers FC also plays at Step 6 in Division One West of the Hellenic Football League at British Gas Sports Field. The Club is also seeking promotion to the Premier Division and reports that it is unable to develop the site to meet the requirements for Step 4 football and beyond due to the lack of secure tenure. The land is leased on a ten year rolling agreement from National Grid with three years remaining on the current lease. The Club believes that National Grid are open to relinquishing the land and has begun talks about the potential to buy the land outright or to secure a 99 year lease which would increase opportunities to access grant funding. Access to the site is difficult up a steep gravelled hill and the gas mains running along the outskirts cause the surrounding areas to flood often.

Gala Wilton FC plays at Step 7 of the football pyramid structure in the Gloucestershire County Football League. The Club rents the pitch annually from the Council and has a lease on the clubhouse and changing rooms which has now expired. The site requires floodlighting in order for the Club to gain promotion to the Hellenic Football League (Step 6) although planning permission was granted in 2014 for installation. The Club intends to seek grant funding for the floodlighting but is restricted because it does not have evidence of long term site tenure required for most grant funding, whilst not being eligible for Football Foundation funding until Step 6. It is now hoping to negotiate a long term lease on the site as a whole with the Council.

### ***Future developments***

The University of Gloucestershire has plans to increase the number of students to 4,000, of which 2,400 are likely to play sport in some capacity based on current participation numbers. The University is keen to expand its sporting offering accordingly as well as continue to increase participation through the Active Universities programme. It plans to increase access to sporting provision at the Oxstalls Campus and would like to bring the majority of its competitive student sport back to play in the City.

## GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

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Quedgeley Wanderers FC has desires for floodlighting on the main adult pitch at Waterwells Sports Centre and was recently unsuccessful in a bid for Sport England funding. Funding is available through the Football Foundation Football Stadia Improvement Fund although criteria requires that a club must have an adult team playing Step 6 football, which in the Gloucestershire area would mean the Hellenic League Division One or the Western League Division One (or higher). At present Quedgeley Wanderers FC first team plays in the Gloucestershire Northern Senior League which is not part of the football pyramid structure.

### 2.3: Demand

Through the audit and assessment, a total of 166 teams are identified as playing matches on football pitches within Gloucester. This consists of 52 men's, three women's, 61 youth boys', seven youth girls' and 44 mini soccer teams (of which five are girls' only mini teams). No teams were identified as consistently playing home matches on AGP surfaces.

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

*Table 2.4: Change in the number of teams over the previous three years*

Team type	Clubs response		
	Increased	Decreased	Stayed the same
Adult	9%	9%	82%
Youth	20%	13%	67%
Mini	-	14%	86%

In general, the number of teams has remained static for the most part, particularly at adult and mini level. Reported increases and decreases at youth are of similar proportions and increase at some clubs is likely to have been balanced by decreases at others. It is possible that some decreases at youth level may be influenced by switching from Saturday morning mini football to Sunday morning youth football.

In addition, rugby union matches and training sessions are typically held on Sundays which may generate some competition for demand between the sports.

An increase in mini teams does not always lead to an increase in adult teams because nationally there has been a trend of 11 aside adult men's teams decreasing due to players opting to play small sided versions of the game. The way in which people, especially adult men, want to play football is changing. People want to be able to fit it in to their busy lifestyle and the small sided formats and shorter games allow players to do this without giving up their weekends. If this trend continues there is likely to be an increase in demand for 3G pitches.

# GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

## Leagues

Table 2.5: Summary of the main leagues servicing Gloucester teams

League	Match day	Comments
Gloucester & District Sunday Football League (GDSFL)	Sunday AM	Decreased in size over the past decade from eight divisions to two but has recently grown due to the folding of the Cheltenham Sunday League which has seen an influx of teams join from neighbouring authorities. Some use of sports club pitches but a large number of teams play on council pitches where the league has bookings at three sites (Tuffley Park, Plock Court and Beaufort Community School).
Stroud & District Football League (SDFL)	Saturday PM	Almost as many City based teams play in the SDFL, dependant on preferred day of play as the league operates on Saturdays.
Gloucester Youth Association League (GYAL)	Saturday AM & Sunday PM	Most mini and youth teams (38) play in this league. Mini soccer takes place on Saturday mornings and youth matches are played on Sunday afternoons.
Gloucester Mini Soccer League (GMSL)	Saturday AM & Sunday PM	Mini soccer takes place on Saturday mornings and youth matches are played on Sunday afternoons like the GYAL. Less teams (16) play in this league.
Gloucestershire County Girls League (GCGL)	Sunday AM & PM	County FA run league which runs mini soccer in the morning and youth matches in the afternoon.

The main league for adult football within Gloucester City is the Gloucester & District Sunday Football League. The league reports that it is looking to grow and amongst new applications a number of member clubs have expressed the desire to enter reserve or second teams. It states that the three sites currently in use are not enough to accommodate the requirements of additional teams wishing to use Council pitches and that access to more Council pitches and cost of hire are the main challenges limiting growth. Some teams play in a number of other leagues around the County including the Gloucestershire Northern Senior League and the Gloucestershire County Football League, both of which also play on Saturdays. All three women's teams play in the Gloucestershire County Women's Football League on Sunday afternoons.

## Unmet demand

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

Quedgeley Wanderers FC reports that it is currently operating at capacity and that it is not able to add more teams due to a lack of access to pitches, often having to refer interested players to other teams.

Tuffley Rovers FC also reports unmet demand due to a lack of pitch availability. It reports having to turn players away and that existing squads are bigger than it would like at most age groups, including approximately 50 children at U8s as part of only two teams.

## GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Longlevens FC reports unmet demand at adult level and states that it has to turn players away because there is no capacity to accommodate them into current squads. The Club has talked about the possibility of a fielding a fifth men's team but there is a lack of available pitches onsite at Longlevens Recreation Ground and the Club is hesitant for any potential further adult teams to play offsite and away from the clubhouse where there is capacity to generate revenue.

Gloucester City FC reports that its youth and mini teams play across a variety of sites including Walls Sports & Social Club and Gloucester Academy. The Club reports the need for a permanent site where it can be based and where it would have the capability to store equipment.

### ***Displaced demand***

Displaced demand refers to Gloucester registered teams that are currently accessing pitches outside of the Area for their home fixtures, normally because their pitch requirements cannot be met, which is usually because of pitch supply or in some cases quality issues.

In Gloucester most of the displaced demand comes from adult teams. Most derives from education establishments playing in neighbouring authorities, such as Gloucestershire College and the University of Gloucestershire which both use pitches in Cheltenham due to an absence of onsite grass pitch provision on the respective campuses.

*Table 2.6: Summary of displaced demand*

<b>Club</b>	<b>Team</b>	<b>Where displaced</b>
University of Gloucestershire	3 x adult men's	The Folley, Cheltenham
Gloucestershire College	1 x adult men's	Cheltenham CSSC
Abbeymead Rovers FC	4x adult men's (Training)	Millbrook Academy, Brockworth
Blackbridge FC	1 x adult men's	Minsterworth Village Hall
Glevum Town FC	1 x adult men's	Swindon Village Park, Cheltenham
Gloucester City Ladies FC	1 x adult men's	Bridge Road, Frampton
Gloucester City FC	1 x adult men's	Cheltenham Town FC, Cheltenham
Gloucester City FC	1 x mini (U7)	3G indoor, Brimscombe Indoor Soccer

The University of Gloucestershire has five adult football teams which all play in Cheltenham at The Folley in the BUCS leagues on Wednesday afternoons. This is partly because the University has a campus in Cheltenham and subsequently some of its students are currently based there.

Gloucestershire College currently has one adult football team which also plays in Cheltenham at the Civil Service Sports Club. There is no outdoor sports provision onsite but the College states that it would require greater access to pitch provision in order to realise aspirations for a second men's team and the creation of a women's team.

Glevum Town FC previously played in Gloucester City but now plays in Swindon Village (Cheltenham). The Club is happy playing here but states that it would consider a move back to play in Gloucester at a suitable facility as many players live within the City.



# GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

## *Future demand*

### *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.

*Table 2.7: Team generation rates*

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams	Team Generation Rate	Future population within age group (2031)	Predicted future number of teams	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population
Senior Mens (16-45)	25,470	60	1:425	27,749	65.4	5.4
Senior Women (16-45)	25,259	3	1:8420	26,644	3.2	0.2
Youth Boys (10-15)	4,414	61	1:72	5,324	73.6	12.6
Youth Girls (10-15)	4,215	7	1:602	5,150	8.6	1.6
Mini-Soccer Mixed (6-9)	5,916	44	1:134	6,952	51.7	7.7

Population increases are likely to result in the greatest growth in participation at youth boy's level amounting to 12 additional teams. Participation is also anticipated to increase at adult level, enough to create five new men's teams, whilst it is likely that the additional players at women's level will join existing squads. Increase at youth girls' level is enough to create another team and mini soccer demand is expected to continue to develop, creating a requirement for seven additional teams.

It is important to note that there has been a recent decrease nationally in participation at adult level and that the number of FA affiliated adult teams playing competitive football has dropped. Similarly, there has been a decline in the number of youth players making the transition from youth football to adult leagues.

### *Participation increases*

There is a focus on developing girl's football within Gloucester and this is likely to lead to more girls' teams in the future and therefore demand for more pitches.

Some clubs plan to increase the number of teams for next season, mostly at adult level. Some clubs also plan to add junior and mini teams, such as Gala Wilton FC which hopes to begin a junior section and Longlevens FC which hopes to continue to build upon its new established junior section.

*Table 2.8: Summary of future demand expressed by clubs*

Club	Comments
Longlevens FC	Links to private coaching delivered in local primary school. Coach passes on a complete team of U12s each year which begun last season. Plans for two new boys youth 11v11 teams next season and considering a fifth men's team.
Cheltenham Athletic FC	Plans for a second adult team.
AFC Cheltenham	Plans for a second adult team.
Ramblers FC	Plans for a second adult team.

# GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Club	Comments
Hucclecote Youth FC	Intentions for three further boys youth 9v9 teams and a new mini team.
Gala Wilton FC	Club plans to add two boys teams at U14s and U16 age groups.

A number of clubs (six) report realistic plans to increase the number of teams they provide, all of which identify that additional teams will be accommodated at current sites. Where quantified, clubs plan to provide an additional three men's, seven youth (boys), and one mini team. Tuffley Rovers FC also reports plans to establish girls' teams but was unable to quantify how many.

### **Imported demand**

A number of teams based outside of the City import demand to use pitches in the area. Notably, there has been an influx of teams from the Cheltenham area since the Cheltenham Sunday League folded in 2012, which has led to clubs joining the GDSL.

## **2.4: Capacity analysis**

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

As a guide, The FA has set a standard number of matches that each grass pitch type should be able to accommodate without adversely affecting its current quality (pitch capacity). Taking into consideration the guidelines on capacity the following was concluded in Gloucester:

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 2.9 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

### **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.



## GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

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In order to reflect daily curriculum use, school team training, extracurricular clubs and fixtures, a supplement of match equivalent sessions has been added to pitches at school sites where appropriate (indicated in bold).

Some schools do not allow community use in order to manage poor quality pitches for their own use throughout the week. Schools may also play fixtures on Saturday mornings during the winter because of bad light after school which may limit capacity for community use, particularly in the case of youth and mini pitches as this coincides with the main junior football leagues which operate on Saturday mornings.

Beaufort Academy reports that it is unable to mark a youth 9v9 pitch for first year pupils because they cannot afford the additional cost of 9v9 sized goalposts. The School has 12 teams and reports having played over 100 fixtures last year midweek and on Saturday mornings.

Tuffley Rovers FC is looking to begin a girls section and has met with Ribston Hall High School to discuss the possibility of using the pitches. The School reports a lack of access to toilet and changing facilities as the main school building would remain closed and any community users would have to cover the cost of a member of staffing coming to both open and close the site to ensure it remains secure.

**GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL  
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Table 2.9: Football pitch capacity analysis

Site ID	Site name	Available for community use?	Type of tenure <sup>4</sup>	Management	Pitch type	Pitch size	Quality rating	No. of pitches	Current play (in match sessions)	FA recommended site capacity (in match sessions)	Overused, at capacity or potential to accommodate additional play	Pitches available in peak period
5	Barnwood Park Arts College	No	Secure	School	Youth	(11v11)	Poor	1	- +3	1	2	-
5	Barnwood Park Arts College	No	Secure	School	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	2	- +6	1	5	-
6	Beaufort Community School	Yes	Secure	School	Adult		Poor	2	1.5 +4.5	2	4	-
6	Beaufort Community School	Yes	Secure	School	Youth	(11v11)	Poor	2	2.5 +6	2	6.5	-
8	Blackbridge Playing Field	Yes	Secure	County Council/ Council	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	0.5	1	0.5	1
9	British Gas Sports Field (Tuffley Rovers AFC)	Yes	Unsecure	Sports Club	Adult		Standard	1	2	2	-	-
11	Clock Tower Park	Yes	Secure	Council	Adult		Standard	1	1.5	2	0.5	1
12	Coney Hill Park	Yes	Secure	Council	Adult		Poor	1	2.5	1	1.5	-
14	Crypt School	No	Secure	School	Adult		Good	1	- +4	3	1	-
14	Crypt School	No	Secure	School	Youth	(11v11)	Good	1	- +4	4	-	-
14	Crypt School	No	Secure	School	Youth	(9v9)	Good	1	- +4	4	-	-
17	Dowty Sport & Social Club	Yes	Secure	Sports Club	Adult		Good	6	5.5	18	12.5*	5
17	Dowty Sport & Social Club	Yes-unused	Secure	Sports Club	Mini	(5v5)	Good	1	0	6	6*	1
17	Dowty Sport & Social Club	Yes-unused	Secure	Sports Club	Mini	(7v7)	Good	2	0	12	12*	2
19	Elmbridge Park	Yes	Secure	Council	Adult		Poor	1	1	1	-	0.5
20	Elmbridge Playing Field	Yes	Secure	Sports Club	Adult		Poor	1	1	1	-	-
21	Gala Wilton Football Club	Yes	Secure	Sports Club	Adult		Poor	1	1.5	1	0.5	-
22	Glevum Way Park	Yes	Secure	Council	Adult		Standard	1	1.5	2	0.5	1
22	Glevum Way Park	Yes-unused	Secure	Council	Mini	(5v5)	Poor	2	0	4	4	2
22	Glevum Way Park	Yes	Secure	Council	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	0.5	2	1.5	0.5
23	Bishop's College	Yes	Secure	Trust	Adult		Good	2	3	6	3	0.5
24	Gloucester Academy	Yes	Secure	School	Adult		Standard	1	1.5 +2	2	1.5	-
27	Gloucester Park	Yes	Secure	Sports Club	Adult		Good	1	0.5	3	2.5	0.5
30	Hempsted Recreation Ground	Yes	Secure	Council	Adult		Poor	1	0.5	1	0.5	1
31	Heron Park	Yes	Secure	Council	Adult		Poor	1	3.5	1	2.5	-
34	Holmleigh Park	Yes-unused	Secure	Council	Adult		Poor	2	0	2	2	2
34	Holmleigh Park	Yes	Secure	Council	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	1.5	1	0.5	-
36	King George V Playing Fields	Yes	Secure	Council	Mini	7v7	Poor	4	5.75	8	2.25	-
37	Kingsway Manor Farm	Yes-unused	Secure	Council	Adult		Poor	1	0	1	1	1

<sup>4</sup> Unless local information suggests otherwise it can be assumed that the availability of all pitches in LA, town and parish council and sports club ownership will be secure.

\*Denotes capacity as per usage from recorded Gloucester teams. May not reflect true capacity subject to additional unrecorded use from teams outside of Gloucester

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Site ID	Site name	Available for community use?	Type of tenure <sup>4</sup>	Management	Pitch type	Pitch size	Quality rating	No. of pitches	Current play (in match sessions)	FA recommended site capacity (in match sessions)	Overused, at capacity or potential to accommodate additional play	Pitches available in peak period
38	Lobleys Drive Open Space	Yes	Secure	Council	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	2	1.5	4	2.5	0.5
38	Lobleys Drive Open Space	Yes	Secure	Council	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	1.5	1	0.5	-
39	Longlevens Recreation Ground	Yes	Secure	Council/ Sports Club	Adult		Poor	2	3.5	2	1.5	0.5
39	Longlevens Recreation Ground	Yes	Secure	Council/ Sports Club	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	1	1	-	-
43	Murray Hall	Yes-unused	Secure	Council	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	2	0	4	4	2
45	Parry Road Playing Fields	Yes-unused	Secure	Council	Adult		Standard	1	0	2	2	1
46	Plock Court	Yes	Secure	Council	Adult		Poor	4	3.5	4	0.5	3
46	Plock Court	Yes-unused	Secure	Council	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	0	1	1	1
47	Randwick Park	Yes-unused	Secure	Council	Adult		Poor	1	0	1	1	1
47	Randwick Park	Yes	Secure	Council	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	2.5	4	1.5	-
48	Ribston Hall High School	Yes	Secure	School	Adult		Poor	2	0.5 +3	2	1.5	2
50	Saw Mills End Playing Field	Yes	Secure	Sports Club	Adult		Standard	1	1	2	1	0.5
52	Severn Vale School	No	Secure	School	Adult		Poor	1	- +2	1	2	-
52	Severn Vale School	No	Secure	School	Youth	(11v11)	Poor	1	- +2	1	2	-
53	Sir Thomas Rich's Sports Centre	No	Secure	School	Adult		Standard	1 (+2)	- +6	6	-	-
54	St Peters Roman Catholic High School	No	Secure	School	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	1 +2	1	2	-
57	The Oaks	Yes	Secure	Council	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	2	1.5	4	2.5	0.5
59	Tuffley Park	Yes	Secure	Council	Adult		Standard	2	3	4	1	1.5
59	Tuffley Park	Yes	Secure	Council	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	1	4	3	1
59	Tuffley Park	Yes	Secure	Council	Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	0.5	2	1.5	1
61	Walls Sports And Social Club	Yes	Secure	Sports Club	Adult (+Mini)	(+5v5 & 7v7)	Standard	1	2 +0.25 +0.25	2	0.5	-
61	Walls Sports And Social Club	Yes	Secure	Sports Club	Adult (+Youth)	(+9v9)	Standard	1	2 +0.5	2	0.5	-
62	Waterwells Sports Centre	Yes	Secure	Parish Council	Adult		Poor	2	6	2	4	-
62	Waterwells Sports Centre	Yes	Secure	Parish Council	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	4	2	2	-
62	Waterwells Sports Centre	Yes	Secure	Parish Council	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	2.5	1	1.5	-
71	Abbeymead Primary School	Yes	Secure	Council	Mini	(5v5)	Standard	2	1.5	8	6.5	0.5
71	Abbeymead Primary School	Yes	Secure	Council	Youth	(9v9)	Standard	2	1.5	4	2.5	1.5
72	Longlevens Infant School	Yes	Secure	County Council	Mini	(5v5)	Standard	1	1.5	4	2.5	-
72	Longlevens Infant School	Yes	Secure	County Council	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	2.5	4	1.5	-
72	Longlevens Infant School	Yes	Secure	County Council	Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	0.5	2	1.5	1
9902	Kingsway Sports Field	Yes-unused	Secure	Council	Adult		Poor	1	0	1	1	1

## 2.5: Supply and demand analysis

### ***Spare capacity***

The next step is to ascertain whether or not any identified 'potential capacity' can be deemed '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 spare capacity against the site. For example, a site may be managed to regularly operate slightly below full capacity to ensure that it can cater for a number of regular friendly matches and activities that take place but are difficult to quantify on a weekly basis.

### ***Peak time***

The peak time varies for the different pitch types. It is important to acknowledge that although most adult football is played Saturday afternoon (60% - 33 of 55 teams), peak time for adult pitches could also be considered as Sunday afternoon when the exact same number of youth teams play on adult pitches. This is because a large proportion of adult pitch demand is generated from the high number (33 of 45 - 73%) of youth teams playing 11 a side matches on adult pitches on Sunday morning. Peak time for mini soccer and youth 9v9 football is Saturday mornings.

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Table 2.10: Actual spare capacity

Site ID	Site name	Available for community use?	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Current play (match sessions)	Potential spare capacity (match sessions)	Match equivalent sessions available in peak period	Comments
8	Blackbridge Playing Field	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	1	0.5	0.5	1	Spare capacity including availability at peak time.
11	Clock Tower Park	Yes	Adult		1	1.5	0.5	1	Spare capacity including availability at peak time.
17	Dowty Sport & Social Club	Yes	Adult		6	5.5	12.5	5	Also used by other clubs from neighbouring areas which are not captured, therefore true availability unknown.
22	Glevum Way Park	Yes	Adult		1	1.5	0.5	1	Spare capacity including availability at peak time.
22	Glevum Way Park	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	1	0.5	1.5	0.5	Retain spare capacity to help manage poor pitch quality.
23	Bishop's College	Yes	Adult		2	3	3	0.5	Spare capacity available at peak time every other week.
27	Gloucester Park	Yes	Adult		1	0.5	2.5	0.5	Spare capacity available at peak time every other week.
30	Hempsted Recreation Ground	Yes	Adult		1	0.5	0.5	0.5	Spare capacity including availability at peak time.
36	King George V Playing Fields	Yes	Mini	7v7	4	5.75	2.25	-	No spare capacity available at peak time.
38	Lobleys Drive Open Space	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	2	1.5	2.5	0.5	Retain spare capacity to help manage poor pitch quality.
46	Plock Court	Yes	Adult		4	3.5	0.5	3	Spare capacity including availability at peak time.
47	Randwick Park	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	1	2.5	1.5	-	No spare capacity available at peak time.
50	Saw Mills End Playing Field	Yes	Adult		1	1	1	0.5	Spare capacity available at peak time every other week.
57	The Oaks	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	2	1.5	2.5	0.5	Retain spare capacity to help manage poor pitch quality.
59	Tuffley Park	Yes	Adult		2	3	1	1.5	Spare capacity including availability at peak time.
59	Tuffley Park	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	1	1	3	1	Spare capacity including availability at peak time.
59	Tuffley Park	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	1	0.5	1.5	1	Spare capacity including availability at peak time.
71	Abbeymead Primary School	Yes	Mini	(5v5)	2	1.5	6.5	0.5	Spare capacity available at peak time every other week.
71	Abbeymead Primary School	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	2	1.5	2.5	1.5	Spare capacity including availability at peak time.
72	Longlevens Infant School	Yes	Mini	(5v5)	1	1.5	2.5	-	No spare capacity available at peak time.
72	Longlevens Infant School	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	1	2.5	1.5	-	No spare capacity available at peak time.
72	Longlevens Infant School	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	1	0.5	1.5	1	Spare capacity including availability at peak time.
17	Dowty Sport & Social Club	Yes-unused	Mini	(5v5)	1	0	6*	-	No identified use by City based clubs. Used by other clubs from neighbouring areas which are not captured, therefore true availability unknown.
17	Dowty Sport & Social Club	Yes-unused	Mini	(7v7)	2	0	12*	-	
22	Glevum Way Park	Yes-unused	Mini	(5v5)	2	0	4	2	Spare capacity including availability at peak time.
34	Holmleigh Park	Yes-unused	Adult		2	0	2	2	Spare capacity including availability at peak time.
37	Kingsway Manor Farm	Yes-unused	Adult		1	0	1	1	Spare capacity including availability at peak time.
43	Murray Hall	Yes-unused	Mini	(7v7)	2	0	4	2	Spare capacity including availability at peak time.
45	Parry Road Playing Fields	Yes-unused	Adult		1	0	2	1	Spare capacity including availability at peak time.
46	Plock Court	Yes-unused	Youth	(9v9)	1	0	1	1	Spare capacity including availability at peak time.
47	Randwick Park	Yes-unused	Adult		1	0	1	1	Spare capacity including availability at peak time.
9902	Kingsway Sports Field	Yes-unused	Adult		1	0	1	1	Spare capacity including availability at peak time.

## GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Actual spare capacity has been aggregated up (highlighted as green in the comments column in the table above) by area and by pitch type.

Table 2.11: Actual spare capacity summary

Actual spare capacity (match sessions per week)					Total
Adult	Youth (11v11)	Youth (9v9)	Mini (7v7)	Mini (5v5)	
9	-	4.5	1	0.5	15

The table shows a total of 15 match sessions of actual spare capacity on pitches which are available for community use and currently used. There are a further 11 match equivalent sessions available on pitches which are available for community use but are currently unused, which have not been included in the table above.

### **Overmarked pitches**

Some clubs report overmarking pitches in order accommodate a number of game formats in one area. This can subject pitches to sustained use, particularly in the specific areas where pitches overlap where use is focused, for example when a mini pitch is marked on the middle of an adult pitch. This is the case at Walls Sports and Social Club where two mini pitches are marked onto one adult pitch, with a youth 9v9 pitch marked onto the other adult pitch.

Hucclecote YFC reports a lack of pitches available at King George V Playing Fields and that the four mini 7v7 pitches onsite are subsequently used for three game formats. Mini 5v5 matches are played widthways in each half of the pitches to accommodate eight matches, whilst 9v9 matches are played widthways across two pitches which each form one half of the playing area.

### **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 the pitches). In summary, 20 pitches are overplayed across eleven sites, by a total of 29 match equivalent sessions. Only sites which have are overplayed and have current community use have been included in the overplay summary, therefore school sites which are overplayed due to curriculum use and school fixtures have been omitted from the table below. Overplay is mainly due to poor quality of pitches, of which 17 are assessed as poor quality. Pitches are often poor due to receiving little maintenance or remedial work and therefore have limited capacity for use.

Notably overplayed sites include Beaufort Community School where adult and youth 11v11 pitches are overplayed by four and 6.5 match equivalent sessions respectively. This is primarily due to the poor quality pitches and weekly curriculum use exacerbated by the weekend community use by Tuffley Rovers FC. There is also a high level of overplay at Waterwells Sports Centre where pitches are poor quality but the adult pitch also used regularly by several youth teams playing 11v11 football.

# GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Table 2.12: Overplayed sites

Site ID	Site name	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Capacity rating
6	Beaufort Community School	Adult	2	4
6	Beaufort Community School	Youth (11v11)	2	6.5
12	Coney Hill Park	Adult	1	1.5
21	Gala Wilton Football Club	Adult	1	0.5
24	Gloucester Academy	Adult	1	1.5
31	Heron Park	Adult	1	2.5
34	Holmleigh Park	Youth (9v9)	1	0.5
38	Lobleys Drive Open Space	Youth (9v9)	1	0.5
39	Longlevens Recreation Ground	Adult	2	1.5
48	Ribston Hall High School	Adult	2	1.5
61	Walls Sports And Social Club	Adult (+Mini 5v5 & 7v7)	1	0.5
61	Walls Sports And Social Club	Adult (+Youth 9v9)	1	0.5
62	Waterwells Sports Centre	Adult	2	4
62	Waterwells Sports Centre	Mini (7v7)	1	2
62	Waterwells Sports Centre	Youth (9v9)	1	1.5

Table 2.13: Overplay summary

Overplay (match sessions per week)				Total
Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	
18	6.5	2.5	2	29

## 2.6: Conclusions

Having considered supply and demand, the tables below identify the overall spare capacity in each of the analysis areas for the different pitch types, based on match equivalent sessions. Future demand is based on Team generation rates (TGRs) which are driven by population increases as well as club development plans.

Table 2.14: Summary of demand for adult pitches (in secured use)

Pitch type	Actual spare capacity <sup>5</sup>	Demand (match equivalent sessions)					
		Overplay	Displaced demand	Unmet demand	Current total	Future demand	Total
Adult	9	18	4.5		9	4	17.5
Youth 11v11	-	6.5	-		6.5	5.5	12
Youth 9v9	4.5	2.5	-		2	4.5	2.5
Mini 7v7	1	2	-		1	2	3
Mini 5v5	0.5	-	-		0.5	2	1.5

<sup>5</sup> In match equivalent sessions



## GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Total	15	29	4.5		14	18	36.5
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The table above shows that overall in Gloucester there is spare capacity to accommodate youth 9v9 and mini 5v5 teams at present. However, there is an undersupply of adult, youth 11v11 and mini 7v7 pitches. Across all pitch types there is a deficit of 14 match equivalent sessions at present. Intentions are for the currently unused adult pitch at Parry Road Playing Fields to be re-marked as two mini 7v7 pitches for the 2015/16 season which may help to reduce the deficit at mini level.

Future demand indicates the need for a further 18 match sessions, whilst a further 4.5 sessions are required to accommodate displaced demand. Therefore, there is an undersupply of match equivalent sessions available for each pitch type to accommodate future demand, to the total of 36.5 sessions overall. The currently deficit can be attributed to the significant level of overplay which is largely a product of poor quality pitches. This limits the capacity available and the overuse is then exacerbated by the demand from teams, particularly on adult pitches which in many cases are also used by youth teams to play 11v11 football.

In addition to the above, if community use is lost at British Gas Sports Field (Tuffley Rovers AFC) there would be a requirement to relocate two match equivalent sessions on adult pitches to accommodate existing demand.

### Football – grass pitch summary

- ◀ The audit identifies a total of 92 grass football pitches in Gloucester City. Of these, 79 are known to be available, at some level, for community use.
- ◀ Most football pitches available for community use are assessed as being of poor quality (56%) with less than third as standard quality (29%) and 15 assessed as good.
- ◀ Changing facilities at Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre which also service both Plock Court and Bishop's College were identified as a key issue for teams, particularly the GDSDL.
- ◀ Tuffley Rovers FC has unsecured tenure of its home site at British Gas Sports Field but has recently been awarded Sport England Protecting Playing Fields funding towards negotiating purchase of the land.
- ◀ A total of 166 teams were identified as playing on pitches within Gloucester.
- ◀ Three teams report unmet demand and having to turn away players they cannot accommodate; Quedgeley Wanderers FC, Tuffley Rovers FC and Longlevens FC.
- ◀ There is displaced demand from Gloucester City FC which currently plays at Cheltenham Town FC (Cheltenham) in order to meet Step 2 requirements.
- ◀ Both Gloucestershire College and University of Gloucestershire teams export demand to Cheltenham. Both report the desire to play within the City, particularly the University which plans to expand its sporting offering for students at the Oxstalls campus in Gloucester.
- ◀ Clubs report a lack of access to affordable floodlit training facilities, particularly AGPs of which there are no 3G pitches.
- ◀ There is a total of 15 match sessions of actual spare capacity across the City, of which nine are on adult pitches. There is a further 11 match equivalent sessions available on pitches which currently have no recorded play.
- ◀ There are 20 pitches overplayed across eleven sites, by a total of 29 match equivalent sessions.
- ◀ There is a shortfall of match sessions at adult, youth 11v11 and mini 7v7 formats to accommodate current demand, whilst increases in future demand would cause a shortfall at all formats.



## PART 3: CRICKET

### 3.1: Introduction

Gloucestershire County Cricket Board (GCCB) is the main governing and representative body for cricket within the County, including Gloucester City. Its aim is to promote the game at all levels through partnerships with professional and recreational cricketing clubs, and other appropriate agencies.

Senior cricket is typically played on Saturday afternoons, however; there is also a notable level of demand for midweek matches. There are a number of local cricket leagues across Gloucestershire which service teams in the City, including:

- ◀ West of England Premier Cricket League (WEPL)
- ◀ Cheltenham & Gloucester Cricket Association
- ◀ Gloucestershire County Cricket League
- ◀ Gloucestershire Evening Cricket League

The youth league structure in Gloucester City tends to be club based matches which are played mid-week. Therefore there is usually no conflict with access to squares and any midweek matches are usually played on different nights. The two main leagues for junior cricket are the Gloucestershire Youth Cricket League and the Cheltenham & Gloucester Cricket Association junior section.

### ***Consultation***

In addition to face to face consultation with key clubs, an electronic survey was sent to all cricket clubs playing in Gloucester. Contact details were provided by GCCB which also distributed the invitation to complete the survey via email. Consultation (either through a survey or face to face interview) represents a 57% club response rate. The results are used to inform key issues within this section of the report. The following clubs were met with face to face:

- ◀ Arcadians Nine Elms CC
- ◀ AIW CC
- ◀ Gloucester City Winget CC
- ◀ Kingsholm CC

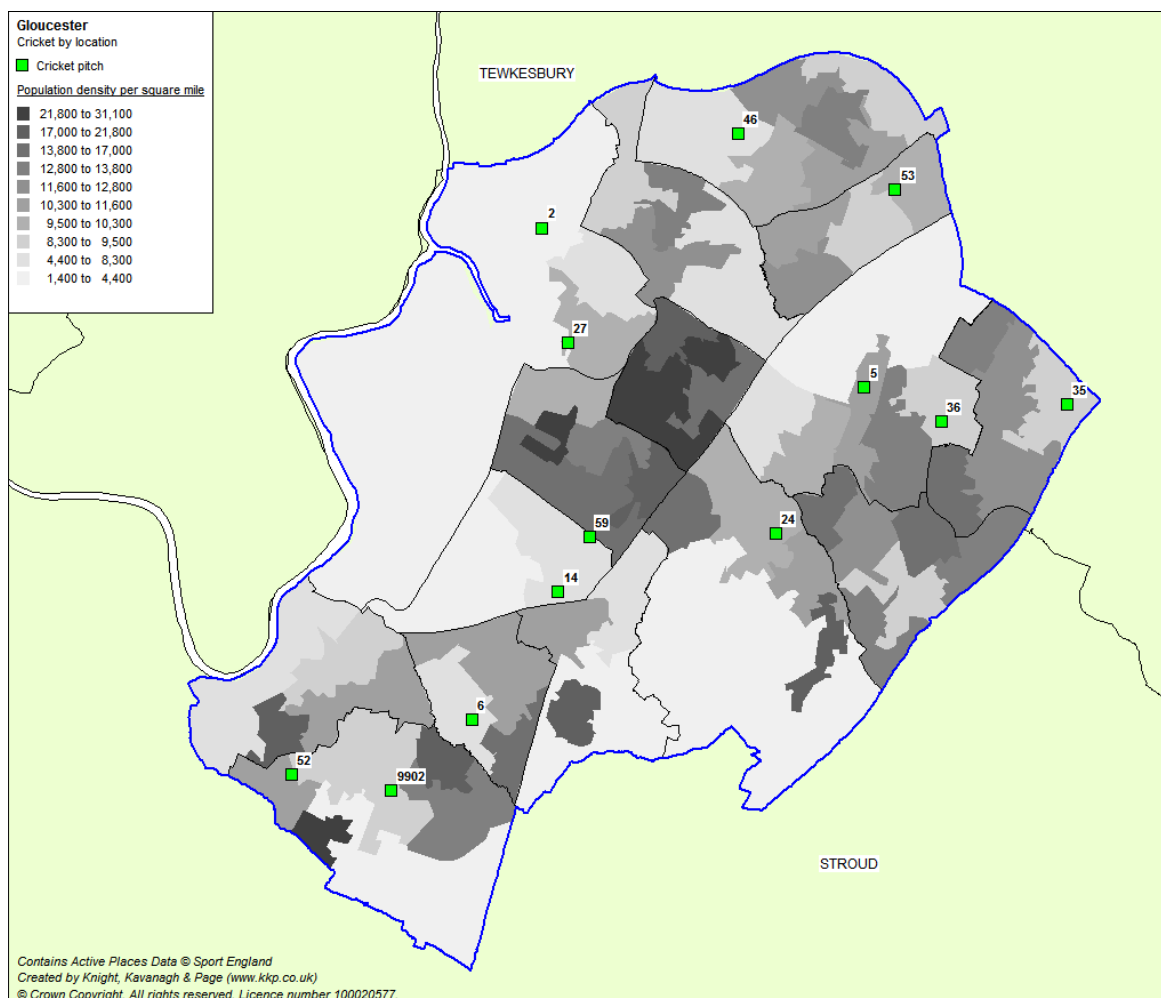
### 3.2: Supply

In total, there are 14 grass cricket squares in Gloucester City all of which are available for community use. Seven cricket squares were identified at school sites. Dowty Sport & Social Club lies just outside of Gloucester but facilities are considered to serve Gloucester residents. There were previously two natural turf squares at the site which are now no longer cut due to an absence of demand.

The map overleaf shows the location of all cricket squares in Gloucester. For a key to the map see Table 3.5.

# GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Figure 3.1: Location of cricket squares in Gloucester



## Surface quality

The non-technical assessments carried out on cricket squares in Gloucester found three squares to be of good quality and 10 were of standard quality, with one poor quality square at Hucclecote Playing Field. Squares assessed as good quality were at Barnwood Park Arts College, Crypt School and Sir Thomas Rich's Sports Centre.

The square at Gloucester Academy is relatively new and is currently only used for school cricket. The pitch is quite small with a short boundary area and though the school is open to community use, the dimensions mean it is not suitable for senior play and therefore it has been excluded from the capacity analysis.

Like Gloucester Academy, the cricket square at Sir Thomas Rich's School is fairly new and was installed within the last three years. There is a pavilion accompanying the square and the pitch was used in part by Arcadians Nine Elms CC. The school is keen to have community use of the cricket square but the Club could not use it consistently because it does not meet league requirements regarding proximity to changing and tea facilities.

## GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

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Clubs generally report the quality of squares to be adequate to good and none highlight any major issues. Both AIW CC and Arcadians Nine Elms CC believe that the quality of their home ground squares at The Crypt School and Barnwood Park Arts College has got progressively better over the past few years through continual improvement work carried out on pitches that are relatively newly established.

Clubs do, however; highlight outfield areas as a greater concern. For example, the outfield at Barnwood Park Arts College is very uneven and undulating, presenting potential safety issues regarding inconsistent bounce of the ball when fielding. The Club reports that the grounds maintenance team subcontracted by the school does not cut the grass short enough and that club volunteers regularly have to perform a further cut for the outfield to be suitable. Gloucester City Winget also highlights that because Gloucester Park must remain a publicly accessible area it is prone to surface damage and unofficial use from local youths, as well dog fouling from an estimated 40 to 50 dog walkers each day.

Maintaining high square 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. To obtain a full technical assessment of wicket and squares, the ECB recommends a Performance Quality Standard Assessment (PQS). The PQS looks at a cricket square to ascertain whether the square meets the Performance Quality Standards which are benchmarked by the Institute of Groundsmanship. The report identifies surface issues and suggests options for remediation together with likely costs.

### ***Non-turf wickets***

There are six non-turf wickets, of which, all are at school sites with the exception of the one at Bishop's College. This wicket is assessed as poor quality and is reported as not fit for use. No competitive senior club cricket takes place on non-turf wickets, although they may be used for training purposes with the aid of mobile nets or some junior matches.

There are two non-turf wickets at Sir Thomas Rich's Sports Centre which lie between the space where other grass pitches are marked in winter and are situated away from the natural turf square. Upon consultation, the school did not specifically highlight any competitive play on non-turf wickets though it is assumed that this is the case for younger age groups.

A non-turf wicket is considered able to take 60 matches per season although this may include training sessions where on occasions mobile nets may be used as a practice facility. None of the six non-turf wickets are situated on natural turf squares, therefore access and use is generally not limited by match play. Given the current supply and limited use, Gloucester is well served for non-turf wickets at present and in view of future demand.

## **GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT**

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### ***Ancillary facilities***

Quality and access to required match day and preparatory facilities varies between clubs in Gloucester. AIW CC particularly reports pressing concerns regarding the quality of the dated pavilion at The Crypt School, reciprocated by the school itself which has desires for a new sports hall incorporating a new pavilion and was recently unsuccessful in its application for grant funding. AIW CC is of the opinion that pavilion and changing facilities are a key issue and that the club's recent success having successfully climbed the league structure from the bottom to play at Premier League level has brought these issues to a head. The Club is of the opinion that league facility requirements of WEPL are too stringent despite the good quality playing surface and that neither the Club nor school has the financial capability required to develop the site further.

Gloucester City Winget CC reports the lack of car parking provision as a key issue at Gloucester Park. The Club had no car parking area until a year ago when it agreed with a local construction company that employees could use the site for parking throughout the week in return for building a small car park area beside the clubhouse. This is still insufficient for match days and cars often have to drive across and park on the edge of the outfield because the neighbouring council car park is unable to be used at weekends.

Arcadians Nine Elms CC reports no issues with ancillary facilities provided by Coney Hill RFC and that there are enough changing rooms to cater for both sports at the beginning

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

Clubs in Gloucester generally have unsecured tenure of sites, with most playing on either school or council owned pitches. Aside from Kingsholm CC which exports demand to Sandhurst where it owns the home ground, only Gloucester City Winget CC has secure tenure at Gloucester Park where it has 18 years remaining on the lease from the Council. There are two teams which pay rent for use of pitches at school sites. Arcadians Nine Elms CC is based at Coney Hill RFC and play at Barnwood Park Arts College which runs adjacent. The pitch is rented annually from the school by the rugby club as an extension of the existing rental agreement it has on the accompanying rugby union pitch. Arcadians Nine Elms CC subsequently sublets the cricket pitch through fees paid to Coney Hill RFC. Tenure is considered to be unsecured as the pitch is rented annually and there is no confirmation ensuring occupancy for the next three years or beyond.

Similarly, AIW CC plays at The Crypt School where it pays an annual sum for rent and maintenance of the pitch. The Club has long standing links with the school and several members were pupils there, though there is no formal written agreement guaranteeing tenure in the short term. The school reports a good relationship with the Club and is keen for this to continue, with no present intentions to cease community use.

Much like Arcadians Nine Elms CC, Gloucester Harlequins CC sublets the pitch at Hucclecote Playing Field from Hucclecote RFC. The Club pays an annual rent but has no written confirmation of use beyond the current season; therefore tenure is considered to be unsecure.

Four clubs use council owned pitches at King George V Playing Fields, Tuffley Park and Kingway Sports Field. All pay an annual rent for use and are considered to have secured tenure of the respective sites as part of the council's maintained sporting offering.

# GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

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## 3.3: Demand

Cricket clubs in Gloucester generally have between one and three senior teams playing on Saturdays, with midweek teams at some clubs. There are 21 senior teams playing competitive matches on pitches within Gloucester although there are only three junior teams.

Women's and girls' cricket is a national priority and there is a target to establish two girls' and one women's team in every local authority over the next five years. 8-10% of the Whole Sport Plan funding is focused around women and girls and talent ID. At present, there are no ladies or girls cricket teams in Gloucester.

Over recent years, cricket in Gloucester has undergone a general decline, including decreases in the number of clubs and teams, a lack of strong coaching expertise available and a significantly low level of junior participation in comparison with most areas. Gloucestershire Cricket Board (GCB) reports that a number of teams in neighbouring authorities around the County have also encountered difficulties and that a decline in players has led to a number of amalgamations to create newly formed clubs. GCB is working in conjunction with local clubs to increase demand within the area, notably through schools initiatives such as the Chance to Shine coaching scheme which aims to teach skills and develop interest within PE lessons whilst guiding talented and interested children in the direction of local clubs.

Aside from those within the City boundary, there are a number of clubs which are based within proximity in neighbouring authority areas. Some of these clubs are considered to cater for Gloucester residents and attract demand as they are reasonably accessible for most. Clubs include:

- ◀ Kingsholm CC
- ◀ Churchdown CC
- ◀ Upton St Leonards CC
- ◀ Ullenwood Bharat CC
- ◀ Haresfield Gladiators CC

### ***Temporal demand***

An analysis of match play identifies that peak time demand for cricket squares is Saturday PM (12 teams). There is no Last Man Stands (LMS) activity in the City, most likely due to the existence of the already established Gloucestershire Evening Cricket League which operates midweek. There is a distinct lack of junior teams with only three teams, all of which are at Gloucester City Winget CC.

### ***Imported and exported demand***

Ullenwood Bharat CC was identified as importing demand into Gloucester from nearby Birdlip (Cotswold). The Club has third and fourth teams which currently play at King George V Playing Fields in Gloucester as a secondary ground because all four teams play on Saturday afternoons.

The University of Gloucester has one cricket team which exports demand, playing in the BUCS leagues on Wednesday afternoons at Cinderford Cricket Club (Forest of Dean).

## GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Kingsholm CC is based five miles out of the centre of Gloucester in Sandhurst (Tewkesbury), though considers itself a Gloucester club given it originates from the Kingsholm area. Most members travel from Gloucester and Cheltenham to play at the Club. It moved out of Gloucester when one of its patrons offered to purchase farming land in Sandhurst, on which the Club would be able to build its own ground and therefore have full ownership and management. The decision to leave Gloucester was therefore solely based on the appeal and advantages of having ownership of its home ground and access to better quality facilities, rather than a lack of access to pitches in the City.

### **Future demand**

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.

*Table 3.1: Team generation rates*

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams	Team generation rate	Future population within age group (2031)	Predicted future number of teams	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population
Senior Mens (18-55)	32,646	21	1:1555	33,383	21.5	0.5
Senior Womens (18-55)	32,745	0	0	32,882	0.0	0
Junior Boys (7-17)	8,245	3	1:2748	9,891	3.6	0.6
Junior Girls (7-17)	7,880	0	0	9,517	0.0	0

Population increases by 2031 are unlikely to result in the creation of further teams but may increase participation.

### **3.4: Capacity analysis**

Capacity analysis for cricket is measured on a seasonal rather than weekly basis. This is due to playability (i.e. only one match is generally played per square per day at weekends or weekday evening). Wickets are rotated throughout the season to reduce wear and allow repair. Therefore, it is more accurate to assess capacity seasonally rather than weekly. The capacity of a square to accommodate matches is driven by the number and quality of wickets. This section presents the current square stock available for cricket and illustrates the number of competitive matches per season per square.

To help calculate square capacity, the ECB suggests that a good quality natural turf wicket should be able to take 5 matches per season per grass wicket (adults). This information 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

## GLoucester City Council PLAYING SQUARE ASSESSMENT

Table 3.2: Natural turf cricket square capacity

Site ID	Site name	Ownership/ management	Available for community use?	Teams accommodated	Quality rating <sup>6</sup>	No. of pitches	No. of grass wickets	Actual play (sessions per season)	Capacity (sessions per season)	Capacity rating (sessions per season)
2	Archdeacon Meadow	School	No	School 1st , 2nd, U15, U14, U13, U12	Standard	3	10	30	50	80
							8		40	
							4		20	
5	Barnwood Park Arts College	School	Yes	Arcadians Nine Elms CC	Good	1	6	23	30	7
14	Crypt School	School	Yes	AIW CC, 4 school teams	Good	1	5	50	25	25
27	Gloucester Park	Sports Club	Yes	Gloucester Winget CC	Standard	1	10	50	50	-
35	Hucclecote Playing Field	Sports Club	Yes	Gloucester Harlequins CC	Poor	1	8	14	40	26
36	King George V Playing Fields	Council	Yes	Ullenwood Bharat CC 3rd & 4th	Standard	1	10	19	50	31
46	Plock Court	Trust	Yes	-	Standard	1	10	-	50	50
53	Sir Thomas Rich's Sports Centre	School	No	10 school teams	Good	1	5	25	25	-
59	Tuffley Park	Council	Yes	Gloucester Winget CC, Quedgeley CC	Standard	2	12	30	120	90
							12			
9902	Kingsway Sports Field	Council	Yes	Hardwicke & Quedgeley CC	Standard	1	10	21	50	29

<sup>6</sup> As derived from the non technical site assessments



# GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

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## 3.5: Supply and demand analysis

### *Spare capacity*

The next step is to ascertain whether or not any identified 'potential capacity' can be deemed '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 spare capacity against the site. For example, a site may be managed to regularly operate slightly below full capacity to ensure that it can cater for a number of regular training sessions, or to protect the quality of the site.

Of those sites with existing community use, there are five which show potential spare capacity on grass wickets in Gloucester, totalling 183 match sessions per season:

- ◀ Barnwood Park Arts College (7 match sessions)
- ◀ Hucclecote Playing Field (26 match sessions)
- ◀ King George V Playing Fields (31 match sessions)
- ◀ Tuffley Park (90 match sessions)
- ◀ Kingsway Sports Field (29 match sessions)

In addition no current use is identified at Plock Court where there is potential to accommodate 50 match sessions per season. In previous years the site was able to host six cricket pitches however the decline in demand has meant that only one pitch is now maintained and at present acts as a reserve site for cricket with no incumbent club team. Should demand increase, the leisure trust managing the site reports that there is the potential to reinstate these pitches.

### *Overplay*

Only one site in Gloucester is considered to be overplayed, Crypt School by a total of 25 match sessions per season. The pitch only contains five grass wickets and with school fixtures and community use by AIW CC it is deemed to be overplayed.

Further to this, two sites are played to capacity, Gloucester Park (Gloucester Winget CC) and Sir Thomas Rich's Sports Centre (which is unavailable for community use).

## 3.6: Conclusions

Overall there is a sufficient supply of cricket pitches to cater for demand from clubs within Gloucester at peak time. Instead, the key issue is that there is a lack of access to high quality facilities across the City, particularly to cater for clubs playing at a high standard such as the WEPL. The decline in cricket over the last decade has led to a decrease in demand, with a number of clubs having folded or amalgamated in order to survive due to a lack of players or funds to keep operating. As a result, a host of newly established clubs have had to start from the bottom of the cricketing league structure with limited resources and cannot afford to own or develop their own site, leading most to rent council or school pitches. The surplus capacity across Gloucester is also a reflection of the very limited junior activity and teams which would otherwise contribute midweek use.



## GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

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Gloucester has enough capacity to cater for both current and future demand but must seek to improve the quality of existing pitches and ancillary provision in use which may prove unattractive to potential players. This will also serve to attract better quality players and will provide a better environment to facilitate skill development through both a higher calibre of match play and practice.

### **Cricket summary**

- ◀ In total, there are 14 grass cricket squares in Gloucester City all of which are available for community use. There are also six artificial wickets, five of which are located at school sites and one at Bishop's College which is not fit for use.
- ◀ There has been a reduction in the number of cricket pitches as a reflection of the decline in demand for cricket over the past decade albeit pitch quality has also affected usage. There were previously six squares at Plock Court where there is now only one which is also unused. Aspire Trust reports that these pitches could be reinstated in the event of an increase in demand.
- ◀ The non-technical assessments carried out on cricket squares in Gloucester found three squares to be of good quality and 10 were of standard quality, with one poor quality square at Hucclecote Playing Field.
- ◀ Clubs generally report the condition of squares as adequate but highlight issues with outfielders being poor quality.
- ◀ There is some imported and exported demand identified on the fringes of Gloucester. For example, Kingsholm CC exports demand to nearby Sandhurst and Ullenwood Bharat CC imports from Birdlip.
- ◀ Of those sites with existing community use, there are five which show potential spare capacity on grass wickets in Gloucester, totalling 183 match sessions per season.
- ◀ Only one site in Gloucester is considered to be overplayed, Crypt School by a total of 25 match sessions per season. The pitch only contains five grass wickets and with school fixtures and community use by AIW CC it is deemed to be overplayed.
- ◀ Further to this, two sites are played to capacity, Gloucester Park (Gloucester Winget CC) and Sir Thomas Rich's Sports Centre (which is unavailable for community use).
- ◀ Overall there is sufficient capacity within Gloucester to accommodate current and future demand on existing squares, however; there is a lack of access to high quality playing and ancillary facilities.
- ◀ It is likely that provision of new good quality pitches in Gloucester would increase demand to play cricket.

## **PART 4: RUGBY UNION**

### **4.1: Introduction**

The Rugby Football Union (RFU) is split into six areas across the country with a workforce team that covers development, coaching, governance and competitions. Gloucester City falls within South West Area, with a County Development Manager and a team of community rugby coaches that deliver core programmes in schools and clubs.

Their variety of programmes, which include 15 aside, 10 aside, 7 aside, Tag and the O2 Touch programme, all aim to increase and retain participation within the game. In order to sustain and increase participation in the game facilities need to be appropriate, affordable and accessible. Rugby union is very popular in the City, which is reflected by Gloucester being selected as one of the host cities for the forthcoming Rugby World Cup 2015 (RWC2015).

#### ***Club consultation***

Face to face consultation was carried out with Hucclecote RFC, Gordon League RFC and Old Centralians RFC to discuss issues which are used to inform this section of the report. All other clubs were contacted by email and invited to register their views via an online survey. Only Hardwicke & Quedgeley Harlequins RFC did not submit a response.

There is one professional club in the City; Gloucester Rugby, playing at Kingholm Stadium which compete in the Aviva Premiership alongside other domestic and European competitions. As professional stadia it is of high quality/standard with no wider access for community use. The Club has a training base at Hartpury College where it has exclusive use of some of the pitches.

### **4.2: Supply**

In total, 48 senior and five mini rugby union pitches are located across 23 sites in Gloucester City, of which, 39 pitches are available for community use. There are a further three senior pitches available at Hartpury College which are not used by City based clubs but have been acknowledged as possible alternatives for use if required.

There is no full size World Rugby Regulation 22 AGP in Gloucester City. The nearest is located at Hartpury College just outside of the study area and clubs both in the City and surrounding areas within Gloucestershire export demand to access it on occasions during the winter when required.

NB: The audit only identifies dedicated, line marked pitches. For rugby union pitch dimension sizes please refer to the RFU guidelines; 'Grass Pitches for Rugby' at [www.rfu.com](http://www.rfu.com)

For a key to the map overleaf see Table 4.3.

# GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

## Unused sites

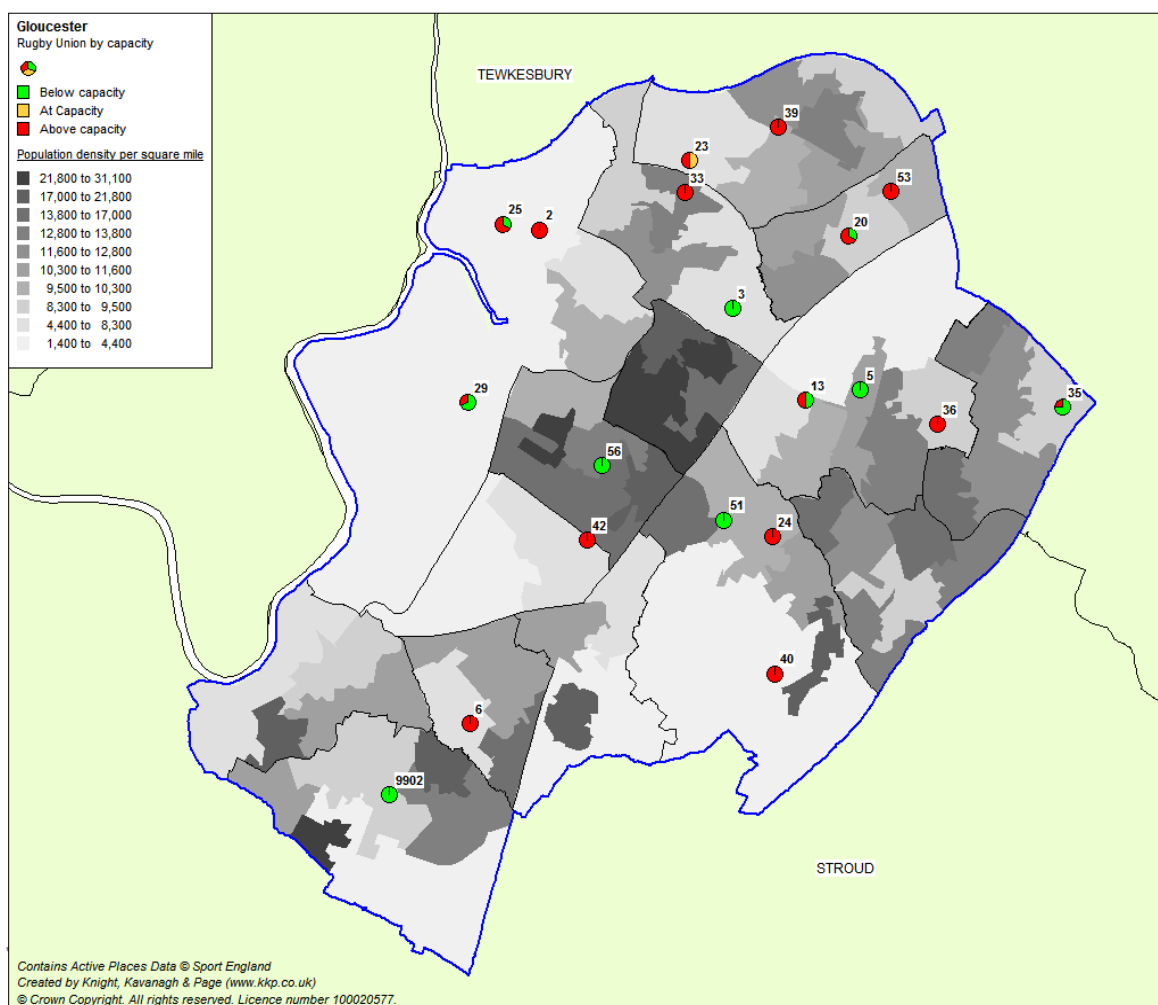
Gloucester All Blues RFC has one senior pitch which is currently unused as the site became unsuitable due to the effects of flooding over recent years. The Club currently uses Bishop's College for matches and training but has this season (2015) completed refurbishment of the clubhouse at its homeground and hopes to continue with the rejuvenation of the site in the hope that the pitches can again be used.

The Lannett is owned by the Council and has two senior rugby union pitches which were previously home to Tredworth RFC. The Club folded in 2014 due to a lack of revenue meaning the pitches are currently lying unused as is the clubhouse building which stands on the site. Due to the lack of use, the Council intends to convert the pitches to youth 11v11 football pitches for the 2015/16 season.

A rugby union pitch was previously marked at Plock Court over a footbridge beyond the existing grass pitches. The pitch is not quite senior size and was marked as a junior pitch but received no use. It is subsequently no longer marked in the absence of reported demand however is able to be brought into use if requested.

Gloucester Civil Service Club was previously a multi club site managed by the Civil Service Sports Council (as detailed earlier in the Lapsed Site Section) which was home to Gloucester Civil Service RFC. The Club relocated to Dowty Sport & Social Club but eventually folded.

Figure 4.1: Location of rugby union pitches in Gloucester City



# GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

## ***Ownership/management***

Only Gordon League RFC has ownership of its ground with the majority of rugby union clubs in Gloucester City having a lease agreement. All clubs are considered to have secure tenure of the pitches. Old Centralians RFC is based at an education site (Gloucester Academy), however, the Club has a long term lease to ensure use of the pitch.

Coney Hill RFC currently leases its homeground from the Council although the Club is looking to gain greater security of tenure beyond the 23 years remaining on the agreement. The Club has aspirations to make improvements to the pitch nearest to the clubhouse and is in discussion with the Council regarding the acquisition of the pitches or a new extended lease agreement which would enable it to apply for grant funding (25 years as required by Sport England).

The Memorial Ground is owned by Gloucester Rugby and has a split lease agreement between the two resident clubs. There are four senior pitches, two of which are leased by Old Cryptians RFC whilst the remaining two are leased by Widden Old Boys RFC. Both clubs hold long term lease agreements in excess of 20 years, therefore tenure is considered to be secure.

The City Council owns three sites with four pitches which are managed by a commercial company. Two sites are currently used by community clubs whilst The Lannett is currently unused. Gloucestershire County Council owns the pitch at Saintbridge Recreation Ground which is managed by the City Council and too lies unused at present but could be marked out if required.

## ***Pitch quality***

The methodology for assessing rugby pitch quality looks at two key elements; the maintenance programme and the level of drainage on each pitch. An overall quality based on both drainage and maintenance can then be generated.

The agreed rating for each pitch type also represents actions required to improve pitch quality. A breakdown of actions required based on the ratings can be seen below:

*Table 4.1: Definition of maintenance categories*

<b>Category</b>	<b>Definition</b>
M0	Action is significant improvements to maintenance programme
M1	Action is minor improvements to maintenance programme
M2	Action is no improvements to maintenance programme

*Table 4.2: Definition of drainage categories*

<b>Category</b>	<b>Definition</b>
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

# GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Table 4.3: 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

## GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

The table below shows quality ratings for each of the sites in Gloucester based on non-technical site assessment scores.

Table 4.4: Site quality ratings

Site ID	Site name	Ownership/ Management	Community use?	Pitch type	Non tech score	Quality rating	No. of pitches	Comments
2	Archdeacon Meadow	School	No	Senior	M1 / D1	Standard	4	Offsite sports provision for the Kings School with no identified community access. Pitches undergo maintenance by school groundsman and are overmarked by cricket pitches in the summer.
3	Armscroft Park	Sports Club	Yes	Senior	M0 / D1	Poor	2	Council owned pitches maintained by AMEY. Gloucester Old Boys RFC reports that the pitch has got slightly better over the past year and that it drains better.
5	Barnwood Park Arts College	School	Yes	Senior	M0 / D1	Poor	1	Used by Coney Hill first team in preference over their pitches as it is flatter and bigger than the club pitches. Partially overmarked by cricket in the summer.
6	Beaufort Community School	School	Yes-unused	Senior	M0 / D1	Poor	3	Two of the pitches are marked for rugby union until January when they are they used for football. Limited maintenance by the Landscape Group which extends to cutting and lining. No remedial work due to cost. Water gathers at the bottom end of the pitches.
13	Coney Hill RFC	Sports Club	Yes	Senior	M0 / D0	Poor	2	The pitches at the club are rutted through the middle where people have walked over and the natural drainage is not very good.
14	Crypt School	School	No	Senior	M0 / D1	Poor	3	The school does not make the pitches available to let by community clubs due to the poor quality, in an effort to manage the condition alongside weekly school use.

## GLoucester City Council PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Site ID	Site name	Ownership/ Management	Community use?	Pitch type	Non tech score	Quality rating	No. of pitches	Comments
20	Elmbridge Playing Field	Sports Club	Yes	Senior	M0 / D1	Poor	2	Poor quality pitches used by Old Richians RFC. Adequate natural drainage.
				Mini	M0 / D1	Poor	1	
23	Bishop's College	Trust	Yes	Senior	M0 / D0	Poor	2	Poor quality pitches maintained by AMEY and operated by ASPIRE trust. One floodlit pitch.
24	Gloucester Academy	School	Yes	Senior	M0 / D0	Poor	1	Pitch used by Old Centralians RFC and drains very poorly, often unplayable between November and February. Very limited maintenance by school and little additional work carried out by the Club.
25	Gloucester All Blues RFC	Sports Club	Yes	Senior	M0 / D0	Poor	2	Pitches are situated on a floodplain and have been lying unused for a number of years having been rendered unusable by sewage and flooding from the nearby river. Have been sanitised and are ready to use again for the 2015/16 season.
25	Gloucester All Blues RFC	Sports Club	Yes	Mini	M0 / D0	Poor	1	
29	Gordon League Rugby Football Club	Sports Club	Yes	Senior	M0 / D1	Poor	3	Three pipe drained pitches, however the pipes under pitch two are suspected to have collapsed as evidenced by a sizeable hump in the middle section of the pitch. Training pitch three is very muddy and boggy and not very safe particularly for junior play.
33	High School For Girls Grass Pitches	School	Yes	Senior	M0 / D1	Poor	1	Natural drainage but does so quite well according to the school. Maintenance subcontracted and has undergone fertilisation and aeration in the last few years.
35	Hucclecote Playing Field	Sports Club	Yes	Senior	M0 / D1	Poor	1	Club received grant funding to carry out some remedial work a few years back but since then maintenance has been limited and inconsistent due to cost.
35	Hucclecote Playing Field	Sports Club	Yes	Mini	M0 / D1	Poor	3	



## GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Site ID	Site name	Ownership/ Management	Community use?	Pitch type	Non tech score	Quality rating	No. of pitches	Comments
36	King George V Playing Fields	Council	Yes	Senior	M0 / D1	Poor	1	Poor quality pitch maintained by AMEY and subject to public use and dog fouling.
39	Longlevens Recreation Ground	Sports Club	Yes	Senior	M0 / D0	Poor	2	Pitches receive little maintenance beyond grass cutting and line marking, though the Club did do some aeration work this season. Uneven surface which has become compacted and public access means it is susceptible to dog fouling. Pitches situated on a floodplain.
40	Matson Park	Sports Club	Yes	Senior	M0 / D1	Poor	2	Two poor quality pitches which receive little to maintenance beyond cutting and lining by AMEY. Matson RFC reports poor grass coverage and that it is often too long as it isn't cut frequently enough. Subject to surface damage through public access.
42	Memorial Ground	Sports Clubs	Yes	Senior	M0 / D0	Poor	4	Both resident clubs report drainage issues due to no underlying system, which causes water to gather in big pools and the pitch to become exceptionally muddy.
51	Saintbridge Recreation Ground	City Council	Yes-unused	Senior	M0 / D0	Poor	1	Poor quality pitch currently unused and therefore uncut or marked for match play.
52	Severn Vale School	School	No	Senior	M0 / D0	Poor	1	One poor quality pitch used and managed by the school. Unavailable for community use due to school concerns over security and allowing access to the rear of the site.
53	Sir Thomas Rich's Sports Centre	School	Yes	Senior	M0 / D1	Poor	4	Maintenance carried out by subcontractor but limited to cutting and lining with no remedial work done. Two pitches also used for football until summer term. Pitches nearest the building slope so water pools in the goal area by the school.

## GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Site ID	Site name	Ownership/ Management	Community use?	Pitch type	Non tech score	Quality rating	No. of pitches	Comments
54	St Peters Roman Catholic High School	School	No	Senior	M0 / D1	Poor	3	Three poor quality pitches used for PE lessons and by the ten rugby union teams for after school and occasional Saturday morning fixtures. Not made available for community use due to poor quality.
56	The Lannett	Council	Yes - unused	Senior	M0 / D1	Poor	1	Poor quality pitches currently unused and not marked accordingly. Cut and lined by AMEY and can be made available upon request.
56	The Lannett	Council	Yes-unused	Mini	M0 / D1	Poor	1	
9902	Kingsway Sports Field	Council	Yes	Senior	M0 / D1	Poor	1	Relatively new pitch built in 2014 as part of wider community development of the site. Maintained by AMEY.
9903	Hartpury College	College	Yes-unused	Senior	M2 / D3	Good	2	Good quality pitches maintained by a groundsman employed by the college. First team pitch used by the college club team in the national leagues.
9903	Hartpury College	College	Yes	Senior	M2 / D3	Good	1	
9903	Hartpury College	College	No	Senior	M2 / D3	Good	2	Two pitches used exclusively by Gloucester Rugby which is based onsite for training and daily operations. There is no use by either the school or other community clubs.

## GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

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### ***Ancillary facilities***

All clubs in Gloucester have access to changing room provision for home games at their main sites.

Gloucester All Blues RFC has recently completed restoration and refurbishment of the clubhouse facilities at Castlemeads after the building was damaged along with the pitches by flooding. The site has two changing rooms which are old and poor quality, served by one communal shower area. The Club identifies improvement of changing facilities as a priority and has held outline talks with the RFU about flood proofing of any future development given the increased cost.

Coney Hill RFC is now a limited company with greater business focus and has aspirations to improve both the clubhouse and changing facilities as part of wider development of the site should it acquire ownership or secure longer term tenure. This includes fencing of the site and a spectator balcony as part of the clubhouse, overlooking the pitches. The changing rooms are used by a number of football and cricket teams, as the Club operates the neighbouring school cricket pitch and the nearby Council owned football pitch which are let with accompanying changing provision at the rugby club.

Widden Old Boys RFC also believes the changing accommodation at the Memorial Ground to be poor quality. There are currently four changing rooms, two home and two away, one of which has en suite shower facilities whilst the other three changing rooms share a communal block.

Gloucester Old Boys RFC recently received RFU Social Spaces grant funding to refurbish the bar area and has now identified the need to make improvements to changing and shower facilities. Old Richians RFC also has plans to make improvements to the clubroom at Elmbridge Playing Field and similarly received RFU grant funding to help do so.

Gordon League RFC is of the opinion that there is a need to make improvements to the social space and changing facilities onsite, particularly the toilets. The Club hopes to develop its small junior section but believes that the quality of provision is a barrier to holding junior and mini events onsite.

Clubs using Bishop's College for training or matches report insufficient access to changing provision provided by Oxtalls Indoor Tennis Centre. Changing facilities are shared with other site users which can cause congestion, particularly in the evenings when one communal male changing room may be used by football and hockey teams as well as people using the indoor tennis facilities.

# GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

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## ***Development***

There are joint proposals by ASPIRE and the University of Gloucestershire to develop the Bishop's College site which currently has two senior rugby union pitches which are well used by community clubs for training and ad hoc match play. Plans for a sporting hub include the construction of a new World Rugby Reg 22 compliant AGP in place of the existing floodlit grass pitch, with intentions for a second World Rugby certified AGP to be built onsite shortly after. Both pitches would be available for community use and managed by ASPIRE, with changing facilities available at both the neighbouring Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre and a new sports centre which is also planned as part of the project. Intentions are for University teams to use the facility for both midweek afternoon matches and evening training sessions.

There are also proposals for another hub site towards the south of the City at Blackbridge Playing Field which is owned by Gloucestershire County Council. Intentions are for a multi-sport venue to incorporate the athletics club currently onsite and there is potential for plans to include rugby union provision including an AGP which would also likely be World Rugby compliant.

Old Centralians RFC has aspirations for a World Rugby certified AGP at Gloucester Academy. The Club plays in the national leagues and regularly has games called off due to the poor quality of the pitch. The RFU is similarly concerned with the quality of the pitch given the standard of competition and is supportive in the Club exploring opportunities to access grant funding alongside the Academy towards the possible construction of an artificial pitch in its place.

Hucclecote RFC is set to benefit from the creation of a new mini pitch which will enable more of its mini teams to play onsite rather than at King George V Playing Fields. A new pitch is set to be built on the land adjacent to Hucclecote Playing Fields funded by developer contributions linked to a local housing development. This pitch has been included in the capacity analysis and is hoped to be available for the 2015/16 season.

## **4.3: Demand**

Demand for rugby pitches in Gloucester tends to fall within the categories of organised competitive play, organised training and casual use.

### ***Competitive play***

Thirteen rugby union clubs play in Gloucester, providing a total of 94 teams. There are 31 senior teams, of which, there is just one ladies team from Hucclecote RFC. There are also 25 junior boys' teams and 36 mini teams. Only Old Richians RFC has girls rugby and fields specific girls teams at U13s and U15s age groups. HE and FE establishments contribute a further two teams, with Gloucestershire College and University of Gloucestershire each fielding one team playing midweek fixtures, though demand from the university is displaced in Cheltenham.

# GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Table 4.5: Summary of demand by analysis area

Team play	No. of rugby union teams		
	Senior	Juniors	Mini
Club leagues	26	3	-
Infrequent/friendlies	5	24	36
Student sport	1	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>36</b>

Longlevens RFC fields the most number of teams with 16, made up of three adult, six junior and seven mini teams. Old Richians RFC and Hucclecote RFC each also have a large number of teams with 14 and 13 respectively.

Some clubs highlight a decrease in junior teams over the last few seasons, particularly at Colts level. Spartans RFC, Gloucester Old Boys RFC and Coney Hill RFC all report a decrease in Colts teams due a lack of players to form a full team and that existing players of that age are now accommodated in senior squads playing senior rugby.

Surveys highlight a decrease in senior participation at a number of clubs. Longlevens RFC third team previously played league rugby but had to become an infrequent side, playing friendlies only, due the demands of first and second teams.

Matson RFC and Gloucester Old Boys RFC have experienced the same issue and each has lost a regular third team, citing a lack of registered players as the main reason. Gloucester All Blues RFC also lost a senior team and was reduced to just one team, largely as an effect of having to move from the home ground due to flooding, which may have caused some players to become disinterested.

## **Training**

Training generally takes place either on match pitches which have full or partial floodlighting or on separate floodlit training areas. There is little use of AGPs for training other than ad hoc usage during the winter when pitches and training areas become exceptionally muddy and unusable for quality skill practice.

There is some unmet demand amongst clubs for access to a rugby suitable AGP and it is likely that the relatively small amount of training on AGPs at present is largely due to the absence of 3G provision in the City and the subsequent unsuitability of sand based surfaces for rugby union practice.

The majority of clubs train on match pitches where floodlighting allows. Only four clubs (Hucclecote RFC, Longlevens RFC, Old Centralians RFC and Old Richians RFC) do not train on competitive pitches at the homeground, either on separate floodlit training areas or on the floodlit pitch at Bishop's College which is a popular alternative floodlit pitch for training.

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All other clubs train on at least one match pitch at the homeground in some capacity, often twice a week. Consistent training, particularly in poor weather conditions, can be a key contributor to poor quality pitches through overuse and a lack of time for rest and regeneration. Use of a separate floodlit area helps to reduce the demand on pitches, many of which already receive limited maintenance, which in turn will help to sustain existing pitch quality for match play.

### ***Unmet and displaced demand***

Unmet demand is existing demand that is not getting access to pitches. It is usually expressed, for example, where a team is already training but is unable to access a match pitch or where a league has a waiting list due to a lack of pitch provision, which in turn is hindering its growth. No rugby union teams identify specific unmet demand for grass pitches.

Displaced demand refers to existing demand which is exported outside of the study area or within the area but a distance from the local community. Demand from University of Gloucestershire is currently displaced, with games currently played in Cheltenham. This is partly because it also has a campus in Cheltenham and some students are based there, however; the University reports a desire to expand its sporting offering including facilities and for competitive student sport to be played within Gloucester.

### ***Casual/unofficial use***

Some of the responding clubs report issues with unofficial use or damage to pitches. Longlevens RFC, Gloucester Old Boys RFC and Coney Hill RFC all report their pitches to be subject to dog fouling and public access. Old Centralians RFC also highlights issues with littering by school pupils which is left on the Gloucester Academy site.

### ***Other sports***

There is additional demand for rugby union pitches from rugby league and American football teams. There are no specific rugby league pitches in Gloucester, therefore matches are usually played on rugby union pitches.

There is also use of rugby union pitches by Gloucester Centurions American Football Club (GCAFC). American Football is typically played on AGPs, specifically 3G surfaces; however, the absence of 3G provision within the City means that matches tend to be played on grass rugby union pitches. The Club plays most matches at Bishop's College but it does not have one fixed homeground location and is somewhat nomadic due to the lack of specific suitable facilities. Use of pitches is subsequently unquantifiable as it is so sporadic, with the Club using Kingsway Sports Field and Bishop's College amongst a host of other AGPs. It reports growth in participation and demand for more teams but is limited by a lack of appropriate facilities.

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## ***Future demand***

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.

*Table 4.6: Team generation rates*

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams	Team Generation Rate	Future population within age group (2031)	Predicted future number of teams	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population
Senior Mens (19-45)	23,047	41	1:562	25,013	44.5	3.5
Senior Women (19-45)	23,050	3	1:7683	24,027	3.1	0.1
Junior Boys (13-18)	4,725	24	1:197	5,420	27.5	3.5
Junior Girls (13-18)	4,347	2	1:2174	5,197	2.4	0.4
Mini rugby mixed (7-12)	8,599	36	1:239	10,418	43.6	7.6

Future population projections forecast an increase in demand for senior mens and junior boys' rugby amounting for the creation of at least three more teams across the City at each age group respectively. There is also anticipated demand for the creation of at least seven new mini rugby teams. Increases in both senior women's and junior girl's participation are relatively small and it is likely that new players would join to become part of existing squads.

Two clubs state intentions to add junior sections for next season. Gloucester Old Boys RFC plan to start a new junior section beginning with one mini team. Gloucester All Blues RFC also plans to re-establish a junior section beginning with a mini team, generating the activity which was lost when the Club had to move site due to flooding. The junior section at Gordon League RFC has not been in place for long, though the Club is continuing to develop junior participation and would like to establish greater links with local schools to help do so. Coney Hill RFC is the only club with plans for a further team at junior level, with intentions to add an U16s team for next season.

Two teams plan to add an additional senior team for next season. Gloucester All Blues RFC plans to return the home ground at Castlemeads for next season and intends to reinstate a second team playing in the Merit League, with the hope that a return to the local community will see resurgence in demand. Coney Hill RFC also plans to add a fourth senior team in line with its club development plan.



## 4.4: Capacity analysis

The capacity for pitches to regularly accommodate competitive play, training and other activity over a season is most often determined by quality. As a minimum, the quality, and therefore the capacity, of a pitch affect the playing experience and people's enjoyment of playing rugby. In extreme circumstances it can result in the inability of the 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.
- ◀ All competitive play is on senior sized pitches (except for where mini pitches are provided).
- ◀ From U13 upwards, teams play 15 v15 and use a full pitch.
- ◀ Mini teams (U7-12) play on half of a senior pitch i.e. two teams per senior pitch.
- ◀ For senior and youth teams the current level of play per week is set at 0.5 for each match played based on all teams operating on a traditional home and away basis (assumes half of matches will be played away).
- ◀ For mini teams, 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.
- ◀ All male adult club rugby takes place on a Saturday afternoon.
- ◀ U13-18 rugby generally takes place on a Sunday morning.
- ◀ Training that takes place on club pitches is reflected by the addition of team equivalents.
- ◀ Team equivalents have been calculated on the basis that 30 players (two teams) train on the pitch for 90 minutes (team equivalent of one) per night.

As a guide, the RFU has set a standard number of matches that each pitch should be able to accommodate. Capacity is based upon a basic assessment of the drainage system and maintenance programme ascertained through a combination of the quality assessment and the club survey as follows:

*Table 4.7: 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

This guide should only be used as a very general measure of potential pitch capacity and does not account for specific circumstances at time of use and assumes average rainfall and an appropriate end of season rest and renovation programme.

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

### ***Education sites***

There are a large number of education sites with rugby union pitches within Gloucester. Rugby union is a very popular sport in the area and features heavily within the local curriculum, with most schools fielding a large number of school teams and playing frequent fixtures. Only Old Centralians RFC uses a school site (Gloucester Academy) as its homeground, though Old Richians RFC and Coney Hill RFC make use of pitches at Sir Thomas Rich's Sports Centre and Barnwood Park Arts College respectively as additional venues because they adjoin the homeground. Availability of school pitches is mixed and a number do not allow community use in order to manage poor quality pitches for weekly school use, they include St Peter's Roman Catholic High School, Crypt School and Severn Vale School.

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

In order to fully establish actual spare capacity, the peak period needs to be established. Peak time for senior rugby union matches in Gloucester is Saturday afternoons and junior and mini teams play on Sundays on senior pitches. Therefore, the peak time for requirement of senior pitches is actually Sundays, but not for senior rugby as the majority of demand comes from junior and mini teams.

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Table 4.8: Rugby union provision and level of community use within Gloucester City

Site ID	Site name	Available for community use?	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Quality rating	No. of pitches	Match equivalent sessions <sup>7</sup> (per week)	Site capacity (sessions per week)	Capacity rating	Comments
2	Archdeacon Meadow	Yes-unused	Secure	Senior	M1 / D1 (Standard)	4	2.5 + 3 +4	8	1.5	Kings School has five rugby union teams playing fixtures on Saturday afternoons. The pitches are not used by any other community clubs. Three sessions and four sessions added to account for training and curriculum use respectively.
3	Armscroft Park	Yes	Secure	Senior	M0 / D1 (Poor)	2	1	3	2	Two poor quality pitches used by the two senior teams at Gloucester Old Boys RFC. No training takes place on match pitches.
5	Barnwood Park Arts College	Yes	Secure	Senior	M0 / D1 (Poor)	1	0.5 +1 +1	1.5	0.5	All girls school with just one rugby union team playing infrequent fixtures, approximately five matches per season. Two match sessions added to reflect weekly training and curriculum use. Pitch used by Coney Hill RFC first team on Saturdays.
6	Beaufort Community School	Yes-unused	Secure	Senior	M0 / D1 (Poor)	1	0 +5 +6	1.5	6.5	One poor quality pitch available for community use but not currently used other than by the school. Training on pitches five times each week plus two sessions curriculum use added per pitch.
						2		3		Two dual use pitches are used for rugby until January from when they are then used for football.
13	Coney Hill RFC	Yes	Secure	Senior	M0 / D0 (Poor)	1	5	0.5	4.5	Second team pitch also used for junior matches on Sunday mornings and all midweek training as it is partially floodlit.
						1	0	0.5	0.5	Reserve pitch used to accommodate infrequent teams such as 3rds and Vets on occasions when both league teams are at home.
20	Elmbridge Playing Field	Yes	Secure	Senior	M0 / D1 (Poor)	2	4.25 +2	3	3.25	Two poor quality pitches used by Old Richians RFC for senior matches and junior matches and training. Both pitches also used weekly by Sir Thomas Rich's School to help accommodate fixtures on Saturday mornings.
20	Elmbridge Playing Field	Yes	Secure	Mini	M0 / D1 (Poor)	1	0.75	1.5	0.75	One mini pitch onsite which can host some mini play but most is spread across Sir Thomas Rich's Sports Centre.
23	Bishop's College	Yes	Secure	Senior	M0 / D0 (Poor)	1	4	0.5	3.5	One poor quality pitch with floodlights, primarily used by a number of clubs as a floodlit training facility.
						1	0.5	0.5	-	Pitches onsite used by Old Centralians RFC third team and also Gloucestershire Warriors RLFC during summer. All year round play therefore no further use recommended.
24	Gloucester Academy	Yes	Secure	Senior	M0 / D0 (Poor)	1	1	0.5	0.5	Poor quality pitch used by Old Centralians RFC playing in the national leagues. Used by first and second teams but regularly unplayable when subject to adverse weather conditions.

<sup>7</sup> Where university training usage is unknown two match equivalent sessions have been added to current play.

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Site ID	Site name	Available for community use?	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Quality rating	No. of pitches	Match equivalent sessions <sup>7</sup> (per week)	Site capacity (sessions per week)	Capacity rating	Comments
25	Gloucester All Blues RFC	Yes	Secure	Senior	M0 / D0 (Poor)	2	2.5	1	1.5	Two poor quality pitches subject to flooding from the nearby river. Unusable for a long time but the Club has recently moved back to the site and plans to play here and train on the pitches using mobile floodlights from next season. Match equivalents based on reported planned use for next season.
25	Gloucester All Blues RFC	Yes	Secure	Mini	M0 / D0 (Poor)	1	0	0.5	0.5	New pitch currently unused. The Club plans to add a mini section and has installed the pitch ready to do so.
29	Gordon League Rugby Football Club	Yes	Secure	Senior	M0 / D1 (Poor)	2	1.5	3	1.5	Used for matches by both Gordon League RFC senior teams as well as Gloucestershire College.
						1	4	1.5	2.5	Floodlit training pitch used twice weekly for senior club training and mini training and matches. Also used by the County representative squad for training twice monthly.
33	High School For Girls Grass Pitches	Yes	Secure	Senior	M0 / D1 (Poor)	1	2.5	1.5	1	Off site school provision with little curriculum use, though marked with an athletics track in summer. Community use by Spartans RFC senior and junior teams for matches and junior training.
35	Hucclecote Playing Field	Yes	Secure	Senior	M0 / D1 (Poor)	1	2	1.5	0.5	Poor quality pitch which hosts senior matches from three teams, along with infrequent matches by U14 and U15 teams throughout the month.
35	Hucclecote Playing Field	Yes	Secure	Mini	M0 / D1 (Poor)	3	2.25	4.5	2.25	Used by Hucclecote RFC mini teams approximately three weeks out of four for matches or training in the weeks with no arranged fixture.
36	King George V Playing Fields	Yes	Secure	Senior	M0 / D1 (Poor)	1	2.5	1.5	1	One senior pitch used as an additional venue to accommodate Hucclecote mini teams and one U13 team for matches and or training most weeks.
39	Longlevens Recreation Ground	Yes	Secure	Senior	M0 / D0 (Poor)	2	4	1	3	Two poor quality pitches used by Longlevens RFC seniors and juniors. Training on separate grass area. Also used by one senior team from Dowty RFC for matches.
40	Matson Park	Yes	Secure	Senior	M0 / D1 (Poor)	2	8	3	5	Two poor quality pitches used by Matson RFC senior and juniors sections. Training on match pitches.
42	Memorial Ground	Yes	Secure	Senior	M0 / D0 (Poor)	1	3.5	0.5	3	Floodlit pitch which is used by Old Cryptians for matches and senior training.
						1	2	0.5	1.5	Old Cryptians RFC second pitch which is slightly smaller and used for junior and mini matches and training.
						1	6.5	0.5	6	Partly floodlit pitch used by Widden Old Boys RFC for senior training twice and Junior training once each week, as well as for matches and some junior use at weekends.
						1	2.5	0.5	2	Widden Old Boys RFC second pitch used mainly for junior matches and training on Sundays.

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Site ID	Site name	Available for community use?	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Quality rating	No. of pitches	Match equivalent sessions <sup>7</sup> (per week)	Site capacity (sessions per week)	Capacity rating	Comments
51	Saintbridge Recreation Ground	<b>Yes-unused</b>	Secure	Senior	M0 / D0 (Poor)	1	-	0.5	0.5	One poor quality senior pitch currently unused. Previously used by Old Centralians RFC for 3 <sup>rd</sup> team matches but not quite big enough.
53	Sir Thomas Rich's Sports Centre	Yes	Secure	Senior	M0 / D1 (Poor)	2	0 +3 +4.5 +2	3	6.5	School has 17 rugby teams and has around six matches per week across the four pitches. Two training sessions weekly per age group on pitches due to building of sixth form block on training grids. 1.5 match sessions training per age group and one match curriculum use added across the four pitches.
						2	1.5 +3 +4.5 +2	3	8	Two pitches used by Old Richians RFC for mini fixtures and training every week on Sunday mornings.
56	The Lannett	<b>Yes-unused</b>	Secure	Senior	M0 / D1 (Poor)	1	-	1.5	1.5	One senior and one mini pitch currently unused. Previously home ground of Tredworth RFC which recently folded. Club still own clubhouse onsite. At present unmarked but available if there were to demand for use.
56	The Lannett	<b>Yes-unused</b>	Secure	Mini	M0 / D1 (Poor)	1	-	1.5	1.5	
9902	Kingsway Sports Field	Yes	Secure	Senior	M0 / D1 (Poor)	1	0.5	1.5	1	Senior pitch used by the one senior team at Hardwicke & Quedgeley Harlequins for matches.

All junior play takes place on adult pitches and this has been added to calculate the actual play on sites. Team equivalents for training sessions taking place on match pitches have also been added.

There are three additional pitches located at Hartpury College which are available for community use, though use by City based clubs tends to be on an ad hoc basis if required. These pitches have not been included within the capacity analysis as they are not used regularly by clubs and are likely to be subject to demand from other local areas such as Forest of Dean which subsequently has not been captured.

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## 4.5: Supply and demand analysis

### *Spare capacity*

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

Six sites show spare capacity totalling 5 match equivalent sessions at senior peak time, of which, two sessions are available at currently unused sites at The Lannett and Saintbridge Recreation Ground. Eight sites show spare capacity at junior and mini peak time, at which there are seven match equivalent sessions (two at currently unused sites) across six sites for play on senior pitches. There are two sites with spare capacity on mini pitches, totalling two match sessions, of which 1.5 sessions are currently unused at The Lannett.

*Table 4.9: Actual spare capacity on pitches available for community use*

Site ID	Site name	No. of pitches	Actual spare capacity	
			Senior peak time	Junior/Mini peak time
3	Armscroft Park	2	1	2
13	Coney Hill RFC	1	0.5	0.5
20	Elmbridge Playing Field	1 (Mini)	N/A	-
25	Gloucester All Blues RFC	1 (Mini)	N/A	0.5
29	Gordon League Rugby Football Club	2	1	1.5
35	Hucclecote Playing Field	3 (Mini)	N/A	-
51	<i>Saintbridge Recreation Ground</i>	1	0.5	0.5
56	<i>The Lannett</i>	1	1.5	1.5
56	<i>The Lannett</i>	1 (Mini)	N/A	1.5
9902	Kingsway Sports Field	1	0.5	1

### *Overplay*

Fourteen sites currently used by community clubs in some capacity are overplayed by a total of 53.75 match equivalent sessions per week. All pitches exhibiting overplay are senior size, there are no overplayed mini pitches.

*Table 4.10: Overplay on pitches currently used by community clubs*

Site ID	Site name	No. of pitches	Capacity rating
5	Barnwood Park Arts College	1	0.5
13	Coney Hill RFC	1	4.5
20	Elmbridge Playing Field	2	3.25
23	Bishop's College	1	3.5
24	Gloucester Academy	1	0.5
25	Gloucester All Blues RFC	2	1.5

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Site ID	Site name	No. of pitches	Capacity rating
29	Gordon League Rugby Football Club	1	2.5
33	High School For Girls Grass Pitches	1	1
35	Hucclecote Playing Field	1	0.5
36	King George V Playing Fields	1	1
39	Longlevens Recreation Ground	2	3
40	Matson Park	2	5
42	Memorial Ground	4	12.5
53	Sir Thomas Rich's Sports Centre	4	14.5

The pitches at Sir Thomas Rich's Sports Centre are used heavily for matches and training by the large number of school teams, in excess of the recommended usage. Additional use by Old Richians RFC mini teams on Sunday mornings further exacerbates the level of overplay. The poor quality of pitches and basic maintenance regime limits the recommended capacity available, which combined with the exceptionally high level of usage causes the pitches to be significantly overused. The School previously used grids marked separately from the pitches for training; however, the building of a sixth form block on the land meant the training was transferred to match pitches.

The Memorial Ground exhibits the largest amount of overplay of a homeground club site amounting to 12.5 match equivalent sessions. The site is split between two teams with two pitches each but the majority of overuse (eight match sessions) derives from Widden Old Boys RFC which has more teams than Old Cryptians RFC. The tendency for both clubs to make use of the pitches for training because they are floodlit and may be considered a low cost option impacts greatly on the level of overplay, with five of the match equivalent sessions of use attributed to training between the two teams across the site as a whole.

A significant cause of overplay in Gloucester aside from training on match pitches is the high level of junior section activity on Sunday mornings. The absence of leagues at both mini and junior level means that games are arranged on a friendly basis and are generally played less frequently than they would be in a home and away league structure. This means that junior and mini use of pitches is generally sustainable because teams will train or play onsite every week except for in the case of an away fixture. The high level of activity in conjunction with the popularity of rugby union within Gloucester leads to a constant demand for pitches on an almost weekly basis rather than fortnightly as would typically be expected of teams playing within leagues.

The lack of spare capacity and subsequent overuse of pitches is a reflection of generally poor pitch quality and a subsequent limitation in recommended pitch capacity per week. This is exacerbated by training demand or demand from other users, not allowing pitches to be repaired properly and imparting consistent use every few days throughout the season with little rest. Limited maintenance programmes in most cases are doing little to offset or compensate persistent use.



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## 4.6: Conclusions

Having considered supply and demand above, the table below identifies the overall spare capacity in each of the analysis areas, based on match equivalent sessions.

Table 4.11: Summary of demand for rugby pitches

Pitch type	Actual spare capacity <sup>8</sup>	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current demand	Future demand	Total
Senior (senior peak time)	5	53.75	48.75	2.5	51.25
Mini	2	-	2	6.75	4.75
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>53.75</b>	<b>45.75</b>	<b>9.25</b>	<b>56</b>

Overall there is a shortfall of 56 match equivalent sessions in Gloucester to accommodate current demand. Additional future demand of 9.25 match sessions will be required when considering future demand highlighted by clubs and team generation rates. Gloucester does not have the available capacity at present to accommodate these required match sessions.

Senior pitches are significantly overplayed by a total of 47.75 match equivalent sessions, with an extra 2.5 sessions to be required from expected future demand from senior teams. The high level of overplay can be attributed to three key factors. Firstly, many teams use at least one senior pitch for training due to the presence of partial or full pitch floodlighting. A high level of use is therefore focused on one pitch and in some cases one area of lighting on that pitch, particularly as many senior teams in Gloucester City prefer to train twice weekly. A good example of this is at the Memorial Ground where training from both Old Cryptians RFC and Widden Old Boys RFC on full and partially floodlit pitches accounts for much of the overuse. Secondly, junior teams play on senior pitches on Sunday mornings as do a number of mini teams, using half of a senior pitch to play matches widthways. Several teams have large junior sections and the absence of a junior league structure in Gloucester means that teams are often using the pitches most weeks. Thirdly, pitch maintenance across the City is generally poor, which plays a large part in influencing the limited capacity available on most pitches. Maintenance of Council sites is typically basic whilst clubs often find cost to be a challenge when trying to maintain their own pitches. Overall, the limited pitch capacity combined with significant use across the city culminates in the high level of overplay.

There are currently two match equivalent sessions available on mini pitches which are enough to cater for current demand, as mini teams often play on senior pitches. Future demand predicts a requirement for 6.75 match equivalent sessions on mini pitches based on teams using pitches three weeks in every four due to the nature of play and matches or training at the home site most weeks. Gloucester City is therefore underserved by 4.75 match equivalent sessions on mini pitches to accommodate future demand. The creation of a new mini pitch neighbouring Hucclecote RFC will help to alleviate overplay at King George V Playing Field where the Club currently has mini teams playing on the senior pitch.

<sup>8</sup> In match equivalent sessions

## **Rugby union summary**

- ◀ In total, 48 senior rugby union pitches are located across 23 sites in Gloucester City, of which 39 are available for community use. There are also five mini pitches.
- ◀ Most pitches are located at school or sports club sites, with the exception of King George V Playing Fields, The Lannett and Kingsway Sports Field which are operated by the Council and Saintbridge Recreation Ground which is managed by the Council.
- ◀ There are four standard quality pitches at Archdeacon Meadow; otherwise all other pitches within the City are assessed as poor quality.
- ◀ There are two sites currently available for community use but unused, at The Lannett and Saintbridge Recreation Ground.
- ◀ Clubs typically train on match pitches in the case of full or partial floodlighting. The nearest World Rugby compliant AGP is at Hartpury College which clubs make ad hoc use of when required.
- ◀ There are 31 senior teams, of which there is just one Ladies team from Hucclecote RFC. There are also 25 junior boys' teams and 36 mini teams. Only Old Richians RFC has girls rugby and fields specific girls teams at U13s and U15s age groups. Gloucester College and University of Gloucestershire each also field one men's team.
- ◀ There is spare capacity of 5 match equivalent sessions across six sites with senior rugby union pitches at senior peak time and 7 sessions available at junior peak time. There are two match sessions available on mini pitches.
- ◀ Fourteen sites currently used by community clubs in some capacity are overplayed by a total of 53.75 match equivalent sessions per week, all of which are senior pitches.
- ◀ Overplay is generally due to excessive training use of pitches, sustained weekly junior use and limited capacity on pitches due to poor quality.
- ◀ Overall there are insufficient pitches in Gloucester to service current and future demand, totalling a future requirement for a further 51.25 and 4.75 match equivalent sessions on senior and mini pitches respectively.
- ◀ University of Gloucestershire and ASPIRE Trust have proposals for the development of the Bishop's College site. This would include two new World Rugby AGPs available for training and match play, of which there are currently none in the City.
- ◀ Old Centralians RFC has aspirations for a World Rugby Reg 22 compliant pitch at Gloucester Academy and is working alongside the school and RFU to explore opportunities to access grant funding.

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## PART 5: HOCKEY

### 5.1: Introduction

Hockey in England is governed by England Hockey (EH). Competitive league hockey matches can only be played on sand based, sand dressed or water based pitches. Although 40mm 3G can be considered suitable for some recreational and school use this surface is not suitable for club matches.

It is considered that a hockey pitch can accommodate a maximum of four matches on the peak day (Saturdays) provided that the pitch has floodlighting.

#### **Club consultation**

There are two community hockey clubs based within Gloucester City; Cleevillians HC and Gloucester City HC. An online survey was completed by Cleevillians HC and face to face consultation was carried out with Gloucester City HC.

### 5.2: Supply

There are four full size artificial grass pitches (AGPs) in Gloucester suitable for competitive hockey, of which, two are sand filled and two are sand dressed. There are no water based pitches. All four pitches are floodlit and available for community use. See Part 6 for full AGP details, a summary of hockey suitable AGPs is shown below.

*Table 5.1: Provision of hockey suitable AGPs in Gloucester*

Site ID	Site name	Surface type	Floodlighting?	Quality rating	Quality score
44	Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre	Sand Dressed	Yes	Standard	78%
52	Severn Vale School	Sand Filled	Yes	Standard	56%
54	St Peters Roman Catholic High School	Sand Dressed	Yes	Standard	56%
60	University Of Gloucestershire (Oxstalls Campus)	Sand Filled	Yes	Standard	64%

#### **Quality**

Of the four sand based AGPs in Gloucester, all are assessed as standard quality and no pitches are rated as good or poor. The pitch at Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre was recently resurfaced in 2012 and is subject to significant use for both hockey and football, yet represents the better of the four. Severn Vale School and St Peters Roman Catholic High School were assessed as relatively inferior quality.

The AGP at Severn Vale School has previously been subject to mole damage. However, the surface has since been repaired and is in relative adequate condition given that the age of the carpet (21 years old) dictates the need for replacement. The School has aspirations to refurbish it but does not have the funds to do so. During the day the pitch is left open and used by pupils as a playground area.



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### 5.3 Availability and usage

All hockey suitable AGPs in Gloucester are available for community use at some level and only the pitch at Severn Vale School is currently unused for club or university hockey.

Table 5.2: Summary of availability and usage

Site ID	Site name	Surface type	Floodlit?	Quality <sup>9</sup>	Total number of hours available for community use during peak period	Football/ rugby usage	Hockey usage	Spare capacity
44	Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre	Sand Dressed	Yes	Standard	34	59%	32%	9%
52	Severn Vale School	Sand Filled	Yes	Standard	34	100%	-	-
54	St Peters Roman Catholic High School	Sand Dressed	Yes	Standard	23	41%	24%	35%
60	University Of Gloucestershire (Oxstalls Campus)	Sand Filled	Yes	Standard	34	87%	13%	-

Severn Vale School pitch is managed and operated by Quedgeley Community Trust and is available at weekends between 9am and 6pm for match play. Evening hire is available from 5pm until 9pm but the pitch used to capacity by local football teams and there is no spare capacity for hockey training.

The pitch at University of Gloucestershire (Oxstalls Campus) is used for hockey by student teams which play on Wednesday afternoons but also require the pitch for training in the evenings. There is some training additional usage from Cheltenham Ladies HC and developments sessions held as part of the England Hockey Player Pathway Programme. There is no use for match play at weekends and instead use is by social football groups or coaching courses.

<sup>9</sup> Quality is assessed via a combination of non technical assessments carried out by KKP but also take account of user views and opinions.

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Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre is a key sporting centre within the City and as such is a popular and well used venue. This pitch is the main site for hockey in the area and hosts almost all matches and training by Gloucester City HC, along with Cleevillians HC matches. The two clubs take up full use of the pitch through the day on Saturdays for match play, with some junior play and occasional mixed matches on Sundays. The pitch is operating at capacity throughout the week due to the high volume of football and hockey training and both resident clubs seek further capacity for training sessions.

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St Peter's Roman Catholic High School available from 6pm until 10pm throughout the week. West Bromwich Albion FC hires the pitch and has exclusive access on Mondays and Wednesdays for its academy teams, which leaves little capacity otherwise. The school reports that the AGP is used at capacity throughout the week but there is some capacity available at weekends for matches around use by The King's School teams on Saturday morning. The school site is used by Gloucester City HC as an additional venue to accommodate both matches and training due to a lack of available capacity at Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre.

### 5.4: Demand

Table 5.3: Summary of hockey demand within Gloucester

Club	Number of teams		
	Mens	Ladies	Juniors
Gloucester HC	4	4	9
Cleevillians HC	2	-	-
University of Gloucestershire	2	2	-

Gloucester City HC reports that the changing facilities at Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre do not have a separate area which can be used by officials, as required by the national league. A social area is used as a makeshift changing area for referees which is not suitable. Junior teams currently play infrequent matches in a monthly festival style format in Cheltenham and the Club states it would like to host one of these events but is unable to due to a lack of available pitch capacity.

The Club recently moved back to Plock Court from playing at St Peter's Roman Catholic High School and believes this will help towards plans to grow the junior section. Intentions are to develop links with the university which is nearby and to develop satellite clubs through partnerships with Hartpury College and local primary and secondary schools with the help of Active Gloucestershire. The Club has plans to double the size of the junior sections but believes it is limited from doing so due to the lack of capacity in suitable time slots, particularly training where late midweek times are not appropriate for juniors. The Club believes there is a small amount of capacity on Sunday mornings but is wary that this clashes with local football and rugby union leagues which may have an impact on demand.

Gloucester City HC is keen to be based nearer to its social venue at Riverside Sports Club and would like to access a pitch which is closer. The Club has held exploratory talks with some schools about the potential for a joint venture to create a new pitch. The Kings School is near to Riverside Sports Club and the Club believes it would be an ideal location; however the school plays hockey matches on Saturday mornings which would reduce the amount of capacity available to the Club at peak time.

Cleevillians HC traditionally originates from Bishop's Cleeve in Tewkesbury and would like to play there but due to an absence of facilities in the area is based within Gloucester City. Cleevillians HC plays at Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre and has a long standing booking there on Saturday afternoons. Both teams train at Imjin Barracks, just outside of the study area in Innsworth. The Club would like to move training to Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre as well rather than using two different venues but is unable to due to a lack of midweek capacity.

Similarly, Painswick HC has a ladies team playing on Saturday afternoons as well as a summer league mixed team on Sundays. The team trains in Churchdown but imports

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demand and plays matches at St Peter's Roman Catholic High School. Cheltenham HC also imports demand and uses the AGP at University of Gloucestershire once a week for training.

University of Gloucestershire has two men's and two ladies teams playing matches in the BUCS leagues on Wednesday afternoons. All teams play on the AGP at University of Gloucestershire (Oxstalls Campus) and use the same pitch for training in the evenings.

Hartpury College recently established a new students union and is seeking to cater for a wider range of sports including new hockey teams, though it does not have a hockey suitable AGP onsite. It is likely that any hockey teams created will import demand into Gloucester City to access pitches for both matches and training.

## **Future demand**

### *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.

*Table 5.4: Team generation rates*

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams	Team Generation Rate	Future population within age group (2031)	Predicted future number of teams	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population
Senior Mens (16-45)	25,470	10	2547	27,039	10.6	0.6
Senior Womens (16-45)	25,259	6	4210	26,314	6.3	0.3
Junior Boys (11-15)	3,732	5	746	4,491	6.0	1.0
Junior Girls (11-15)	3,529	4	882	4,333	4.9	0.9

Population increases are likely to result in the greatest growth in participation at junior level amounting to an additional team for both boys and girls. Participation is also anticipated to increase at adult level, though not enough to warrant the creation of any new teams. Instead it is likely that the additional players will be assimilated into existing mens and womens squads respectively.

Gloucester City HC plans to add a fifth men's team for next season to initially play friendlies as required in order to demonstrate consistency before applying to join the league the following year. It also has plans to double the number of junior teams over the coming years subject to available pitch capacity suitable for junior training and matches.

## **5.5 Conclusions**

Gloucester is adequately provided for with regards to AGPs suitable for hockey matches at present. Both Gloucester HC and Cleevillians HC identify a lack of capacity throughout the week to accommodate training. Access to midweek capacity is the key issue surrounding hockey in the City and is the main barrier to increasing participation and number of teams.

An important contributor to the lack of available midweek capacity for hockey training is the usage by football and rugby union teams for training. This is exacerbated by the lack



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of 3G pitches in Gloucester that may otherwise alleviate some of the use of existing AGPs. Notwithstanding that from a sustainability point of view it may not be appropriate to move all football/rugby training away from sand AGPs.

### Hockey summary

- ◀ There are four AGPs suitable for competitive hockey within Gloucester City, of which, there are two sand filled and two sand dressed surfaces. However, only three are used for hockey with Severn Vale School being used for football only.
- ◀ Although all four AGPs are assessed as standard quality, some are better in relation to others. Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre achieved the highest score (78%) whilst St Peter's Roman Catholic High School and Severn Vale School scored the joint lowest (56%) of the four pitches.
- ◀ With the exception of Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre, which was resurfaced in 2012, the other three pitches are in excess of ten years old and may require future surface replacement.
- ◀ There are three clubs using AGPs in the area. Gloucester City HC is the largest club based in the City, whilst both Cleevillians HC and Painswick HC import demand due to a lack of facilities in their local communities.
- ◀ Gloucester City HC has plans to add a fifth men's senior team next year. It also has plans to double junior participation through links with local education providers but believes it is limited by a lack of available pitch capacity at appropriate times for juniors.
- ◀ The Club reports the lack of changing provision at Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre to be a problem, specifically the congestion caused by changing in a communal area and the lack of a separate changing area for officials as specified in the national league requirements.
- ◀ Gloucester City HC and Cleevillians HC both consider Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre to be their home site at which they are based, though both teams access other pitches for training due to a lack of available capacity. Both teams would like to train onsite as well.
- ◀ Cleevillians HC trains outside of the City in Innsworth. The Club would like to train at Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre if possible.
- ◀ Gloucester City is adequately provided for with regards to AGPs suitable for hockey matches at present. However, access to pitches for hockey training is a key issue as all AGPs are operating at capacity midweek primarily due to football training. This is reported as a limiting factor in the growth of participation at Gloucester City HC.
- ◀ The absence of 3G pitch provision in Gloucester plays a large part in the midweek capacity issues of hockey suitable AGPs as many are used for football and rugby union training.
- ◀ University of Gloucestershire has recently purchased Debenhams Sports Field and has plans to develop the site as well as its Oxstalls Campus. It is currently unknown whether this includes the threat of losing the sand based AGP at Oxstalls Campus but doing so would exacerbate the existing shortfall of capacity available to accommodate training demand. Further investigation would be required to examine the extent of this if there was an increase in 3G pitches in the City which could accommodate some of the existing football training on sand AGPs.

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## PART 6: ARTIFICIAL GRASS PITCHES (AGPS)

### 6.1 Introduction

There are several surface types that fall into the category of artificial grass pitch (AGP). The three main groups are rubber crumb (third generation turf 3G), sand (filled or dressed) and water based.

Competitive football can take place on 3G surfaces that have been FA or FIFA certified and a growing number of 3G pitches are now used for competitive match play at mini soccer and youth level. Only competition up to (but not including) regional standard can take place on a 40mm pile. Football training can take place on sand and water based surfaces but is not the preferred option.

Hockey is played predominantly on sand based/filled AGPs. Although competitive play cannot take place on 3G pitches, 40mm pitches may be suitable, in some instances, for beginner training and are preferred to poor grass or tarmac surfaces.

World Rugby produced the 'Performance Specification for Artificial Grass Pitches for Rugby', more commonly known as 'Regulation 22' that provides the necessary technical detail to produce pitch systems that are appropriate for rugby union (this is also adopted by rugby league). The artificial surface standards identified in Regulation 22 allows matches to be played on surfaces that meet the standard. Full contact activity, including tackling, rucking, mauling and lineouts can take place.

*Table 6.1: AGP type and sport suitability*

Surface	Category	Comments
Rubber crumb	Long Pile 3G (60mm with shock pad)	Rugby surface – must comply with World Rugby type 22, requires a minimum of 60mm.
Rubber crumb	Long Pile 3G (55-60mm)	Preferred football surface
Rubber crumb	Short Pile 3G (40mm)	Acceptable surface for some competitive football
Sand	Sand Filled	Competitive hockey and football training
Sand	Sand Dressed	Preferred hockey surface and suitable for football training
Water	Water based	Preferred hockey surface and suitable for football training if irrigated.

### 6.2 Current provision

The table overleaf provides a list of the current supply of AGPs identified in Gloucester. There are four full size AGPs as well as two at Hartpury College (just outside the study area) which are considered to accommodate a significant proportion of demand from within the City. There is no FA or World Rugby certified AGP within Gloucester suitable for competitive play, though Hartpury College has one of each.

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Table 6.2: AGPs in Gloucester

ID	Site name	Ownership/ management	No. of pitches	Pitch type	Certification
44	Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre	Commercial	1	Sand Dressed	None
52	Severn Vale School	School	1	Sand Filled	None
54	St Peters Roman Catholic High School	School	1	Sand Dressed	None
60	University Of Gloucestershire (Oxstalls Campus)	University	1	Sand Filled	None
9903	Hartpury College	College	1	Long Pile 3G (65mm) with shock pad	World Rugby Reg 22
9903	Hartpury College	College	1	Medium Pile 3G (55-60mm)	

## 6.3 Quality

All six pitches included in the analysis are assessed as standard quality; with the exception of the medium pile 3G at Hartpury College which is of poor quality. Though all pitches achieved the same quality rating, not all are comparable in condition and some are better than others. Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre represents the better of the four (78%), whilst Severn Vale School and St Peters Roman Catholic High School were assessed as relatively lesser quality (56%). University of Gloucestershire (Oxstalls Campus) scored 64% and therefore acts as the mid range amongst the three aforementioned pitches.

The carpet of an AGP usually lasts for approximately 10 years. Aside from the pitch at Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre which was recently resurfaced, three of the four AGPs in Gloucester are approximately 12 years old or greater and are due future carpet replacement.

The medium pile AGP at Hartpury College is also approximately ten years old and likewise requires surface replacement. The pitch has become compacted due to heavy use and the quality of line markings is poor. It was previously FA accredited for competitive football use but is yet to be recertified and as such competitive play is not supported at present.

Severn Vale School acknowledges the need to replace the AGP surface and stated that it would like to retain a hockey suitable pitch, although there is no current hockey use by community clubs. The School reports previous problems with local wildlife which got into the base of the pitch and caused issues with the surface but this has since been resolved.

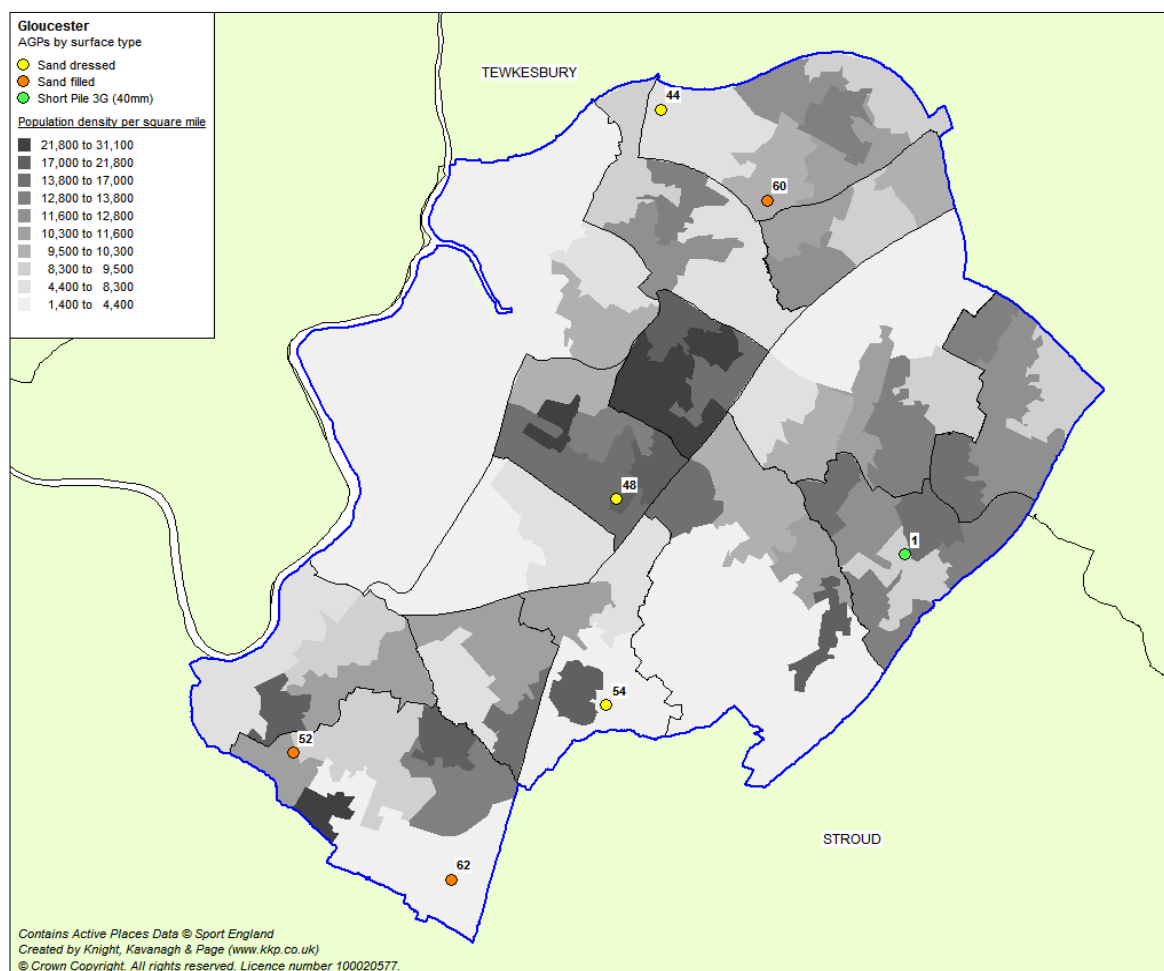
# GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

Table 6.3: Summary of quality

Site ID	Site name	Surface type	Year built (refurbished)	Floodlit?	Quality
44	Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre	Sand Dressed	1996 (2012)	Yes	Standard
52	Severn Vale School	Sand Filled	1994	Yes	Standard
54	St Peters Roman Catholic High School	Sand Dressed	2003	Yes	Standard
60	University Of Gloucestershire (Oxstalls Campus)	Sand Filled	2002	Yes	Standard
9903	Hartpury College	Long Pile 3G (65mm) with shock pad	2012	Yes	Standard
9903	Hartpury College	Medium Pile 3G (55-60mm)	2005	Yes	Poor

From 2014/15 only 3G pitches with a valid performance test and listed on the FA Register (<http://3g.thefa.me.uk/>) can be used for competitive play. This is to ensure the pitch has the same playing characteristics as natural turf and ensures that the pitches are safe to use.

Figure 6.4: Location of current full size AGPs in Gloucester



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### 6.4 Availability

The following table summarises the availability of full size AGPs for community use in Gloucester. In addition, it records the availability of provision within the peak period. Sport England's Facilities Planning Model (FPM) applies an overall peak period for AGPs of 34 hours a week (Monday to Thursday 17:00-21:00; Friday 17:00-19:00; Saturday and Sunday 09:00-17:00).

*Table 6.4: AGP availability define security of tenure*

Site ID	Site name	No. of pitches	Availability for community use?	Availability for community use in the peak period
44	Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre	1	Yes	Monday-Friday : 18hrs Weekend : 16hrs Total: 34hrs
52	Severn Vale School	1	Yes	Monday-Friday : 18hrs Weekend : 16hrs Total: 34hrs
54	St Peters Roman Catholic High School	1	Yes	Monday-Friday : 7hrs Weekend : 16hrs Total: 23hrs
60	University Of Gloucestershire (Oxstalls Campus)	1	Yes	Monday-Friday : 18hrs Weekend : 16hrs Total: 34hrs
9903	Hartpury College	2	Yes	Monday-Friday : 13hrs Weekend : 14hrs Total: 27hrs

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Table 6.5: Summary of usage

Site ID	Site name	Surface type	Floodlit?	Quality <sup>10</sup>	Total number of hours available for community use during peak period	Football/ rugby usage	Hockey usage	Spare capacity
44	Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre	Sand Dressed	Yes	Standard	34	59%	32%	9%
52	Severn Vale School	Sand Filled	Yes	Standard	34	100%	-	-
54	St Peters Roman Catholic High School	Sand Dressed	Yes	Standard	23	41%	24%	35%
60	University Of Gloucestershire (Oxstalls Campus)	Sand Filled	Yes	Standard	34	87%	13%	-
9903	Hartpury College	Long Pile 3G (65mm) with shock pad	Yes	Standard	27	56%	N/A	44%
9903	Hartpury College	Medium Pile 3G (55-60mm)	Yes	Poor	27	56%	N/A	44%

In the main, availability of provision in the peak period is generally good. Where there is provision on education sites, this is generally made available after school and at weekends.

There is spare capacity for hockey match play at weekends at St Peters Roman Catholic High School amounting to approximately 14 hours (35% the weekly pitch availability). Gloucester HC already makes use of the pitch as an overspill facility.

<sup>10</sup> Quality is assessed via a combination of non technical assessments carried out by KKP but also take account of user views and opinions.



## GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

A significant amount of midweek capacity at St Peters Roman Catholic High School is taken up by West Bromwich Albion FC academy teams. The professional football club is a partner and stakeholder in the AGP and subsequently has exclusive access on Monday and Wednesday evening, limiting availability midweek albeit that Gloucester HC does also use the venue in addition to Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre for training.

Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre currently operates at capacity midweek accommodating football and hockey training demand, as well as social bookings and small sided football leagues. There is also a lack of spare capacity at weekends as the pitch is used by Gloucester HC senior and junior teams and Cleevillians HC, with slots only available on Sunday mornings when there is little demand.

Severn Vale School reports that the AGP onsite currently operating at full capacity by football users, with no use by hockey clubs. Bookings are managed by Quedgeley Community Trust; however, the School is hoping to transfer operation of all community use to the trust in order to increase community use across the site, particularly at weekends as this would help to eliminate current staffing limitations.

Hartpury College has two AGPs which are both currently operating at capacity during football training peak time, which is also be considered as rugby union training peak time. The College reports having to turn bookings away due to a lack of capacity at required times. The pitches are used heavily throughout the day by college students and for BUCS teams, as well as exclusive use of the World Rugby pitch by Gloucester RUFC as its daily training base facility. Despite this, both pitches have capacity throughout the weekend for fixtures as both are certified as match play.

### **Pricing and cost**

All of the AGPs in Gloucester are available for community use, yet it should be acknowledged that cost of booking may influence usage of certain sites and possibly the process of travelling outside of the local community to access a site elsewhere in the local authority. Football clubs with many junior teams can often find it hard to identify capacity and pay for training slots for a high number of teams.

*Table 6.6: Comparison of pitch hire costs for Gloucester City AGPs*

Site ID	Site name	Full pitch		Pitch segment (per hour)	
		Block Booking	Casual Booking	Block Booking	Casual Booking
44	Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre	£72.50 per match £68 per hour		£34 per half	
52	Severn Vale School	Unknown		Unknown	
54	St Peters Roman Catholic High School	£47.50 per hour	£57 per hour	<b>Unavailable to hire</b>	
60	University Of Gloucestershire (Oxstalls Campus)	£84 per match £60 per hour		£35 per half	
9903	Hartpury College	Unknown		Unknown	
N/A	Gloucestershire FA (Almondsbury)	£120 per match		£42 per half	



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Site ID	Site name	Full pitch		Pitch segment (per hour)	
		Block Booking	Casual Booking	Block Booking	Casual Booking
N/A	Allsaints Academy 3G (Cheltenham)	£60 per hour		-	
N/A	Cheltenham College – sand based (Cheltenham)	£66 per hour		-	
N/A	Stratford Park Leisure Centre – sand based (Stroud)	£69.70 per hour		£31.90 per third	

In comparison to similar facilities in neighbouring local authorities, sand based AGPs in Gloucester are competitively priced (£60-70 per hour), with St Peters Roman Catholic High School notably more affordable (£47-57 per hour) than most sand based pitches. Though there are no 3G pitches in the City itself, some clubs report travelling to access 3G pitches, particularly Gloucester City FC which uses the AGPs at Hartpury College.

## 6.5 Supply and demand analysis

*Sport England's Facilities Planning Model (FPM) – National Facilities Audit Dataset (January 2014)*

The FPM is a model used as a starting point to help assess the strategic provision of sports facilities, including AGPs. The model is prescriptive and not predictive in that it does not provide precise estimates of the use of proposed facilities. Rather it prescribes an appropriate level of provision for any defined area in relation to demand and which reflects national expectations and policies. It is not a substitute for considering local club needs and should be used alongside any local assessment.

The bullet points below outline the conclusions drawn from the Sport England FPM run in Gloucester City. The run shows that satisfied demand is relatively high but that Gloucester City is supplied to capacity with full size AGPs, with demand balancing supply.

The bullet points below are concluding statements from the FPM model:

- ◀ Total demand is estimated to generate the need for a minimum of 4.1 pitches, compared to a current supply of 3.6 pitches T
- ◀ There are two AGPs each in the North and South of the City. There are none in the central or eastern areas T
- ◀ Most combined demand (96.8%) from residents is currently met by supply, which is higher than both regional and national figures M
- ◀ There is subsequent combined unmet demand of 3.2%, equating to the capacity of 0.13 AGPs T
- ◀ Gloucester AGPs are used at 96.7% of their capacity at peak times G
- ◀ Overall there appears to be a good supply to meet demand for AGPs in the City, in O

## **GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT**

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particular sand based pitches. There are no 3G pitches in the City at this time. The FPM report does not justify the requirement of a new AGP in the City

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## ***Future plans for provision***

### *University of Gloucestershire*

ASPIRE has plans for the development of two new AGPs in conjunction with University of Gloucestershire. Intentions are for two new pitches, both of which would be FA and World Rugby certified, to be built on the old Bishop's College site behind Plock Court.

The University currently accesses sporting provision in Cheltenham where it has another campus but has ambitious plans to develop the sporting offering alongside an increase of 4,000 students, with all or most sports teams playing within Gloucester City.

Plans also include the building of a new sports hall with new changing facilities to service both the new AGPs and Plock Court, which would help to address the lack of changing space at Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre.

University of Gloucestershire has recently purchased Debenhams Sports Field and has plans to develop the site which runs alongside the campus. Further detail is currently unknown together with the impact of provision at Oxstalls Campus, though any potential loss of the existing AGP would further increase the existing shortfall of capacity available to accommodate hockey training demand at peak time.

### *Old Centralians RUFC*

The Club is located adjacent to Gloucester Academy where it plays on a poor quality rugby union pitch. The Club plays at a high standard in the National League but frequently has games abandoned or forced to move fixtures to other venues as the pitch is often unplayable between November and February. Both the Club and the Academy are keen to build a World Rugby AGP and has the support of the county RFU. Any potential development would require access to further funding and involved parties are hoping to explore funding opportunities created as part of the Rugby World Cup 2015 legacy.

### *Hartpury College*

The College acknowledges the deterioration of the poor quality AGP onsite and has aspirations to resurface it. The College does not have funding in place at this time and stated it would likely seek the support of Gloucestershire FA to investigate possible funding opportunities in order to replace the existing surface with another FA certified pile.

### *Gloucester City FC*

Gloucester City FC has experienced significant difficulty over the past decade since its ground was flooded for a third time and condemned for use. The Club has plans to return from playing in Cheltenham and aspirations to demolish the ground, raise the land, and to then build a stadia 3G pitch. It would use the pitch for both matches and training and is keen to maximise use of any future 3G through availability to the community as well as schools and groups throughout the day. Gloucestershire FA continues to support the Club in working towards a solution so that they can return to

## **GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT**

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play within the City. At the time of writing, 'outline' planning permission has been approved for the demolition and redevelopment of the club's site at Sudmeadow Road.

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## *Blackbridge sports hub*

The local Councillor for Podsmead is driving proposals for a potential sports hub at Blackbridge, where Gloucester Athletic Club is currently based. Developments are at an early stage and plans for the proposed layout of the site including an AGP have yet to be drawn up before submitting for planning.

If all these proposals went ahead it would result in an additional four AGPs servicing Gloucester, including three World Rugby compliant and three FA certified 3G pitches. This would lead to Gloucester being adequately served for AGP provision.

## ***The FA model***

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 floodlit 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 type per hour from 5pm-10pm Mon-Fri and 9am-5pm Saturday & Sundays. It is estimated that one full size AGP can service 60 teams. On the basis there are 169 teams playing competitive football in Gloucester, there is a recommended need for three full size 3G pitches, currently there are none in the area.

There are, however, three smaller sized pitches that help to accommodate demand, for example from mini teams and for training. These can be seen in the table below:

Site name	Surface type	Quality	Quantity	Size
Abbeydale Sports & Community Centre	Short Pile 3G (40mm)	Standard	1	40x30
Ribston Hall High School	Sand Dressed	Standard	1	63x34
Waterwells Sports Centre	Sand filled	Standard	1	60x40

## ***Local demand***

### *Hockey*

Gloucester is adequately provided for with regards to AGP surfaces suitable for hockey matches both at present and with the prospect of any future increase in demand. On balance, there is an undersupply of provision for training sessions when considering peak time training demand across all sports, due to a lack of 3G pitches in the City.

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### *Football*

Competitive football on 3G AGPs is generally not preferred in Gloucester City due to the absence of provision, with only one team (Quedgeley Wanderers FC Vets) currently playing competitive matches on 3G pitches in the Gloucestershire CFA Vets League held centrally at Hartpury College. Artificial surfaces are, however, used for training, with all sand based pitches used to capacity due to a lack of 3G surfaces. A number of mini and youth teams playing small sided formats of the game train on small sided pitches at the following sites:

- ◀ Abbeymead Sports & Community Centre (Abbeymead Rovers FC, Gloucester College)
- ◀ Waterwells Sports Centre (Quedgeley Wanderers FC)

### *American football*

Gloucester Centurions AFC currently uses grass rugby union pitches for both matches and training and is somewhat nomadic in its consistent use of various different sites. The Club reports that ideally it would like to play and train on a 3G pitch where it could be based but is unable to as there are none in the area. It states that because the dimensions of American football pitches are slightly larger, finding a suitably sized pitch of any nature is difficult. This is likely to translate to AGPs given typical dimensions of full sized AGPs including run off areas, although nonetheless the Club believes that use of a 3G surface would be preferred.

### *Lacrosse*

There are two lacrosse teams in the City fielded by the University of Gloucestershire which has one men's and one women's team. Matches are played on Wednesday afternoons in the BUCS leagues on the AGP at University of Gloucestershire Oxstalls Campus. Beyond this, there are no community clubs playing in the City and as such there seems to be no further demand.

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

Gloucester City based teams such as Gloucester City FC and Tuffley Rovers FC export demand to access the pitches at Hartpury College for training. Gloucester City HC ladies first team also exports demand to nearby Cheltenham due to a lack of available capacity midweek at Oxstalls Sports Park.

Hartpury College has recently established a student union which will field additional sports teams in BUCS leagues. Some sports teams may have to look towards Gloucester City to access facilities, for example it is reported likely that the hockey team will seek use of Oxstalls Sports Park on Wednesday afternoons for matches.

St Peter's School reports hockey demand imported from Painswick HC which has one Ladies team using the AGP for matches on Saturdays. The School also highlighted use by The Kings School for hockey matches as the school has no AGP of its own.

## ***Key trends and changes in demand for pitches***

Demand from football for 3G AGPs has increased in recent years due to demand from clubs for training but also due to a growing acceptance by local leagues of use for competitive matches, where play on 3G pitches is now included within the FA Standard Code of Rule. This considered, the general condition of local authority pitches and increasingly limited budget for regular and adequate maintenance may lead more teams to consider AGPs as a possible alternative should it be financially viable.

A number of leagues around the country now use 3G pitches as central venues where all mini soccer play takes place, though this is not the case in Gloucester. Some vets leagues are also held at 3G central venues, for example, the CFA Vets League which was previously held on the 3G pitch at Hartpury College. This trend is likely to increase in the future and more mini soccer and vets leagues could be played exclusively on 3G pitches.

Given the poor quality weather often experienced throughout the winter months of the rugby union season, more clubs are becoming increasingly receptive towards training on artificial pitches. Clubs traditionally train on match pitches where floodlights are in place (and Gloucester is no exception to this) or one pitch designated for all training in particular. This often results in deterioration in pitch quality coupled with decreasing maintenance budgets.

Nationally clubs identify the use of AGPs 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 AGPs for fixtures in the case of unsuitable pitches due to waterlogging or frost.

## **6.6 Conclusions**

In summary, supply and demand analysis highlights that Gloucester is currently well served for hockey suitable AGPs but the absence of full size 3G pitch provision to service football and rugby is a priority.

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## **AGP summary**

- ◀ There are four AGPs in Gloucester all of which are sand based surfaces and are assessed as standard quality. With the exception of Oxstalls Sports Park, all require carpet replacement as they are more than 12 years old.
- ◀ There is also one 60mm pile 3G carpet compliant to World Rugby 22 standard and one FA certified 40mm pile 3G carpet at Hartpury College located in neighbouring Forest of Dean which services demand from the City.
- ◀ In the main, availability of provision in the peak period is generally good. Where there is provision on education sites, this is generally made available after school and at weekends.
- ◀ All full size pitches are operating at capacity for midweek training but most have some amount of spare capacity at weekends.
- ◀ The FA estimates that there is a need for three full size 3G pitches to service football training needs in Gloucester. Further to this, approximately a third of football clubs specified demand for access to 3G pitches.
- ◀ Demand also exists for a rugby compliant 3G surface in the City. In many cases floodlit grass pitches are overplayed due to training demand and which the provision of an alternate floodlit training facility would help to alleviate.
- ◀ A dedicated surface to accommodate football and rugby training would likely free up more hours accessible for hockey training. However, the sustainability of existing sand AGPs still needs to be maintained.
- ◀ In summary, supply and demand analysis highlights that Gloucester is currently well served for hockey suitable AGPs but the absence of full size 3G pitch provision to service football and rugby is a priority.
- ◀ University of Gloucestershire has recently purchased Debenhams Sports Field and has plans to develop the site as well as its Oxstalls Campus. It is currently unknown whether this includes the threat of losing the sand based AGP at Oxstalls Campus but doing so would exacerbate the existing shortfall for hockey training. Further investigation would be required to examine the extent of this if there was an increase in 3G pitches in the City which could accommodate some of the existing football training on sand AGPs.



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## **PART 7: RUGBY LEAGUE**

### **7.1: Introduction**

The Rugby Football League (RFL) is the governing body for rugby league in Britain and Ireland. It administers the England national rugby league team, the Challenge Cup, Super League and the Championships which form the professional and semi-professional structure of the game structure in the UK.

The RFL also administers the amateur and junior game across the country in association with the British Amateur Rugby League Association (BARLA).

#### ***Club consultation***

Gloucestershire Warriors RFC is the only club based and currently playing within Gloucester, whilst there are also two men's student teams fielded by University of Gloucestershire. All Golds RLFC is based across Cheltenham and Gloucester but currently plays in Cheltenham. Face to face consultation was carried out with All Golds RLFC and University of Gloucestershire, whilst Gloucestershire Warriors RLFC was able to register its views via telephone consultation.

### **7.2: Supply**

There are no dedicated rugby league pitches marked out in Gloucester. The only site used for rugby league matches is Bishop's College, where the floodlit rugby union pitch is dually used for both codes of rugby.

The pitch is poor quality, most likely because it receives use all year round by rugby union teams for both matches and training and is used from March onwards by Gloucestershire Warriors RLFC. The Club is of the opinion that the pitch is generally good quality and that maintenance is of a satisfactory standard. However, having asked ASPIRE if the pitch could be subject to a 'rest period' was told that it was not necessary.

Gloucestershire Warriors RLFC make use of both pitches at Bishop's College, where the floodlit pitch is overplayed by 3.5 match equivalent sessions and the second pitch is considered to be played to capacity due to all year round use from rugby union and rugby league play.

### **7.3: Demand**

All Golds RLFC is the largest club within the Gloucester area and operates semi-professionally, with one senior team playing in RFL Championship One at weekends. All Golds RLFC is a club arm of the University of Gloucester and the two are strongly linked.

The University also has two student rugby league teams playing Wednesday afternoons in the BUCS League, with many of the players also making up part of the All Golds team.

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All three teams currently play in Cheltenham at the Prince of Wales Stadium, though the university intends for both student teams to play in Gloucester in future. At present All Golds RLFC is happy to remain in Cheltenham. It is undecided as to a potential move back the City, particularly as the new leisure trust in Cheltenham is open to development ideas for the Prince of Wales Stadium and is keen to retain the Club. Teams currently train at various sites, including the AGP at University of Gloucestershire Oxtalls Campus and sites in Cheltenham.

The University of Gloucestershire has proposals alongside ASPIRE Leisure Trust to develop the site at Bishop's College to include the construction of two new 3G AGPs to be World Rugby Reg 22 certified, which in turn would meet RFL Community Standard criteria.

The University intends for both student rugby league teams to play matches and train on the new 3G pitches should the development go ahead, in order to provide a linked competitive programme with access to the sport science facilities at Oxstalls Campus. The proposals are part of University of Gloucestershire plans to develop the sporting offering for students at its Oxstalls Campus, the number of which is expected to increase by 4,000 students.

This is also likely to increase rugby league demand alongside participation initiatives such as the ongoing Active Universities programme. All Golds RLFC also runs participation programmes such as Play Touch Rugby League (PTRL) and links with local schools to deliver similar coaching such as the Sky Try initiative, both of which are likely to develop interest in the sport. The university also has aspirations to host one of the England youth academy squads, providing sports science support on campus and pitch provision either through the proposed new development or at the Prince of Wales Stadium in Cheltenham.

Gloucestershire Warriors RLFC plays on Saturday afternoons in the Conference South between March and September at Bishop's College. The Club has one senior team playing league fixtures but previously had a second team in 2012.

It has plans for a second team again next season to play friendly matches but is unable to commit to joining the West of England League because a number of players also play rugby union and the crossover of seasons means that there are not always enough players to consistently field a team each week.

The Club also links with All Golds RLFC as part of a holistic approach to rugby league in Gloucester and the two clubs share coaching knowledge and resources. Players from All Golds RLFC have the opportunity to play for Gloucestershire Warriors RLFC for example when not selected or coming back from injury and vice versa.

It also has aspirations for a junior section in the future but at present does not have the volunteer resources. It moved last season from playing matches at Elmbridge Playing Field (Old Richians RFC) in light of the proposed developments at Bishop's College and is keen to retain strong links with the university through partnership with All Golds RLFC, with intentions to be based at the newly developed site should proposals be accepted.

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## 7.4: Conclusions

Despite the lack of a specific rugby league pitch, Gloucester is currently adequately served for pitches for rugby league use. Cross code pitch usage is not irregular within rugby league and given that there is only one team in the area playing less than ten matches a season, there is not a pressing requirement for a rugby league pitch and re-marking existing pitches for rugby league is a more suitable option. Uncertainty as to whether All Golds RLFC wishes to be based in Gloucester means that future demand could be subject to change although given the matchday criteria to meet league requirements it is likely that the Club will continue to play at the Prince of Wales Stadium in Cheltenham. Any growth and addition of consistent junior or reserve teams at the Club may be centred in Gloucester given the strong links with the university and student players although the Club did not report any imminent increases in the number of teams.

### Rugby league summary

- ◀ There are no pitches specifically marked for rugby league in Gloucester City. Play currently takes place at Bishop's College where the floodlit rugby union pitch is also used for rugby league.
- ◀ The University of Gloucestershire is a key driver behind rugby league in the area. It has two men's student teams and links to All Golds RLFC, its semi-professional club arm with one team playing in RFL Championship One.
- ◀ The only other club in the City is Gloucestershire Warriors RLFC, which too links with the university. The Club has one team playing Saturday afternoons at Bishop's College.
- ◀ Only Gloucestershire Warriors RLFC plays within the City. Both All Golds RLFC and the university export demand to Cheltenham where teams play at the Prince of Wales Stadium.
- ◀ University of Gloucester has proposals with ASPIRE to develop the site at Bishop's College to create two new RFL compliant 3G AGPs. Should this go ahead, intentions are for student teams to play matches and train on the 3G pitches. Gloucestershire Warriors RLFC is also keen to make use of any potential new facilities.
- ◀ Rugby league interest and participation is likely to increase in the future. Gloucester Warriors RLFC has added an infrequent second team and the university has plans to significantly increase the number of students.
- ◀ There are a number of rugby league initiatives taking place in the City which are likely to develop interest in the sport, including Play Touch Rugby League and the primary school Sky Try programme.
- ◀ There is great potential for crossover of players between both codes of rugby given the popularity of rugby union in Gloucester City.
- ◀ Despite the lack of a specific rugby league pitch, Gloucester is currently adequately served for pitches for rugby league use. Given the cross code transfer of players and the number of fixtures each season, continued play on rugby union pitches with vigilant management of usage is suitable.

## **PART 8: BOWLING GREENS**

### **8.1: Introduction**

All bowling greens in Gloucester are flat greens. Bowls England (BE) is the governing body responsible for ensuring effective governance of flat green bowls across the Country. The bowling season for flat green runs from April to September.

#### ***Consultation***

There are eight clubs using bowling greens in Gloucester, whilst Dowty BC (located in Cheltenham) has also been included in the analysis because it is considered to cater for demand from residents despite its location outside of the City. Four clubs replied to the survey, equating to a response rate of 44%. Several teams play on multiple days of the week as part of different leagues. The main leagues servicing the area are:

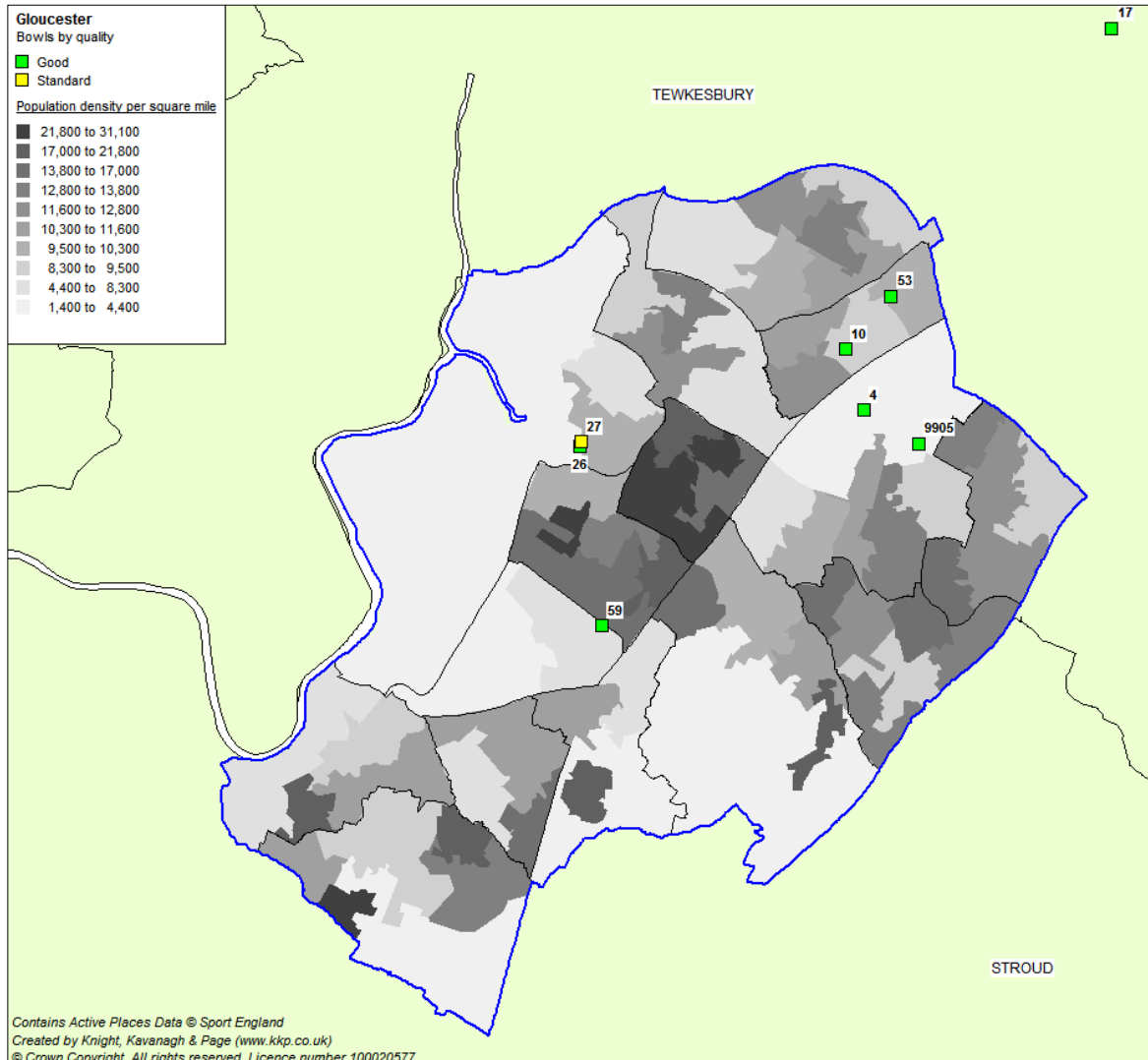
- ◀ Gloucestershire Bowls Association (Mens & Womens Sections)
- ◀ Glevum League
- ◀ County Bowls 2 Rink League (Mens & Womens Sections)

### **8.2: Supply**

All seven bowling greens in Gloucester are flat greens, provided across seven sites. There are no double green sites, though the greens at Gloucester City BC and Gloucester Park are adjacent and there is some ad hoc sharing when required by the two resident clubs, which also share use of the one artificial green in the City at Gloucester City BC.

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Figure 8.1: Distribution of bowling greens across Gloucester



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Table 8.1: Key to map

Site ID	Site name	No. of greens	Quality <sup>11</sup>	Ownership
4	Barnwood Bowling Club	1	Good	Sports Club
10	Caer Glow Bowling Club	1	Good	Sports Club
17	Dowty Sport & Social Club	1	Good	Sports Club
26	Gloucester City Bowling Club	1 + 1 artificial	Good	Sports Club
27	Gloucester Park	1	Standard	Sports Club
53	Sir Thomas Rich's Sports Centre	1	Good	School
59	Tuffley Park	1	Good	Sports Club
9905	EDF Energy Tennis Club	1	Good	Industry

<sup>11</sup> Assessed via a non technical assessment

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### ***Quality***

Non-technical site assessments show all greens in Gloucester to be assessed as good quality, with the exception of the green at Gloucester Park which is standard quality. No greens were assessed as poor quality. Green quality is generally good which may be influenced by the nature of management, with almost all operating as club sites. This is most likely due to increased ability to store maintenance equipment onsite and club members taking time to properly maintain the surface, whilst some greens have security from public access.

Barnwood BC reports that the green quality is much improved since last season, largely due to the hiring of a private subcontractor to carry out a higher standard of maintenance than was done previously.

Winget BC reports that the green at Tuffley Park reports that green quality has remained the same but that it has had previous issues with damage by foxes at night. The Club reports that the member who cares for the green is aging and that it has concerns as to the continuation of maintenance, though a younger member has begun to learn the relevant skills. The Club believes that if maintenance ever had to be subcontracted out then it would be crippled financially and that it would be very difficult to continue operating.

### ***Ancillary facilities***

Dowty BC is of the opinion that improvements are required at Dowty Sport & Social Club in order to foremost improve the quality of access pathways and areas surrounding the green. It also identifies further need to improve changing facilities, green fencing and storage facilities. The Club reports that it is limited in what improvements it is able to make because it is unable to apply for grant funding due to being a part of the overarching sports club.

Barnwood BC recently received Sport England Inspired Facilities grant funding to improve ancillary facilities. The Club is partway through the development which includes a new scoreboard and steps onto the green.

Winget BC recently submitted an application for grant funding towards the building of a new clubhouse at Tuffley Park. If successful, the Club intends to hire the building out as a function venue in order to generate revenue and increase involvement within the local community, which it believes could lead to being able to hire a contractor to help maintain the green.

There is a clubhouse at Gloucester City Bowling Club which services the two greens and the artificial green onsite. Gloucester City BC and Gloucester Spa BC each have use of a green, whilst the two clubs come together to share use of the artificial green and clubhouse building.

### ***Ownership and management***

Most greens operate as sports club sites on lease agreements, including Tuffley Park, Gloucester City Bowling Club and Gloucester Park which are all leased from the Council.

Barnwood BC is based at Barnwood Bowling Club where it has 61 years remaining on the lease from Barnwood Bowling & Tennis Co Ltd. Winget BC also leases the green at Tuffley Park and has 13 years remaining on the current agreement.

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Caer Glow BC shares the green at Sisson Road with Co-Op BC which owns the site and to which it pays an annual rent for use. Dowty BC also pays an annual rent to Dowty Sport & Social Club for use of the green each season.

### 8.3: Demand

There are eight bowling clubs in Gloucester, each with multiple teams playing various evenings and afternoons throughout the week. Dowty BC is based at Dowty Sport & Social Club which is outside of the City boundary but is considered to service demand from City residents and has therefore also been included. The analysis below summarises information gathered from consultation with bowls clubs playing in Gloucester:

- ◀ The level of membership of clubs varies from 33 to 82 members
- ◀ Winget BC has the smallest membership with 33 members
- ◀ The largest club is Barnwood BC with 82 members and four league teams

Generally clubs and leagues in Gloucester report that membership levels have remained static over the last three years and no clubs have a waiting list for new members. The sport has experienced an overall decline in participation nationally which may be due to access to facilities in some cases; however, most clubs acknowledge a lack of interest in the sport amongst the local community, with few new bowlers taking up the sport. This adds to a player base which is largely drawn from the elderly community and in most cases the fall in numbers has been attributed to aging players, with a lack of younger or newer players coming into the sport to sustain demand. Barnwood BC reports two junior members whilst Dowty BC reports just one junior member. There are no junior leagues identified within the Gloucestershire area.

There are four main leagues based within the Gloucester City area. Many clubs, teams and bowlers may play in a number of these leagues simultaneously throughout the week and so although there may be a substantial number of teams; many are made up of the same players, thus representing a smaller player base.



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### 8.4 Capacity analysis

Capacity is very much dependent on the leagues and the day that they operate. A green may have no spare capacity on an afternoon/evening when a popular league is operating but may be empty for the rest of the week.

*Table 8.2: Bowling green capacity*

Site ID	Site name	No. of greens	Clubs	No of club members
4	Barnwood Bowling Club	1	Barnwood BC	82
10	Caer Glow Bowling Club	1	Co-Op BC, Caer Glow BC	50+
17	Dowty Sport & Social Club	1	Dowty BC	51
26	Gloucester City Bowling Club	1	Gloucester City BC	Unknown
27	Gloucester Park	1	Gloucester Spa BC	Unknown
53	Sir Thomas Rich's Sports Centre	1	Sir Thomas Rich's BC	Unknown
59	Tuffley Park	1	Winget BC	33
9905	EDF Energy Tennis Club	1	EDF Energy BC	Unknown

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### 8.5: Conclusions

The largest club identified in the area is Barnwood BC with 88 members. The green caters for a large membership base and four teams playing consistently throughout the week, sometimes twice daily, in excess of the green capacity.

Caer Glow BC has a membership of 50 players across four teams playing both midweek and at weekends. The green is also shared with Co-Op BC which did not respond to the survey and therefore it is not possible to determine an accurate indication of level of use, though it is likely that the additional membership from Co-Op BC causes the green to be overplayed.

Winget BC has a membership of 33 players which make use of one green, therefore there is capacity for additional play and a growth in membership or access to pay and play.

Neither Gloucester City BC nor Gloucester Spa BC submitted a survey response and subsequently it is not possible to ascertain the level of usage, however; it is likely that there are no capacity issues due to the ability to make use of the shared artificial green which is onsite.

#### **Bowls summary**

- ◀ There are seven bowling greens in Gloucester City provided across seven single green sites. All are flat greens and there are no crown greens.
- ◀ There is one artificial green located at Gloucester City Bowling Club.
- ◀ All greens in the City are assessed as good quality with the exception of the green at Gloucester Park which is standard quality.
- ◀ There are no Council operated bowling greens and the majority of sites are operated by clubs with lease agreements securing tenure. There is one education site, where one green is located at Sir Thomas Rich's School.
- ◀ There is a general perception that the quality and maintenance of privately/club owned and maintained greens are of a good standard. This is likely to be due to cost of upkeep or a lack of equipment and knowledge of maintenance.
- ◀ Barnwood BC recently received grant funding for a new scoreboard and to make improvements to the access areas. Winget BC is similarly looking to apply for grant funding to improve ancillary facilities by building a new clubhouse at Tuffley Park.
- ◀ There are eight clubs using bowling greens in Gloucester City. Generally clubs in Gloucester City report that membership levels have remained static in the last three years
- ◀ Barnwood BC shows evidence of overplay at Barnwood Bowling Club. It is also likely that the green at Caer Glow Bowling Club is overplayed due to the additional usage from Co-Op BC which shares the site.
- ◀ Gloucester City is generally well served for bowling greens at present as the nature of play is club focused, most of which have security of tenure at home sites. The key issue facing bowls clubs is the national decrease in playing members and sports development factors rather than a lack of accessible facilities.

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### 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 Gloucester.

##### ***Consultation***

A survey was distributed to all six tennis clubs in Gloucester, all of which provided a response. A survey was also sent to Dowty Sports & Social TC (based in Cheltenham) as it is considered to cater for demand from City residents though the Club did not submit a response. The six clubs based within Gloucester are:

- ◀ EDF Energy TC
- ◀ Gloucester Wotton LTC
- ◀ Kingsholm Square LTC
- ◀ Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre
- ◀ Riverside TC
- ◀ St Peter's Junior TC

#### 9.2: Supply

There are a total of 75 tennis courts identified in Gloucester. The courts are located across 18 sites including private sports clubs, parks and centres. There are 28 courts (37%) unavailable for community use, most of which are at school sites.

Please note that for the purposes of this report, availability for community use refers to courts in public, voluntary, private or commercial ownership or management recorded as being available for hire by individuals, teams or clubs.

There is only one single court site at Randwick Park. There are nine courts managed by the Council across four sites, four of which are located at The Oval.

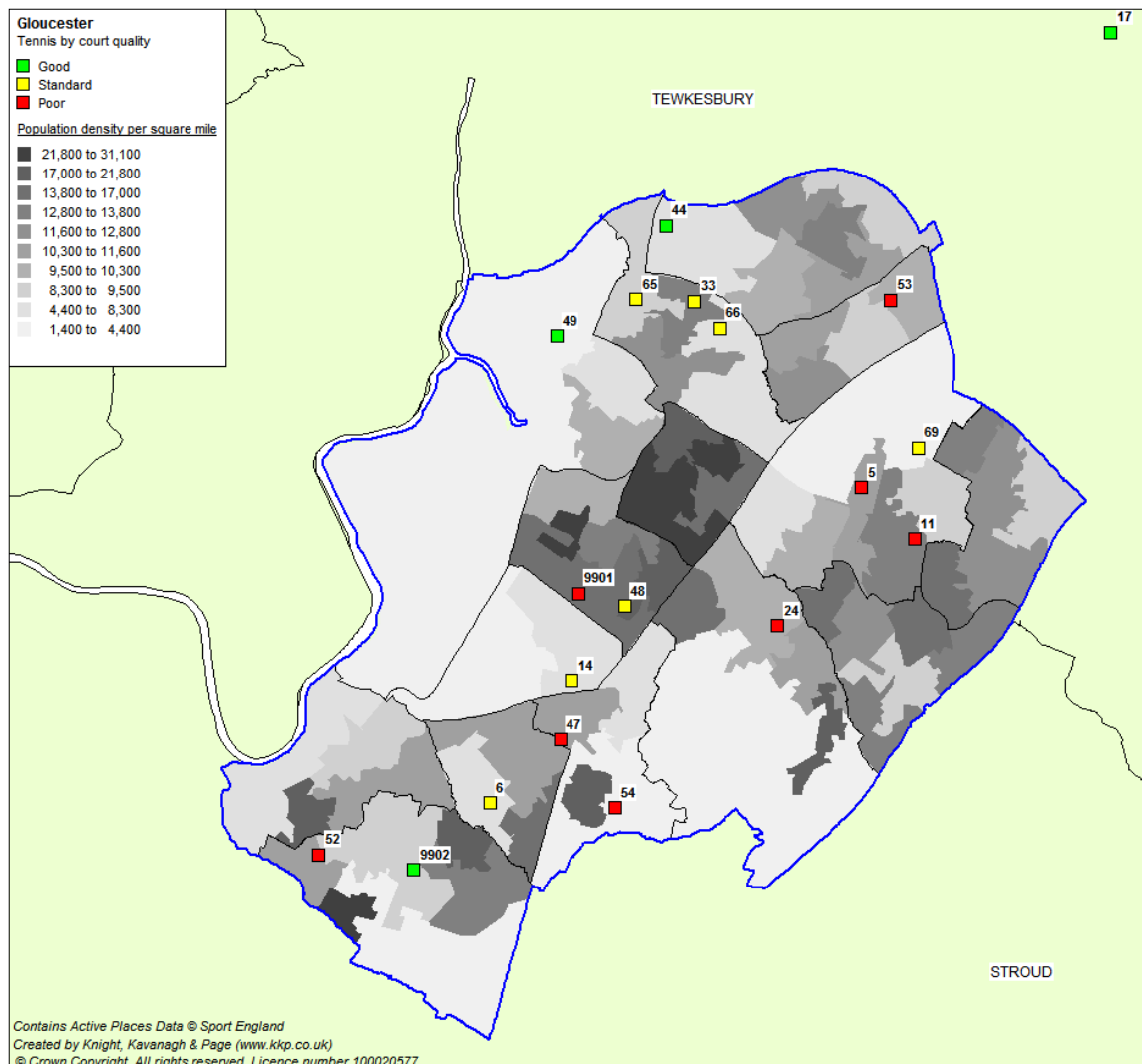
Fourteen courts in Gloucester (19%) are floodlit, spread across four sites. Only eight of these courts are available and currently used, with four each located at Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre and Riverside Sports and Leisure Club.

In addition tennis provision and coaching is available at Virgin Active Health Club which is not included in the analysis as it is not widely accessible to residents as a private members facility. Though it is not broadly accessible, the facility is likely to attract a significant level of demand from residents given the extensive tennis facilities onsite and professional tennis coaching available through membership, influencing the need and use of other sites in the City.

EDF Energy is also limited to public access and therefore not considered as widely available for community use. The courts are part of the overarching EDF Sports Club which provides leisure facilities for company members and as such use of the courts is exclusively for employees and their associate guests.

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Figure 9.1: Location of tennis courts in Gloucester



Please refer to Table 9.2 for a key to the map.

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Just over half of courts in Gloucester are located at school sites (55%). Generally these are multipurpose facilities used as playgrounds and/or over marked with other sports such as netball. In most cases schools identify that provision is not floodlit or used outside of school hours. A summary of school provision is provided below:

*Table 9.1: School provision summary*

School	Number of courts	Summary
Barnwood Park Arts College	6	Courts overmarked with three netball courts. Poor quality and not available for community use.
Beaufort Community School	3	Three standard quality tarmac courts overmarked for netball and with floodlighting. Available for use but no current club use. Reported lack of access due to use as cricket nets in summer during tennis season.
Crypt School	2	Standard quality tarmac courts without floodlighting, therefore not made available for community use.
Gloucester Academy	3	Poor quality floodlit courts overmarked for netball, used by school only. Unavailable for community use.
High School for Girls	6	Six courts with accompanying changing pavilion, previously used by Glevum TC which no longer exists. School plans to increase community usage.
Ribston Hall High School	7	Three tarmac courts with an additional four courts marked on the small sized AGP, none of which are floodlit.
Severn Vale School	6	Six poor quality tarmac courts. Some occasional pay and play use operated by Quedgeley Community Trust but mostly school use.
Sir Thomas Rich's Sports Centre	7	Poor quality tarmac courts overmarked for netball use. School would like resurface due to poor quality.
St Peters Roman Catholic High School	7	Separate areas of two courts and five courts, both often used as playground areas. Very poor facilities give tennis is a school focus sport and junior performance centre.

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Table 9.2: Summary of provision site by site

Site ID	Site name	Management	Availability for community use?	No. of courts	No. of floodlit courts	Court type	Court quality <sup>12</sup>
5	Barnwood Park Arts College	School	No	6	-	Tarmac	Poor
6	Beaufort Community School	School	Yes - unused	3	3	Tarmac	Standard
11	Clock Tower Park	Council	Yes	2	-	Tarmac	Poor
14	Crypt School	School	No	2	-	Tarmac	Standard
17	Dowty Sport & Social Club	Sports Club	Yes	2	-	Tarmac	Good
24	Gloucester Academy	School	No	3	3	Tarmac	Poor
33	High School for Girls	School	No	6	-	Tarmac	Standard
44	Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre	Trust	Yes	4	4	Clay	Good
47	Randwick Park	Council	Yes	1	-	Tarmac	Poor
48	Ribston Hall High School	School	Yes - unused	3	-	Tarmac	Standard
				4	-	Sand dressed artificial	Standard
49	Riverside Sports & Leisure Club	Commercial	Yes	4	4	Tarmac	Good
52	Severn Vale School	Trust	Yes	6	-	Tarmac	Poor
53	Sir Thomas Rich's Sports Centre	School	No	7	-	Tarmac	Poor
54	St Peters Roman Catholic High School	School	Yes	7	-	Tarmac	Poor
65	Kingsholm Square Lawn Tennis Club	Sports Club	No	2	-	Grass	Standard
66	Gloucester Wotton Lawn Tennis Club	Sports Club	Yes	3	-	Tarmac	Standard
				2	-	Grass	Standard
69	EDF Energy	Industry	No	2	-	Tarmac	Standard
9901	The Oval	Council	Yes	4	-	Tarmac	Poor
9902	Kingsway Sports Field	Council	Yes	2	-	Tarmac	Good

<sup>12</sup> Assessed using a non-technical site assessment pro-forma and also takes account of user comments.

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## Quality

A total of 12 courts (16%) are assessed as good quality and 27 courts (36%) as standard quality. However, most courts (48%) are assessed as poor quality, all of which are tarmac surfaces and are located at school sites.

Table 9.3: Summary of the quality of courts by surface type

Surface type	Good	Standard	Poor
Clay	4	-	-
Artificial	-	4	-
Tarmac	8	19	36
Grass	-	4	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>36</b>

Issues affecting court quality include evidence of moss, loose gravel, poor grip underfoot, and/or poor line markings. Some sites such as Clock Tower Park and The Oval also have metal nets which are unsuitable for club tennis, whilst courts at school sites are often also used as general playground areas and are therefore subject to regular use which often impacts on quality.

A key site which is assessed as poor quality is St Peter's Roman Catholic High School. The courts are used by St Peter's Junior TC. There are five courts which are overmarked for netball and are often used as a general playground area, whilst a further two courts are again used as a social area and for car parking, thus negatively impacting on their quality for use as a tennis area. There are, however, a further two courts located within a covered barn area which are primarily used. The Club uses the courts for around 30 hours a week but reports that its key challenge is access to more courts of better quality, particularly covered or indoor courts which can be used throughout winter. The Club and school have aspirations to improve facilities onsite and are investigating opportunities to secure funding for a possible dome or roof covering on the existing courts.

The courts at EDF Energy are managed by EDF Energy Sports and Social Club which is also responsible for maintenance. The courts were resurfaced approximately five years ago and the Club reports that the only quality issue regards the surrounding trees and root damage to the outer court surface.

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## **Ancillary provision**

Where tennis courts are located at park sites such as Randwick Park and The Oval, there is generally no accompanying changing provision as courts mainly cater for social and infrequent demand from residents, therefore there is no identified need. School sites receive little community use beyond social bookings such as at Severn Vale School where changing is provided within the sports centre section of the building. No community clubs highlighted key issues with ancillary or changing facilities or identified a need for greater access to provision.

Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre provides two communal changing rooms; one each for males and females and also services the surrounding pitches at both Plock Court and Bishop's College. This often leads to congestion as changing areas are shared between a multitude of sports and members, including those accessing tennis coaching through the centre, teams training onsite midweek and teams playing matches at weekends. The number of changing rooms was previously reduced based on demand, however; an increase in team sport demand has led to a requirement for more access to changing facilities.

## **9.3: Demand**

### **Competitive tennis**

The main league for competition in Gloucester is the Aegon Tennis League which caters for both men's and ladies singles as well as junior tennis from U8s. Senior doubles tennis is also played in the Dunlop Gloucestershire Summer Tennis League and Gloucestershire Seniors League. Additional mini tennis is played at Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre as part of the red, orange and green LTA structure.

*Table 9.4: Summary of demand within Gloucester*

<b>Club</b>	<b>Total members</b>	<b>Men's</b>	<b>Ladies</b>	<b>Juniors</b>
St Peter's Junior TC	50+ Junior	-	-	2
Oxstalls TC	210 Senior 610 Junior	6	6	20
Gloucester Wotton LTC	65 Senior 18 Junior	4	4	-
EDF Energy TC	50+ Senior	2	-	-
Riverside TC	Unknown	1	1	-

St Peter's Junior Tennis Club was formed through St Peter's Roman Catholic High School as an extension of tennis delivered in curricular and extracurricular time, for pupils to develop their skills further through increased access to coaching. The Club has two teams at U14s and U18s playing in the National Junior Club League. All play generally takes place at the School with the exception of particularly important matches when the Club will often rent better quality facilities at Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre or Virgin Active Health Club. Tennis is a focus sport at the School, which has been successful nationally given its comparable size and facilities.



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Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre is a key venue for tennis within Gloucester, providing access to coaching, competitive tennis and social play for both seniors and juniors across indoor and outdoor facilities. The Club has a strong junior programme and has 14 teams between U8s and U18s including mixed teams playing in the Aegon Tennis League. The Club also has a strong senior section with ten teams playing doubles matches in the Gloucestershire Summer Tennis League.

EDF Energy TC is a relatively small club with just two senior teams. It is a section of the overarching sports and social club onsite which serves to provide leisure and sports activities for employees. The courts are owned by the sports and social club and are used for social play at lunchtimes and for evening matches when the summer light allows, with approximately 12 fixtures per year. The site is not widely accessible to community use as membership is limited to company employees and associate members with links to the company. However, the Club reports that membership is nonetheless increasing due to expansion of the company and an increase in employees.

Kingsholm Square LTC is a private members club which serves the residents of Kingsholm Square and Edwy Parade. Membership is restricted to estate residents only and therefore it is not possible for the general public to join. The Club has a full structure with a board and committee although tennis is restricted to social events and occasional matches between members. The Club pays a small rent to the Council as part of the lease and has a locked shed which contains a mower and bits of maintenance equipment.

The courts at High School for Girls were previously used by Glevum TC until the Club folded and are subsequently now unused beyond school tennis. The School reports that it would like to increase usage and would like to liaise with Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre in order to help do. It does have concerns regarding the security of the site and is exploring the possibility of fitting an electronic keypad to the entrance but is actively seeking to increase community use.

### ***Informal tennis***

Courts on education sites are largely unavailable for community use, likely due to the poor quality of areas where marked courts are used daily as playground and social areas. Both Beaufort Community School and Ribston Hall High School state that the courts are available to hire but upon consultation neither school identified any community use.

It is likely that demand for recreational play increases annually following events such as Wimbledon. Although it is hard to measure casual use as some courts, it is assumed that courts are generally busy throughout the summer months when weather is favourable. Council managed courts at park sites are often publicly accessible free of charge.

### ***Unmet demand***

St Peter's Junior TC identifies clear unmet demand for additional sessions and court space. The Club reports that as a leading junior performance centre in the South West it attracts demand from many junior players but regularly has to turn them away due to a lack of facilities and accessible courts onsite to accommodate the extra demand. The Club reports demand to be able to at least double participation with access to more courts and would be able to increase the number of junior teams from two to six.

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Gloucester Wotton LTC is of the opinion that the three hard courts onsite are not enough to cater for current demand. The Club has aspirations to install floodlighting and is keen to investigate opportunities to access grant funding to fund the development. The Club highlights a need for at least two more hard courts as it is unable to host home fixtures until mid May due to the lack of floodlighting. It believes that with access to floodlit courts it would be able to have another men's team as there would be more hours available throughout the evenings.

### ***New developments***

High School for Girls is keen to increase use of the courts onsite and in conjunction with ASPIRE leisure trust and Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre has successfully been awarded LTA grant funding of £5000 to install an electronic key fob entry system. This will help to resolve initial concerns the school had regarding access and security and will serve to increase availability to the community. The courts were previously used by Glevum TC which no longer exists but plans are for the site to act as a venue providing social and non-organised tennis participation for residents. Key fobs and court booking will be available through ASPIRE which will manage use on behalf of the school. The site may also act as a supplementary venue for Oxstalls Indoor Centre and its teams if required and long term plans include aspirations to install floodlighting. The centre plans to undertake a similar project at Severn Vale school in the next two years where it hopes to establish a satellite club set up through Active Gloucestershire.

### **9.4: Conclusions**

In conclusion, there are enough tennis courts in Gloucester to cater for demand and casual use, though there is not sufficient access to available good quality courts required for the development of tennis at some clubs, particularly St Peter's Roman Catholic High School. There is a need for access to more hours of court time and as such greater access to floodlit courts, for example at Gloucester Wotton LTC, which would therefore increase the number of hours available throughout the year. Much of the tennis focus within Gloucester is centred at Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre which acts as a central performance and development hub. The facility contributes greatly towards the provision of both indoor and outdoor tennis and development of the sport as a whole across the City.

### Tennis summary

- ◀ There are a total of 75 tennis courts provided in Gloucester City across 17 sites. Provision can be found on a range of sites including sports clubs and parks. There are nine courts across council managed sites
- ◀ There are 28 courts unavailable for community use, most of which are located at schools sites and are generally made unavailable due to lack of floodlighting, lack of staffing or security issues
- ◀ There are 14 floodlit courts, spread across four sites at Beaufort Community School, Gloucester Academy, Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre and Riverside Sports & Leisure Club
- ◀ A total of 12 courts (16%) are assessed as good quality and 27 courts (36%) assessed as average quality. The majority of courts (48%) are assessed as poor quality
- ◀ There are four clay courts, four artificial and 63 tarmac courts. There are a further four grass courts at Gloucester Wotton Lawn Tennis Club and Kingsholm Square Lawn Tennis Club
- ◀ There are six clubs based within Gloucester City, though Dowty TC is also located outside of the authority nearby and is considered to accommodate demand from residents
- ◀ St Peter's TC reports that the Club is limited by the lack of good quality courts at the school. The Clubs a high level of unmet demand and that it is turning away junior players regularly because it is unable to accommodate them onsite
- ◀ Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre is a key venue for tennis development in Gloucester City. It provides intra venue competition as well as league play through its club section. The tennis programme provides coaching for both juniors and seniors and is also available for social play
- ◀ There are plans to increase social and non-organised participation at High School for Girls, made possible by installation of a new electronic key fob security system through LTA funding. Use of the courts will be managed by ASPIRE leisure trust and Oxstalls Indoor Tennis Centre.
- ◀ Virgin Active Health Club is a private members club not included within the analysis as it is not broadly available for community use. It must be acknowledged that the facility has a strong tennis focus, range of good facilities, accessible coaching and opportunity for competition which attracts a significant level of demand from City residents
- ◀ There are enough tennis courts in Gloucester to cater for demand and casual use, though there is not sufficient access to available good quality floodlit courts required for the development of tennis at some clubs, particularly St Peter's Roman Catholic High School and Gloucester Wotton LTC.

## 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.

### ***Sport England: A Sporting Habit for Life (2012-2017)***

In 2017, five years after the Olympic Games, Sport England aspires to transforming sport in England so that it is a habit for life for more people and a regular choice for the majority. Launched in January 2012 the strategy sets out how Sport England will invest over one billion pounds of National Lottery and Exchequer funding during the five year plan period. The investment will be used to create a lasting community sport legacy by growing sports participation at the grassroots level following the 2012 London Olympics. The strategy will:

- ◀ See more people starting and keeping a sporting habit for life
- ◀ Create more opportunities for young people
- ◀ Nurture and develop talent
- ◀ Provide the right facilities in the right places
- ◀ Support local authorities and unlock local funding
- ◀ Ensure real opportunities for communities

The vision is for England to be a world leading sporting nation where many more people choose to play sport. There are five strategic themes including:

- ◀ Maximise value from current NGB investment
- ◀ Places, People, Play
- ◀ Strategic direction and market intelligence
- ◀ Set criteria and support system for NGB 2013-17 investment
- ◀ Market development

The aim by 2017 is to ensure that playing sport is a lifelong habit for more people and a regular choice for the majority. A specific target is to increase the number of 14 to 25 year olds playing sport. To accomplish these aims the strategy sets out a number of outcomes:

- ◀ 4,000 secondary schools in England will be offered a community sport club on its site with a direct link to one or more NGBs, depending on the local clubs in a school's area.
- ◀ County sports partnerships will be given new resources to create effective links locally between schools and sport in the community.
- ◀ All secondary schools that wish to do so, will be supported to open up, or keep open, their sports facilities for local community use and at least a third of these will receive additional funding to make this happen.
- ◀ At least 150 further educational colleagues will benefit from a full time sports professional who will act as a College Sport Maker.

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- ◀ Three quarters of university students aged 18-24 will get the chance to take up a new sport or continue playing a sport they played at school or college.
- ◀ A thousand of our most disadvantaged local communities will get a Door Step Club.
- ◀ Two thousand young people on the margins of society will be supported by the Dame Kelly Holmes Legacy Trust into sport and to gain new life skills.
- ◀ Building on the success of the Places People Play, a further £100 million will be invested in facilities for the most popular sports.
- ◀ A minimum of 30 sports will have enhanced England Talent Pathways to ensure young people and others fulfil their potential.

### ***National Planning Policy Framework***

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out planning policies for England. It details how these changes are expected to be applied to the planning system. It also provides a framework for local people and their councils to produce distinct local and neighbourhood plans, reflecting the needs and priorities of local communities.

The NPPF states the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It identifies that the planning system needs to focus on three themes of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. A presumption in favour of sustainable development is a key aspect for any plan-making and decision-taking processes. In relation to plan-making the NPPF sets out that Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs.

The 'promoting healthy communities' theme identifies that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficiencies or surpluses in local areas should also be identified. This information should be used to inform what provision is required in an area.

As a prerequisite the NPPF states existing open space, sports and recreation buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

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

In order for planning policies to be 'sound' local authorities are required to carry out a robust assessment of need for open space, sport and recreation facilities.

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## ***The FA National Game Strategy (2011 – 2015)***

The Football Association's (FA) National Game Strategy provides a strategic framework that sets out key priorities, expenditure proposals and targets for the national game (i.e., football) over a four year period. The main issues facing grassroots football are identified as:

- ◀ Growth and retention (young and adult players)
- ◀ Raising standards and behaviour
- ◀ Better players
- ◀ Running the game
- ◀ Workforce
- ◀ Facilities

'The National Game Strategy' reinforces the urgent need to provide affordable, new and improved facilities in schools, clubs and on local authority sites. Over 75% of football is played on public sector facilities. The leisure budgets of most local authorities have been reduced over recent years, resulting in decaying facilities that do not serve the community and act as a disincentive to play football. The loss of playing fields has also been well documented and adds to the pressure on the remaining facilities to cope with the demand, especially in inner city and urban areas.

The growth of the commercial sector in developing custom built five-a-side facilities has changed the overall environment. High quality, modern facilities provided by Powerleague, Goals and playfootball.net for example, have added new opportunities to participate and prompted a significant growth in the number of five-a-side teams in recent years.

## ***The FA National Facilities Strategy (2013 – 2015)***

The recently launched National Facilities Strategy sets out the FA's long term vision for development of facilities to support the National Game. It aims to address and reflect the facility needs of football within the National Game. The National Game is defined as all non-professional football from Steps 1-7 of the National League System down to recreational football played on open public space. The role of facilities will be crucial in developing the game in England. One of the biggest issues raised from 'the Big Grassroots Football Survey' by that of 84% respondents, was 'poor facilities'.

The FA's vision for the future of facilities in England is to build, protect and enhance sustainable football facilities to improve the experience of the nation's favourite game. It aims to do this by:

- ◀ Building - Provide new facilities and pitches in key locations to FA standards in order to sustain existing participation and support new participation.
- ◀ Protecting - Ensure that playing pitches and facilities are protected for the benefit of current and future participants.
- ◀ Enhancing - Invest in existing facilities and pitches, ensuring that participation in the game is sustained as well as expanded.

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The Strategy commits to delivering in excess of £150m (through Football Foundation) into facility improvements across the National Game in line with identified priorities:

- ◀ Natural grass pitches improved – target: 100
- ◀ A network of new AGPs built – target 100
- ◀ A network of refurbished AGPs – target 150
- ◀ On selected sites, new and improved changing facilities and toilets
- ◀ Continue a small grants programme designed to address modest facility needs of clubs
- ◀ Ongoing support with the purchase and replacement of goalposts

It also commits to:

- ◀ Direct other sources of investment into FA facility priorities
- ◀ Communicate priorities for investment across the grassroots game on a regular basis
- ◀ Work closely with Sport England, the Premier League and other partners to ensure that investment is co-ordinated and targeted

### ***Champion Counties – England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) Strategic Plan (2013 – 2017)***

“Champion Counties” - continues to focus on the four pillars, as identified in the ECB’s previous strategy: “Grounds to Play”. The pillars are:

- ◀ Energising people and partnerships through effective leadership and governance
- ◀ Building a **Vibrant** domestic game through operational excellence and delivering a competition structure with appointment to view
- ◀ **Engaging** participants through the maintenance of existing facilities, supporting club/school links , supporting volunteers and expanding women’s and disabilities cricket
- ◀ Delivering **Successful** England teams and world class global events

The key measures for the life span of the plan are as follows:-

- ◀ Increase the subset of participation measured by Sport England’s Active People Survey from 183,400 to 197,500.
- ◀ Increase attendances at LV= CC, YB50 and FLT20 by 200,000.
- ◀ Complete sponsorship and broadcasting agreements through 2019.
- ◀ Win the World Test Championship and Women’s World Cup in 2017.
- ◀ Win The Ashes and World Cup in 2015.
- ◀ Expand the number of clubs participating in NatWest Cricket Force from 2,000 to 2,200.
- ◀ Complete co-operation agreements for each of the 39 County Boards with their First Class County or Minor County partner.
- ◀ Deliver two world class global events in 2017 which exceed budget and exceed customer satisfaction targets.
- ◀ Increase the number of cricket’s volunteers to 80,000 by 2017.
- ◀ Expand the number of participants in women’s and disabilities cricket by 10% by 2017.
- ◀ Award all Major Matches through 2019 by December 2014.
- ◀ To increase the number of TwelfthMan members from 220,000 to 250,000 by 2017.
- ◀ Complete an approved Community Engagement programme with all 18 First Class Counties and MCC.



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- ◀ Provide First Class Counties with total fee payments of £144m between 2014 and 2017.
- ◀ For each £1 provided in facility grants through the Sport England Whole Sport Plan grant programme ensure a multiplier of 3 with other funding partners.
- ◀ Provide a fund of £8.1m of capital investment to enhance floodlights, sightscreens, replay screens, power sub-stations and broadcasting facilities at First Class County venues.
- ◀ Provide an interest-free loan fund to community clubs of £10 million.
- ◀ Leverage the 2014 tour by India to engage with a minimum of 10,000 cricket supporters of Asian origin. Qualify and engage 50 Level 4 coaches to support the development of professional cricketers.
- ◀ Expand the number of coaches who have received teacher level 1, 2 or 3 qualifications to 50,000.
- ◀ Deliver an annual fixture for the Unicorns against a touring (Full, A or U19) ICC member nation.
- ◀ Provide a fund of £2 million for community clubs to combat the impact of climate change.
- ◀ Introduce a youth T20 competition engaging 500 teams by 2017.

### ***The Rugby Football Union National Facilities Strategy (2013-2017)***

The recently launched RFU National Facility Strategy 2013-2017 provides a framework for development of high-quality, well-managed facilities that will help to strengthen member clubs and grow the game in communities around them. In conjunction with partners, this strategy will assist and support clubs and other organisations, so that they can continue to provide quality opportunities for all sections of the community to enjoy the game. It sets out the broad facility needs of the sport and identifies investment priorities to the game and its key partners. It identifies that with 470 grass root clubs and 1500 players there is a continuing need to invest in community club facilities in order to:

- ◀ Create a platform for growth in club rugby participation and membership, especially with a view to exploiting the opportunities afforded by RWC 2015.
- ◀ Ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of rugby clubs, through supporting not only their playing activity but also their capacity to generate revenue through a diverse range of activities and partnerships.

In summary the priorities for investment which have met the needs of the game for the Previous period remain valid:

- ◀ Increase the provision of changing rooms and clubhouses that can sustain concurrent adult and junior male and female activity at clubs
- ◀ Improve the quality and quantity of natural turf pitches and floodlighting
- ◀ Increase the provision of artificial grass pitches that deliver wider game development

It is also a high priority for the RFU to target investment in the following:

- ◀ Upgrade and transform social, community and catering facilities, which can support the generation of additional revenues
- ◀ Facility upgrades, which result in an increase in energy-efficiency, in order to reduce the running costs of clubs
- ◀ Pitch furniture, including rugby posts and pads, pitch side spectator rails and grounds maintenance equipment



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## ***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

## ***England Hockey (EH)***

*'The right pitches in the right places'<sup>13</sup>*

In 2012, EH released its facility guidance which is intended to assist organisations wishing to build or protect hockey pitches for hockey. It identifies that many existing hockey AGPs are nearing the end of their useful life as a result of the installation boom of the 90's. Significant investment is needed to update the playing stock and protect the sport against inappropriate surfaces for hockey as a result of the rising popularity of AGPs for a number of sports. EH is seeking to invest in, and endorse clubs and hockey providers which have a sound understanding of the following:

- ◀ Single System – clubs and providers which have a good understanding of the Single System and its principles and are appropriately places to support the delivery.
- ◀ ClubsFirst accreditation – clubs with the accreditation are recognised as producing a safe effective and child friendly hockey environment
- ◀ Sustainability – hockey providers and clubs will have an approved development plan in place showing their commitment to developing hockey, retaining members and providing an insight into longer term goals. They will also need to have secured appropriate tenure.

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<sup>13</sup><http://englandhockey.co.uk/page.asp?section=1143&sectionTitle=The+Right+Pitches+in+the+Right+Places>

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## ***2015-2018 British Tennis Strategy***

The new strategy is presented in a concise one page framework that includes key strategies relating to three participation "focus" areas, six participation "drivers" and three participation "enablers". To achieve success, the 12 strategy areas will need to work interdependently to stem the decline and unlock sustainable growth:

The three participation "focus" areas are where tennis is consumed:

1. Deliver great service to CLUBS
2. Build partnerships in the COMMUNITY, led by parks
3. Enhance the tennis offer in EDUCATION

The six participation "drivers" are the areas that will make the biggest difference where tennis is consumed. They must all be successful on a standalone and interconnected basis and include:

1. Becoming more relevant to COACHES
2. Refocusing on RECREATIONAL COMPETITION
3. Providing results orientated FACILITY INVESTMENT
4. Applying best in class MARKETING AND PROMOTION
5. JUMP STARTING THE PEAK SUMMER SEASON
6. Establishing a "no compromise" HIGH PERFORMANCE programme with focus.

The final layer is comprised of three participation "enablers" that underpin our ability to be successful. These enablers are rooted in how the LTA will get better; how the entire network of 4 / 17/03/2015 partners must be harnessed to work together and the need to raise more financial resources to fund our sport's turnaround. They include:

1. Becoming a more effective and efficient LTA
2. Harnessing the full resource network
3. Generating new revenue

For further information and more detail on the framework please go to <http://www.lta.org.uk/about-the-lta/structure-vision>

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### ***Bowls England: Strategic Plan 2014-2017***

Bowls England will provide strong leadership and work with its stakeholders to support the development of the sport of bowls in England for this and future generations.

The overall vision of Bowls England is to:

- ◀ Promote the sport of outdoor flat green bowls.
- ◀ Recruit new participants to the sport of outdoor flat green bowls.
- ◀ Retain current and future participants within the sport of flat green bowls.

In order to ensure that this vision is achieved, ten key performance targets have been created, which will underpin the work of Bowls England up until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017.

- ◀ 115,000 individual affiliated members.
- ◀ 1,500 registered coaches.
- ◀ Increase total National Championship entries by 10%.
- ◀ Increase total national competition entries by 10%.
- ◀ Medal places achieved in 50% of events at the 2016 World Championships.
- ◀ 35 county development plans in place and operational.
- ◀ County development officer appointed by each county association.
- ◀ National membership scheme implemented with 100% uptake by county associations.
- ◀ Secure administrative base for 1st April 2017.
- ◀ Commercial income to increase by 20%.

Despite a recent fall in affiliated members, and a decline in entries into National Championships over the last five years, Bowls England believes that these aims will be attained by following core values. The intention is to:

- ◀ Be progressive.
- ◀ Offer opportunities to participate at national and international level.
- ◀ Work to raise the profile of the sport in support of recruitment and retention.
- ◀ Lead the sport.
- ◀ Support clubs and county associations.