



# **DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORTS STRATEGY**

## **ASSESSMENT REPORT OCTOBER 2022**

QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

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# **DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT**

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### ABBREVIATIONS

3G	Third Generation (artificial turf)
AGP	Artificial Grass Pitch
BAFA	British American Football Association
BC	Bowls Club
BCGBA	British Crown Green Bowling Association
BSUK	Baseball Softball United Kingdom
CFA	County Football Association
CONGU	Council of National Golf Unions
DCMS	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
ECB	England and Wales Cricket Board
EH	England Hockey
FA	Football Association
FC	Football Club
FF	Football Foundation
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
FPM	Facilities Planning Model
GMA	Grounds Management Association
HC	Hockey Club
JFC	Junior Football Club
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh and Page
LFFP	Local Football Facilities Plan
NFFS	National Football Facilities Strategy
NGB	National Governing Body
NHS	National Health Service
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PPS	Playing Pitch Strategy
PPOSS	Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy
PQS	Performance Quality Standard
RFL	Rugby Football League
RFU	Rugby Football Union
RLFC	Rugby League Football Club
RUFC	Rugby Union Football Club
TC	Tennis Club
U	Under
WCB	Worcestershire Cricket Board

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### PART 1: INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

Knight, Kavanagh & Page (KKP) has been commissioned by the Black Country authorities of Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton, together with the Black Country Consortium, to assess playing pitch and outdoor sport facility needs across the individual local authority areas. The output is provision of four separate needs assessments and strategies across the aforementioned authorities as well as one additional overarching framework.

This is the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy (PPOSS) Assessment Report for Dudley. It presents a supply and demand assessment of playing pitch and outdoor sports facilities in accordance with Sport England's Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) Guidance (for playing pitch sports) and Sport England's Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guide (for "non-pitch" sports). The PPS Guidance details a 13-stepped approach, separated into five distinct sections:

- ◀ Stage A: Prepare and tailor the approach (1, 2 & 3)
- ◀ Stage B: Gather information and views on the supply of and demand for provision (4 & 5)
- ◀ Stage C: Assess the supply and demand information and views (6, 7 & 8)
- ◀ Stage D: Develop the strategy (9 & 10)
- ◀ Stage E: Deliver the strategy and keep it robust and up to date (11, 12 & 13)

Stages A to C are detailed in this report, with stage D covered in the proceeding strategy document and Stage E ongoing once the work has been adopted. The lifespan of a PPOSS is considered to be three years, although this can be increased if it is kept up to date. As part of the Stage E process, the PPOSS should be reviewed on an annual basis from the date it is formally signed off. Such a review will help to maintain the momentum and commitment built up during its development.

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

##### ***Why the strategy is being developed***

The PPOSS for Dudley will replace the existing study, which is now considered to be out of date having been finalised in 2014.

A key driver for undertaking the Study across the four authorities was to support the preparation of a joint Black Country Plan and to provide an important evidence base for its development. The intention was for this to replace the Black Country Core Strategy, which was adopted in 2011; however, separate local plans are now to be produced by the four local authorities instead.

Notwithstanding the above, the joint framework will still enable the four authorities to ensure that each PPOSS is carried out to same degree of detail and quality and for the reports to identify compatible outcomes across the sub-region. It will also help the authorities identify areas of deficits and surpluses in provision as well as helping to identify and capitalise on cross-boundary opportunities.

The PPOSS will identify current levels of provision across the four authorities and will compare this with current and likely future levels of demand. The primary purpose is therefore to provide a strategic framework that can ensure that the provision of playing pitch and outdoor sports facilities can meet local and community needs of existing and future residents. As such, it will provide the evidence required to help protect provision and will ensure sufficient land is available to meet existing and projected future requirements.

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The strategies will be produced in accordance with national planning guidance and provide robust and objective justification for future sporting provision throughout the Black Country. One of the core planning principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), updated in 2021, is to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs. Paragraph 98 discusses the importance of access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation that can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.

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

### ***Management arrangements***

A project team from Dudley Council, as well as the other relevant councils, has worked with KKP to ensure that all relevant information is readily available so that project stages and milestones are delivered on time. In addition, a strong and effective steering group has and will continue to lead the PPOSS during its development and will be responsible for the delivery of its recommendations and actions. The membership of this group is balanced and representative of the different parties and key drivers behind the work; it is made up of representatives from the councils, Active Black Country, Sport England and the relevant National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs).

The steering group is and has been responsible for the direction of the PPOSS from a strategic perspective and for supporting and checking and challenging the work of the project team. It will be important for the steering group to continue once the PPOSS has been finalised for several reasons, including a continuing responsibility to:

- ◀ Be a champion for provision in the area and promote the importance of the PPOSS.
- ◀ Support implementation of the recommendations and action plan.
- ◀ Monitor and evaluate the outcomes of the study.
- ◀ Ensure that the work is kept up to date and refreshed when necessary.

### ***Agreed scope***

A wide range of playing pitch and outdoor sports and associated facilities have been agreed for inclusion in the PPOSS in Dudley and across all four Black Country authorities. In full, the study covers:

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| ◀ Athletics                          | ◀ Bowls  |
| ◀ Cricket                            | ◀ Cycling                                      |
| ◀ Football (including 3G pitches)    | ◀ Golf   |
| ◀ Hockey (sand/water based AGPs)     | ◀ Netball                                      |
| ◀ Rugby union (including 3G pitches) | ◀ Rugby league (including 3G pitches)          |
| ◀ Tennis                             | ◀ Water sports (e.g. sailing and water skiing) |

In addition, other grass pitch sports are included where identified as having a presence. These can include, but are not limited to, sports such as American football, baseball/softball, Gaelic football and lacrosse.

Sport England’s PPS guidance applies to football, rugby union, rugby league, cricket and hockey, as well as any other grass pitch sports, whereas the ANOG guidance applies to the remaining sports (as these are “non-pitch”).

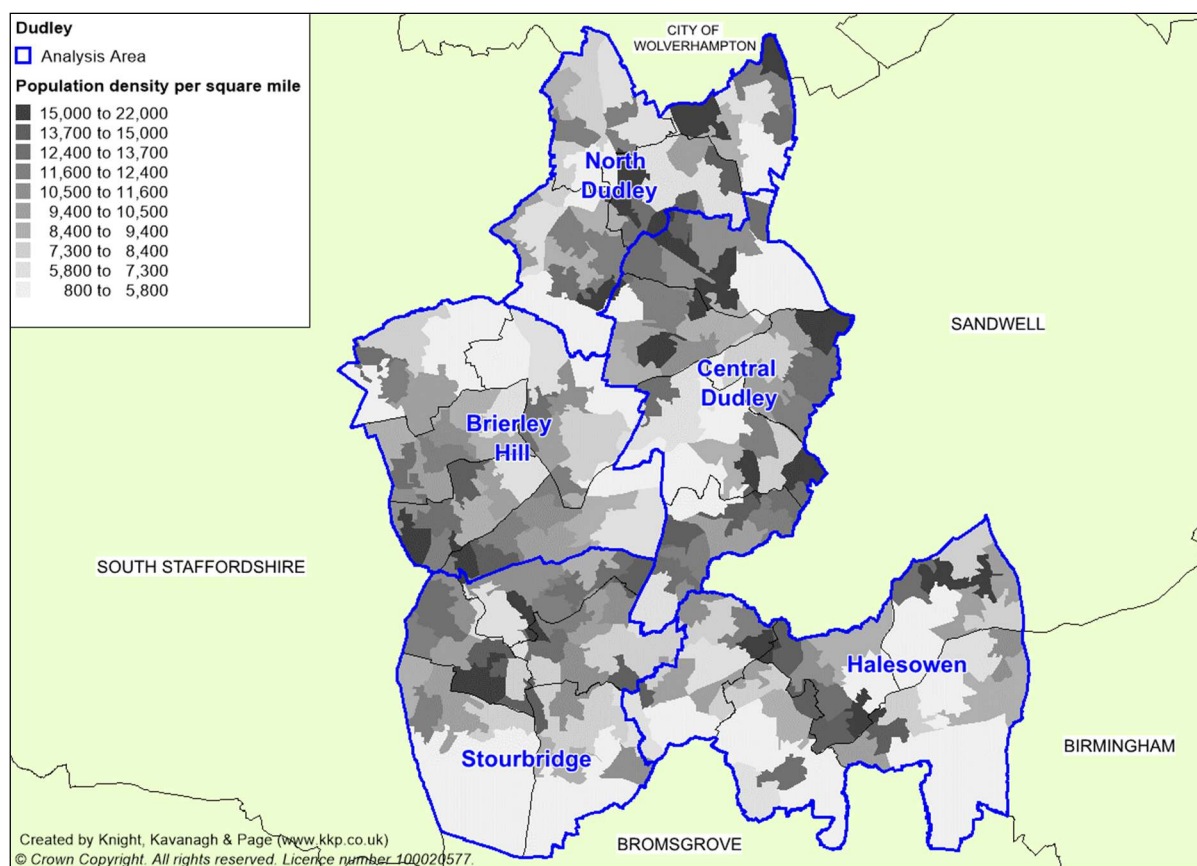
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## Study area

The study area for the Dudley PPOSS is the Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council boundary area. Further to this, sub areas or analysis areas have been used to allow for a more localised assessment of provision and examination of supply and demand at a local level. For this purpose, Dudley is split into the following five areas:

- ◆ Brierley Hill
- ◆ Central Dudley
- ◆ Halesowen
- ◆ North Dudley
- ◆ Stourbridge

Figure 1.1: Analysis areas



Cross-boundary migration is also be explored, not only to and from the other three Black County authorities but also from the likes of Birmingham, Bromsgrove and South Staffordshire. This applies to demand from neighbouring authorities that imports into Dudley and demand from the Borough which exports out. As part of this, some sites that are technically outside of Dudley are included within the scope of the study due to their close proximity to the authority's border.

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

A clear picture of the supply of and demand for playing pitches and outdoor sport facilities in Dudley needs to be provided to enable an accurate assessment of quantity, quality and usage. This is achieved through site assessments and consultation with key stakeholders.

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### ***Gather supply information and views – an audit of provision***

Sport England's guidance uses the following definitions of a playing pitch and playing field; these are set out by the Government in the 2015 'Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order'<sup>1</sup>:

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

Although the statutory definition of a playing field sets out a minimum size, this PPOSS takes account of smaller sized pitches that contribute to the supply side. For example, a site containing a mini 5v5 football pitch is included despite it potentially being smaller than 0.2ha. The study counts individual grass pitches (as a delineated area) as the basic unit of supply, with the definition of a playing pitch also including artificial grass pitches (AGPs).

As far as possible, this report aims to capture all of the playing pitches and relevant outdoor sport facilities within Dudley; however, there may be instances that have led to omissions, such as unused school sites where access was not possible (although facilities at sites not accessed are still included within the study where provision is known to exist from other sources e.g. affiliation data or club/league consultation). Where provision has not been recorded within the report, it is still considered to exist for planning purposes and will continue to do so. Furthermore, any exclusion does not mean that the provision is not required from a supply and demand point of view.

### ***Quantity***

Where known, all playing pitches and outdoor sport facilities are included within the PPOSS, irrespective of ownership, management and use. Sites were initially identified using Sport England's Active Places web-based database, with the Council and NGBs supporting the process by checking and updating this initial data as well as supplying their own. This was also verified against club and league information supplied through consultation and any affiliation processes.

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

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

### ***Accessibility***

Not all facilities offer the same level of access to the community and the ownership and accessibility of provision also influences actual availability for demand. As such, each site is assigned a level of community use as follows:

- ▶ **Community use** – facilities in public, voluntary, private or commercial ownership or management (including education sites) recorded as being available for hire and currently in use by teams/members/individuals (depending on the sport).

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



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- ◀ **Available but unused** - facilities that are available for hire but are not currently used externally; this most often applies to school sites but can also apply to sites which are expensive to hire or particularly poor quality.
- ◀ **No community use** - facilities which are, as a matter of policy, unavailable for external hire. This includes professional club pitches along with some semi-professional club pitches where play is restricted to the first or second team of the host club.
- ◀ **Disused** – sites that are not being used at all by any users and are not available for community hire either (often being unmarked). 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 99 of the NPPF; Sport England would nonetheless challenge a proposed loss which fails to meet such criteria. It should be emphasised that the lawful planning use of a lapsed site is still that of a playing field.

In addition, there should be a good degree of certainty as to whether a facility will be available to the community for at least the following three years. A judgement is made based on the information gathered and any provision adjudged not be available for this length of time is considered to be “unsecure” (as opposed to “secure”).

### *Quality*

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

It is not just the quality of the pitches themselves which have an effect on capacity but also the quality, standard and range of ancillary facilities. The quality of both the playing provision and the ancillary facilities will determine whether sites are able to contribute to meeting demand from various groups and for different levels and types of play.

The quality of all provision identified in the audit and the ancillary facilities supporting them are assessed regardless of ownership, management or availability. Along with capturing any details specific to the individual facilities and sites, a quality rating is also recorded within the audit for each. These ratings are then used to help estimate the capacity (aligned to NGB guidance) 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 have also been consulted on the quality. In some instances, the quality rating has been adjusted to reflect this i.e. an “agreed quality rating”.

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

Presenting an accurate picture of current demand for playing pitches and outdoor sport facilities (i.e. recording how and when provision is used) is important when undertaking a supply and demand assessment. Demand for provision in Dudley tends to fall within the following categories:

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



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Current and future demand for provision is presented on a sport-by-sport basis within the relevant sections of this report. In addition, unmet, latent, imported and exported demand for provision is also identified within each section.

Unmet demand is existing demand that is not getting access to provision; it is usually expressed, for example, when a team is in training but is unable to access a match pitch, or when a league has a waiting list due to a lack of pitch provision, which in turn is hindering the growth of the league. In comparison, latent demand is defined as the number of additional teams that could be fielded if access to a sufficient number of outdoor sports facilities (and ancillary provision) was available. Exported and imported demand refers to those that are playing outside of their local authority area of choice.

A variety of consultation methods were used to collate demand information. Firstly, face-to-face consultation (normally via video call due to Covid-19 restrictions) has been carried out with key clubs and leagues (as identified by the Steering Group) from each sport, thus allowing for the collection of detailed demand information and an exploration of key issues to be interrogated and more accurately assessed. For all remaining clubs, telephone consultation or an online survey (converted to postal if required) has been utilised.

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

### ***Future demand***

Alongside current demand, it is important for a PPOSS to assess whether the future demand for provision can be met. Using Office of National Statistics (ONS) population projections and proposed housing growth, as well as likely participation growth informed through consultation, an estimate can be made of the likely future demand for the relevant facilities. Assumptions can then be made as to whether existing provision can cater for such growth.

Team generation rates are used to provide an indication as to how many people it may take to generate a team (by gender and age group). This ratio is then applied to predicted population growth to help estimate the change in demand for each sport that may arise in the future. Other information sources that were used to help identify future demand include:

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

In line with the previously proposed Black Country Plan (now to be replaced by four separate local plans), future demand projections across the PPOSS cover the period up until 2039.

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

Supply and demand information gathered is used to assess the adequacy of playing pitch and outdoor sport provision in Dudley and to identify key issues, challenges and aspirations. This forms the basis of this report.

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

Qualitative ratings are linked to a capacity rating derived from NGB guidance and tailored to suit a local area. For playing pitch sports, the quality and use of each pitch is assessed against recommended capacity to indicate how many match equivalent sessions a pitch could accommodate. This is then compared to the number of matches actually taking place and categorised as follows, to identify:

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

As a guide, the NGBs for football, cricket, rugby union, rugby league and hockey have set a standard number of matches that each pitch type should be able to accommodate without adversely affecting its quality. Given how the sports operate, this is per week for football, rugby union and rugby league, per day for hockey and per season for cricket.

*Table 1.2: Capacity of playing pitches*

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

For non-pitch sports, capacity is not linked to the number of matches taking place but rather the number of members (and other users) attracted to a site. For example, for tennis, a floodlit hard court is said to have capacity for 60 members, whereas a non-floodlit has court has capacity for 40 members (this varies for grass courts). Other sport specific capacity guidance is detailed within the relevant sections of this report.

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

Once capacity is determined on a site-by-site basis, actual spare capacity is calculated on a Borough-wide and an area-by-area basis via further interrogation of peak time demand. This then identifies whether there is overall spare capacity on provision or whether there is a shortfall.

Although spare capacity may be identified at some sites and in some areas, it does not necessarily mean that there is surplus provision. For example, spare capacity may not be available when it is needed (actual spare capacity), or a site may be retained in a 'strategic reserve' to enable rotation and to reduce wear and tear. Often, spare capacity is discounted due to site specific issues such as those relating to quality, availability and security of tenure.

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

By completing the aforementioned steps, it is possible to identify several findings and issues relating to the supply, demand and adequacy of playing pitch and outdoor sport provision. This report therefore seeks to identify and present such key information on a sport-by-sport basis prior to the development of the Strategy and Action Plan.

Each included sport has its own section within this Assessment Report, detailing key findings and featuring a supply and demand analysis. In addition, a separate 3G pitch section is also included to take into account the variety of sports that can utilise such provision (e.g. football, rugby union and rugby league).

### ***Develop the future picture of provision (scenario testing)***

Modelling scenarios to assess whether existing provision can cater for unmet, latent, exported and future demand is made after the capacity analysis. As such, most of the scenario testing generally occurs in the Strategy report that proceeds this document and therefore does not form part of the Assessment Report.

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### PART 2: FOOTBALL

#### 2.1: Introduction

Birmingham County FA is the primary organisation responsible for the development of football in Dudley. 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.

Facility development for football is largely the responsibility of the Football Foundation, which is a charity, linked to the Premier League, the FA and the Government, that helps communities improve their local football facilities through grant funding. It is committed to improving the experience of playing football for everyone involved in the game.

This section of the report focuses on the supply and demand for grass football pitches. Part 3 captures supply and demand for third generation pitches (3G pitches), which is the preferred artificial surface type for football. There is a growing demand for the use of 3G pitches for competitive football fixtures, in addition to training needs, especially to accommodate mini and youth football.

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

*Table 2.1: Football grass pitch formats*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Consultation

Consultation requests were sent to all football clubs based in Dudley via Birmingham FA, with 47% responding. Whilst this is a relatively low figure, it represents 79% of teams that play in the Borough as focus was placed on large clubs identified as key. As such, most non-respondents are small clubs fielding just one or two teams.

The responsive clubs include the following:

- ◀ Cradley Town DC FC
- ◀ Halas Hawks JFC
- ◀ Lye Town FC
- ◀ Sedgley & Gornal United FC
- ◀ Wordsley Wasps FC
- ◀ Gornal Athletic FC
- ◀ Halesowen Town Colts FC
- ◀ Netherton Colts FC
- ◀ Stourbridge FC
- ◀ Wrens Nest Youth FC

## 2.2: Supply

The audit identifies a total of 182 grass football pitches within Dudley across 96 sites, with 154 pitches available, at some level, for community use across 77 sites. Most of the unavailable pitches are located at school sites.

The distribution of the community available pitches is shown in the following table. As can be seen, they are well spread across Dudley, with the Stourbridge Analysis Area containing the most (38) and the North Dudley Analysis Area containing the least (24). Adult pitches are the most common (43), whilst youth 11v11 pitches are the least (24).

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

Analysis area	No. of pitches available for community use					Total
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	
Brierley Hill	8	5	8	9	5	35
Central Dudley	8	1	6	9	5	29
Halesowen	13	1	8	2	4	28
North Dudley	6	6	6	2	4	24
Stourbridge	8	10	5	7	8	38
<b>Dudley</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>154</b>

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There being more adult pitches across Dudley is reflective of high demand for this format of play. However, youth 11v11 demand is actually higher, meaning that the low supply of youth 11v11 pitches does not correlate. This leads to many youth 11v11 teams playing on adult pitches, which, whilst sometimes preferable for clubs, is not ideal for players at U13-U16 level and is not in line with the FA Youth Review.

Using Dudley's previous PPS as a guide (completed in 2015), there has been a reduction in the number of grass football pitches in the Borough in recent years, with 167 community available pitches previously identified. This is most notable with a reduction of adult pitches, although more youth 11v11, youth 9v9 and mini 5v5 pitches are now provided suggesting that many have been converted to more appropriate sizes to meet demand.

There are less pitches marked out at several council sites when compared to 2015 data, which is a consequence of the Council now only marking out provision that has been booked. In addition to lapsed and disused sites (identified below), the following council-operated sites previously provided more pitches than they currently do:

- ◀ Abbey St Recreation Ground
- ◀ Cot Lane
- ◀ Donkey Pool Playing Fields
- ◀ Enville Road
- ◀ King George V Park (Stourbridge)
- ◀ Kinver Street
- ◀ Lister Road Open Space
- ◀ The Mere
- ◀ Withymore Playing Fields

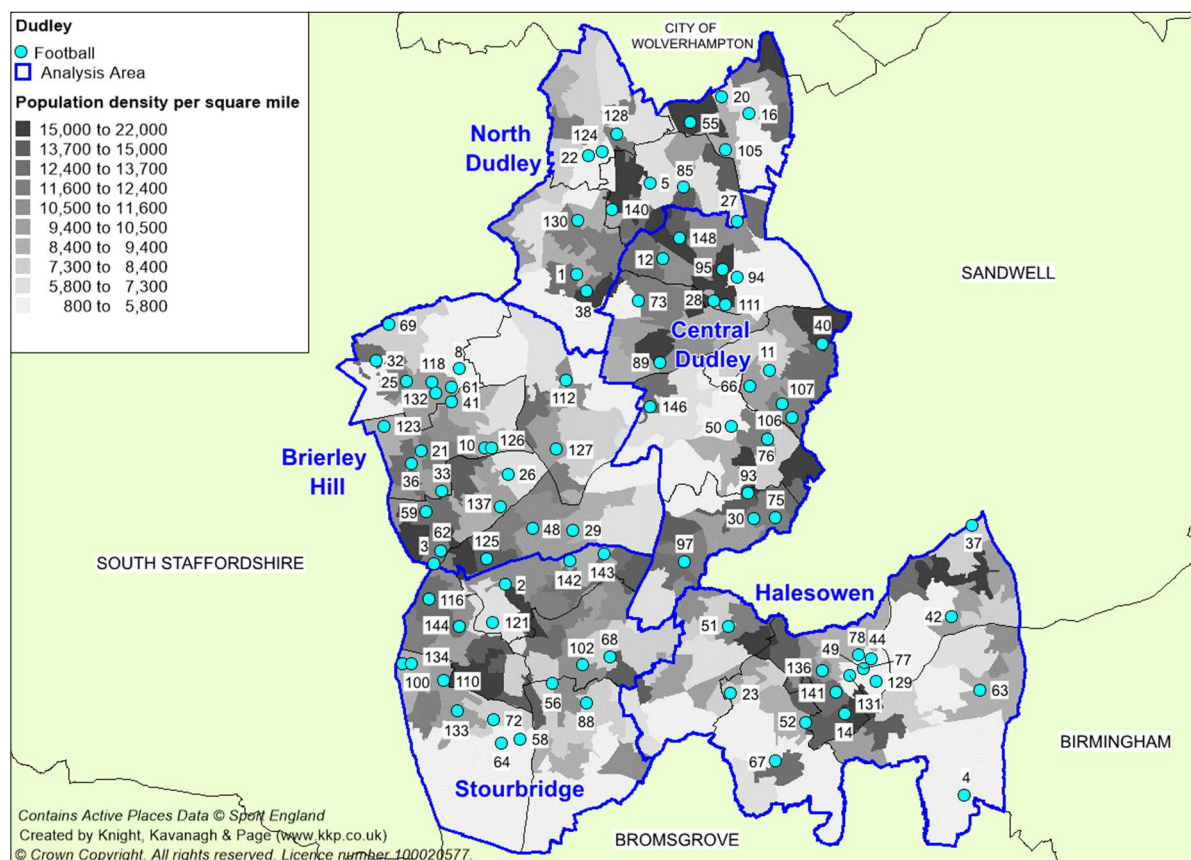
In addition, fewer schools now provide pitches, especially in regards to primary schools.

Figure 2.1 below identifies the location of all football pitches in Dudley, regardless of community use. For a key to the map, please see Table 2.14.



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Figure 2.1: Location of grass football pitches in Dudley



## Lapsed/disused provision

The following playing field sites previously provided football pitches that are no longer being marked out or maintained:

- ◀ Harrison Road
- ◀ Marle Hole
- ◀ Milking Bank Playing Fields
- ◀ Pens Meadow School
- ◀ Grange Park
- ◀ Hurst Green Park
- ◀ Poole Crescent

The majority of these sites has been used for formal football within the last five years, which means that they are considered disused rather than lapsed. However, that will shortly not be the case for Grange Park, Hurst Green Park and Harrison Road, which were last used in 2016/2017.

Each site is operated by the Council. Grange Park, Hurst Green Park and Milking Bank Playing Fields all provided at least one adult pitch, whereas Marle Hole provided a youth 9v9 pitch and Harrison Road provided two mini 7v7 pitches.

Poole Crescent is considered to be a lapsed site, with its last known use being in 2012 when it provided a solitary football pitch.



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### ***Future provision***

Wordsley Wasps FC has recently been granted a lease agreement with the Council for Oldswinford And Stourbridge Social Cricket Club (Norwood Road). It plans to mark football pitches on site and upgrade the existing ancillary provision. The site currently hosts a disused cricket square.

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

The table below details the management of football sites in Dudley. As seen, the main operators are the Council and educational establishments. Uniquely, there are no pitches that are managed privately or commercially.

*Table 2.3: Football pitch sites by management type*

Club	Number of sites	
	Council	Education
9	40	43

With schools being the most common provider of pitches, it is worth noting that they are also the least likely to offer community use. In total, 19 educational providers do not allow for community use of some or all of their pitches, with reasons for not allowing access varying. The most common example is that the schools want to protect pitches for curricular and extra-curricular purposes due to existing quality issues, whilst other reasons include staffing issues, health and safety issues and a perceived lack of profitability.

Moreover, some schools that do provide community access do so without providing security of tenure, meaning that they can stop the external use at any point devoid of any notice. This applies to 21 additional schools, some of which, provide a multitude of pitches such as Pedmore High School and Summerhill School. To prevent future issues, it is recommended that users enter into community use agreements with the schools that they access, where possible.

Away from schools, tenure is considered to be secure, including at council sites where it is assumed that pitches will continue to be offered as part of the Council's commitment to providing sports and leisure facilities.

Four clubs are known to have lease arrangements in place, with these being Cradley Town, Halesowen Town, Lye Town and Stourbridge football clubs, whilst others have ownership such as Gornal Athletic FC. Of those with lease arrangements, the agreements for Halesowen Town at The Grove and Stourbridge FC at War Memorial Athletic Ground are relatively close to expiry, with the former ending in 2028 and the latter ending in 2032.

Stourbridge FC shares its lease of War Memorial Athletic Ground with Stourbridge CC; however, it reports that it would ideally like to take sole control of the site. This is due to the football and cricket pitches overmarking each other, which causes issues when the seasons overlap at both the start and end of each campaign. Furthermore, the Club aspires to expand its provision, which is not possible with the cricket square in place.

In addition to the clubs with lease agreements already in place, Cradley Town DC FC reports that it is interested in taking on an asset transfer of Dudley Wood Playing Fields so that it can develop and enhance the site. It states that it is in talks with the Council regarding this.

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Similarly, both Sedgley & Gornal FC and Dudley Town FC report an ambition to acquire a site that they can use as a base to grow the clubs. Sedgley & Gornal FC has held discussions in relation to Coseley Leisure Centre, whilst Dudley Town FC currently accesses provision in Walsall due to a lack of venues in Dudley (see exported demand). It wants to develop a site within Dudley with appropriate facilities for its first team, which would include the need for a floodlit adult pitch and suitable ancillary provision.

Halas Hawks JFC also reports an aspiration to manage its own site, reporting that it is currently trying to identify a location that it can develop. It is currently predominately based at Homer Hill Park, but has to use a variety of locations, some of which are located outside of Dudley, due to the size of the Club.

Having security of tenure is crucial for clubs/organisations, especially those that will be seeking significant investment and external funding from partners such as the Football Foundation.

### **Pitch quality**

The quality of football pitches across Dudley has been assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating on a scale of good, standard and poor. The percentage parameters used for the non-technical assessments are: Good (>80%), Standard (50-80%), Poor (<50%). However, it must be noted that the final quality ratings assigned to pitches also takes into account the user quality ratings gathered from consultation as well as feedback from Birmingham FA.

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

The table below summarises the quality of pitches that are available for community use in Dudley. Most are considered to be standard quality, with 76 assessed as this, compared to 68 assessed as poor quality and only ten assessed as good quality.

*Table 2.4: Pitch quality assessments (community use pitches)*

Adult pitches			Youth pitches			Mini pitches		
Good	Standard	Poor	Good	Standard	Poor	Good	Standard	Poor
6	18	19	2	32	22	2	26	27

Compared to 2015 findings, the quality picture is broadly consistent, although it must be referenced that there are now fewer good quality pitches and more poor quality pitches. One reason for this is likely to be a consequence of the Council leaving goalposts up at its site during the Covid-19 pandemic, which then had an impact on the level of maintenance carried out.

Most of the poor quality pitches are located at council sites. Such provision often receives limited amounts of dedicated maintenance due to budgetary restraints and can be open access which can lead to further damage from unofficial use. The following community available sites accommodate at least one poor quality pitch:

- ◀ Abbey St Recreation Ground
- ◀ Buffery Park
- ◀ Cavalier Drive Playing Field
- ◀ Amblecote Recreation Ground
- ◀ Burton Road Playing Fields
- ◀ Clayton Park

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- ◀ Cot Lane Open Space
- ◀ Donkey Pool Playing Fields
- ◀ Greenfields Open Space
- ◀ Hurst Hill Recreation Ground
- ◀ King George V Park (Stourbridge)
- ◀ Mary Stevens Park
- ◀ Priory Park
- ◀ Sledmere Playing Fields
- ◀ Tenscore Playing Field
- ◀ The Scrolls
- ◀ Windsor High School & Sixth Form College
- ◀ Wollaston Recreation Ground
- ◀ Dingle Primary School
- ◀ Dudley Wood Playing Field
- ◀ Huntingtree Park
- ◀ Junction Road Playing Fields
- ◀ Kinver Street
- ◀ Primrose Hill Playing Field
- ◀ Silver Jubilee Park
- ◀ South Road Playing Fields
- ◀ The Mere
- ◀ Vale Street Recreation Ground
- ◀ Withymoor Playing Fields
- ◀ Woodside Park

Where poor quality is identified, a lack of maintenance and drainage issues are considered to be the most common factors. Conversely, where better quality is identified, a better maintenance regime is often cited, as is investment by the Football Foundation. The good quality pitches identified in Dudley are at Dudley College (Castle View), Cradley Town Football Club, Dudley Sports Junior & Girls Football Club and War Memorial Athletic Ground.

Where quality issues are prevalent, it is recommended that sites engage with the Football Foundation's PitchPower app (see below).

Of clubs that responded to consultation, 62% report that quality has worsened over the last 12 months, whilst only 8% report that quality has improved (30% report no change). The most common issue cited by clubs reporting a deterioration is a lack of maintenance, especially during Covid-19 lockdown periods, followed by the impact of unofficial use.

For a full breakdown of the quality ratings at each site, see Table 2.12. For the full assessment criteria, please refer to Appendix 2.

### *Local Football Facility Plan*

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

The following 10 site specific projects are identified:

- ◀ Coseley Leisure Centre
- ◀ Dudley Wood Playing Field
- ◀ Hurst Green Park
- ◀ King George V Park (Stourbridge)
- ◀ South Road Playing Fields
- ◀ Donkey Pool Playing Fields
- ◀ Homer Hill Recreation Ground
- ◀ Junction Road Playing Fields
- ◀ Sledmere Playing Fields
- ◀ Wollaston Recreation Ground

In the PPOSS, most pitches at these sites have been assessed as poor or standard. Whilst most of these will therefore still require improvement, given that the LFFP is a live document, there may be a need to amend and/or add to this list based on the findings of this study.

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### *Pitch improvement*

The FA has a Pitch Improvement Programme aimed at improving the standard of grass pitches across the Country. For provision included in the programme, clubs can utilise the services of the Football Foundation's PitchPower app to carry out a free on-site assessment of their pitches.

This then provides the Grounds Management Association (GMA) with the detail needed to create a personalised, informative report to advise on how improvements can be made. Clubs then receive bespoke advice and support to help with any future actions, funding applications and equipment, with clubs getting access to discounted rates for machinery and consumables through local partnerships.

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

PitchPower is less restricted by the seasonal window of in-season play than the non-technical assessments, instead being able to be undertaken within a ten month period, with assessments completed and submitted within one of three windows: September - October, November – March or April – June.

As well as the completion of other supporting information such as detail of volunteer training and what maintenance equipment is available, the assessment requires the taking of images and a single soil sample at each assessment site. There are three assessment sites for 11v11 and 9v9 pitches at each goal area and the centre circle, whilst for mini pitches there are two sites at the centre circle and one goal area.

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

*Table 2.5: Agreed equivalent PPS rating for pitch Performance Quality Standard ratings*

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

In Dudley, six sites have received a PitchPower assessment. The findings of these in comparison to PPS findings are shown in the table below (as shown, the findings align).

*Table 2.6: Summary of PitchPower findings compared to PPS quality ratings*

Site ID	Site name	Pitch type	PPS quality rating	PitchPower rating
4	Bartley Green Football Club	Adult	Good	Good
23	Cradley Town Football Club	Adult	Good	Good

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Site ID	Site name	Pitch type	PPS quality rating	PitchPower rating
29	Dudley Sport Junior & Girls Football Club	Adult	Good	Advanced
		Youth (11v11)	Good	Good
38	Gornal Athletic Football Club	Adult	Standard	Basic
121	War Memorial Athletic Ground	Adult	Good	High
		Mini (5v5)	Good	High
128	The Dormston Centre	Adult	Poor	Poor

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

The Football Foundation and the FA have also recently developed a new Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund that allows clubs and sports organisations to apply for funding for maintenance assistance, consumables and/or equipment. Whilst local authorities are currently ineligible applicants through this fund, clubs, leagues and/or charitable organisations using local authority sites can apply provided they have security of tenure.

Funding is awarded over a ten-year period for up to 66% of the total cost required to bring the pitches up to an appropriate standard, following a site assessment. The level of funding then decreases year on year, with the expectation that the Club is able to take on the works independently by the end of the term. This fund was initially available until the end of March 2020, although it has since been extended indefinitely due to ongoing circumstances surrounding Covid-19.

### **Over marked pitches**

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

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

Additionally, it can be common for football pitches to be marked onto or overlapping cricket outfields, which, as previously mentioned, is this case at War Memorial Athletic Ground as well as at Lye Town Football Club. This creates availability issues at multi-sport sites as the cricket season begins in April when the football season is still ongoing, and the football season begins in August as cricket fixtures are still being played.

The table below highlights all sites containing over marked pitches in Dudley.

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*Table 2.7: Sites containing over marked pitches*

Site ID	Site	Comments
27	Donkey Pool Playing Fields	A youth 9v9 and mini 7v7 pitch over mark each other
30	Dudley Wood Playing Fields	A youth 9v9 pitch over marks an adult pitch and a mini 7v7 pitch over marks a separate youth 9v9 pitch
64	Lea Vale Playing Fields	Adult pitch over marks cricket outfield
68	Lye Town Football Club	Adult pitch over marks cricket outfield
72	Mary Stevens Park	A mini 7v7 pitch over marks an adult pitch and a youth 9v9 pitch over marks a youth 11v11 pitch
93	Primrose Hill Playing Field	A youth 9v9 and mini 7v7 pitch over mark each other
121	War Memorial Athletic Ground	Both the adult and mini 5v5 pitch over mark cricket outfield.
140	Vale Street Recreation Ground	Adult pitch is over marked by a youth 9v9 pitch

### **Ancillary facilities**

As with pitch quality, the quality of ancillary facilities servicing football sites across Dudley has been assessed on the basis of identifying good, standard and poor quality provision. To that end, the ratings are primarily influenced by the type and quality of amenities which are available on a site, such as a clubhouse, changing rooms, car parking and boundary fencing.

Changing rooms in particular are an issue at numerous sites, with many being serviced by facilities that are poor quality, basic, and that do not provide sufficient space in relation to the number of pitches on site. Furthermore, several sites do not have changing provision at all, which is a particular problem for adult football where changing facilities are a requirement for clubs to participate in a league structure.

As an example of the above, South Road Playing Fields has changing facilities that have been condemned by the Council and can therefore no longer be accessed. Similarly, sites such as Tenscore Playing Field and Woodside Park are without purposeful provision, whilst only port-a-cabin facilities are in place for football at Lea Vale Playing Fields. This is despite a clubhouse existing on the site to service cricket activity.

Burton Road Playing Field, Dudley Wood Playing Field, Huntingtree Park, King George V Park (Stourbridge), Sledmere Playing Fields and Wollaston Recreation Ground all have provision that needs upgrading, especially given the volume of demand that is received at the sites. At Dudley Wood Playing Field, Cradley Wood DC FC reports that it wants to develop the provision so that it also provides catering facilities and social space. This forms part of its wider vision to acquire the site via asset transfer.

The changing facilities at Gornal Athletic Football Club are also considered to be poor quality, predominately due to the age of the provision. The Club reports that it is aspirations to develop the facilities but has no financing in place.

Lye Town FC reports that its main problem at its site is a lack of spectator toilets and the need for an upgrade to its changing facilities, particularly to better accommodate its female demand, which is increasing. Female officials currently have to share provision with their male colleagues.

Some sites are serviced by good quality ancillary facilities, including Donkey Pool Playing Fields and Homer Hill Recreation Ground where new clubhouses have recently been provided. In addition, some sites that cater for a higher standard of play are also well serviced, such as War Memorial Athletic Ground.



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### *Local Football Facility Plan*

As with grass pitch improvements, the LFFP for Dudley identifies sites considered as priority sites for clubhouse and changing facility improvements, although there may again be a need to amend and/or add to this list based on the findings of this study. It recommends that the following four sites should be a priority for refurbishment/ replacement:

- ◆ Coseley Leisure Centre
- ◆ Dudley Wood Playing Field
- ◆ King George V Park (Stourbridge)
- ◆ South Road Playing Fields

Whilst most of these sites will still require improvement, as with the grass pitch projects, there may be a need to amend and/or add to this list based on the findings of the PPOSS.

### **2.3: Demand**

Through the audit and assessment, 413 teams from within 100 clubs are identified as playing within Dudley. This consists of 89 adult, 186 youth and 138 mini teams and includes eight adult women's teams as well as 21 youth girls' teams (11 youth 11v11 and ten youth 9v9).

The most prominent playing format is youth 11v11 football (116 teams), whereas the least common is mini 5v5 football (64 teams). The largest number of teams are found in the Central Dudley Analysis Area (101 teams), despite the Stourbridge Analysis Area supplying more pitches. The fewest number of teams play in the North Dudley Analysis Area (45 teams).

A summary of demand can be seen in the table below.

*Table 2.8: Summary of teams currently playing in Dudley*

Analysis area	No. of teams					
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
Brierley Hill	16	25	16	17	11	<b>85</b>
Central Dudley	21	25	17	20	18	<b>101</b>
Halesowen	17	29	20	17	17	<b>100</b>
North Dudley	15	8	4	9	9	<b>45</b>
Stourbridge	20	29	13	11	9	<b>82</b>
<b>Dudley</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>413</b>

### ***Participation trends***

There has been a considerable growth in football demand in recent years in Dudley, with significantly more teams existing now when compared to previous seasons (334 teams were identified in the 2015 PPS). This is predominately due to the growth of large clubs such as Halas Hawks FC and Wordsley Wasps FC, in addition to the formation of clubs that already have significant number of teams, such as Cradley Town DC FC. There has been significant growth in the both the Central Dudley and Halesowen analysis areas.

Aligned to the above, 72% of consulted clubs report a growth in demand over the previous three years, whilst only two clubs report a reduction. These are AFC Birmingham and Wollaston United FC, which both report that they have lost an adult team. The former relates this to a lack of pitch capacity, whilst the latter relates it to the impact of Covid-19.



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The majority of clubs reporting an increase in demand have seen increases in the number of their mini and junior teams. The reasons for the growth vary, but include a general increase in demand, the impact of initiatives and coaching sessions, increased access to secondary venues, and the acquisition of additional coaches.

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

There is a significant level of demand exporting from Dudley to neighbouring authorities. This is predominately due to a perceived lack of pitch capacity and/or poor quality, with clubs therefore travelling outside of the Borough to ensure that teams can be fielded. In contrast, there is very little imported demand identified.

Dudley Town FC is key exporter of demand, with its first team playing at Aspray Arena, in Walsall, via a groundshare with Sporting Khalsa FC. Furthermore, it has an U16s team playing at Westhead Park in Wyre Forest. It reports a need to return this demand to Dudley but states that there is no suitable venue to meet its requirements.

Black Country United FC also exports an adult team due to it needing to access a site with appropriate changing facilities, whilst Sedgley & Gornal United FC splits its demand across Dudley and Wolverhampton due to not being able to access a site large enough to accommodate all of its teams. Halesowen Town Colts FC uses sites in Bromsgrove for some of its teams due to similar issues.

Cradley Town FC utilises a number of sites in Sandwell, whilst Stourbridge FC has to access pitches in both Sandwell and Wyre Forest. Both clubs state that this is due to a lack of availability within Dudley.

Stourbridge FC uses Brown West Head Park, in Kidderminster, as an overspill facility when its Dudley-based sites have no capacity. Halas Hawks JFC also uses this site as well as provision in Bromsgrove.

Other clubs expressing some level of exported demand include:

- |                       |                        |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| ◀ AFC Woodcross Youth | ◀ Beacon Lions FC      |
| ◀ Dudley Athletic FC  | ◀ Gornal Athletic FC   |
| ◀ Lye Town FC         | ◀ Oldswinford Youth FC |
| ◀ Withymoor Colts FC  | ◀ Wrens Nest FC        |

Across the clubs, although it can vary for some week-on-week, approximately 36 teams are exported on a weekly basis. This consists of five adult, 14 youth and 17 mini teams.

### ***Unmet demand***

Dudley Wood FC expresses unmet demand in that it suggests that it has numerous teams that train with the Club but that do not play matches due to a lack of pitch capacity and availability.

No other clubs express unmet demand, although many do identify significant latent demand and are actively having to turn players away.

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### ***Latent demand***

Several clubs in Dudley report latent demand, stating that they could field more teams if more pitches were available. This applies to the following:

- ◀ AFC Birmingham
- ◀ Cradley Town DC FC
- ◀ Dudley Town FC (10
- ◀ Halesowen Town Colts FC
- ◀ Lapal Colts FC
- ◀ Netherton Colts FC
- ◀ Stourbridge FC
- ◀ Wollaston United FC
- ◀ Black Country United FC
- ◀ Cradley Town FC
- ◀ Gornal Athletic FC
- ◀ Halas Hawks JFC
- ◀ Milking Bank Rangers FC
- ◀ Sedgley & Gornal United FC
- ◀ Wordsley Wasps FC
- ◀ Wrens Nest FC

Whilst not all clubs quantify their potential increases, it is significant for those that do. For example, Dudley Town FC reports that it could field up to 10 additional teams, whereas Gornal Athletic FC suggests that it could accommodate six more. Such figures have been incorporated into the future demand section at the relevant clubs, below.

In addition to the requirement for more pitch capacity, some of the clubs also identify that a lack of other facilities limit activity, including 3G pitches for training and changing rooms. Cradley Town FC and Halesowen Town Colts FC also cite a lack of coaches and volunteers.

### ***Future demand***

Future demand can be defined in two ways, through participation increases and by using population forecasts. In addition, the proceeding Strategy & Action Plan document will contain housing growth scenarios that will estimate the additional demand for football arising from housing developments within Dudley.

### ***Population increases***

Team generation rates are used in the following table to calculate the number of teams likely to be generated in the future (2039) based on population growth. Using this, there is a predicted increase of six adult and eight youth 11v11 teams. The represents significant growth from population increases alone.

*Table 2.9: Dudley-wide team generation rates*

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams	Team Generation Rate	Future population within age group (2039)	Predicted future number of teams (2039)	No. of teams that may be generated
Senior Men (18-45)	52,216	81	1:645	56,138	87	6
Senior Women (18-45)	53,606	8	1:6701	59,047	8	0
Youth Boys (12-17)	11,449	115	1:100	12,367	123	8
Youth Girls (12-17)	11,184	11	1:1017	12,014	11	0
Youth Boys (10-11)	4,037	60	1:67	4,088	60	0
Youth Girls (10-11)	3,858	10	1:386	4,003	10	0
Mini-Soccer Mixed (8-9)	8,047	74	1:109	8,132	74	0
Mini-Soccer Mixed (6-7)	8,183	64	1:126	8,186	64	0

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When broken down by analysis area, the increase in adult and youth 11v11 participation is expected to be split relatively equally. This is summarised below and translates the demand to match equivalent sessions (0.5 match equivalent sessions represents one team, based on teams playing on a home and away basis).

*Table 2.10: Summary of future demand through team generation rates by analysis area*

Analysis area	Future demand (match equivalent sessions)					
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
Brierley Hill	0.5	1	-	-	-	1.5
Central Dudley	0.5	0.5	-	-	-	1
Halesowen	0.5	1	-	-	-	1.5
North Dudley	0.5	0.5	-	-	-	1
Stourbridge	1	1	-	-	-	2
<b>Dudley</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>

### *Participation increases*

A total of 17 clubs report aspirations to increase the number of teams that they provide in the future. This equates to a considerable growth of 98 teams, as seen below.

*Table 2.11: Potential team increases identified by clubs*

Club	Analysis area	Future demand (teams)	Pitch size	Match equivalents
AFC Birmingham	Halesowen	1	Adult	0.5
Black Country United FC	Halesowen	1	Adult	0.5
		1	Youth 11v11	0.5
Cradley Town FC	Central Dudley	1	Adult	0.5
		4	Youth 11v11	2
		4	Youth 9v9	2
		3	Mini 7v7	1.5
Cradley Town DC FC	Central Dudley	2	Youth 11v11	1
		2	Youth 9v9	1
		4	Mini 7v7	2
		4	Mini 5v5	2
Dudley Town Youth FC	Brierley Hill	2	Adult	1
		2	Youth 11v11	1
		2	Youth 9v9	1
		2	Mini 7v7	1
		2	Mini 5v5	1
FC Crystal	Stourbridge	2	Youth 11v11	1
Gornal Athletic FC	North Dudley	2	Youth 11v11	1
		3	Youth 9v9	1.5
		3	Mini 7v7	1.5
		2	Mini 5v5	1
Halas Hawks JFC	Halesowen	2	Mini 7v7	1
		4	Mini 5v5	2
Lapal Colts FC	Halesowen	1	Mini 5v5	0.5
Lye Town FC	Stourbridge	2	Youth 11v11	1
		2	Youth 9v9	1

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Club	Analysis area	Future demand (teams)	Pitch size	Match equivalents
Milking Bank Rangers FC	Central Dudley	1	Mini 7v7	0.5
		1	Mini 5v5	0.5
Netherton Colts FC	Central Dudley	2	Mini 5v5	1
Netherton Tigers FC	Central Dudley	2	Adult	1
		2	Youth 11v11	1
		3	Youth 9v9	1.5
		1	Mini 5v5	0.5
Sedgley & Gornal FC	North Dudley	2	Youth 11v11	1
		3	Youth 9v9	1.5
		2	Mini 7v7	1
		3	Mini 5v5	1.5
Stourbridge FC	Stourbridge	2	Youth 11v11	1
		2	Youth 9v9	1
		2	Mini 7v7	1
		2	Mini 5v5	1
Wordsley Wasps FC	Brierly Hill	2	Mini 7v7	1
		2	Mini 5v5	1
Wrens Nest FC	North Dudley	4	Mini 5v5	2
<b>Total</b>				<b>49</b>

Included within the future demand expressed by clubs is demand for the creation of female teams by Cradley Town DC, Cradley Town, Gornal Athletic, Netherton Tigers, Sedgley & Gornal and Stourbridge football clubs. Increasing female demand is currently a priority area for the FA.

Related to the above, Wildcats centres work with County FA qualified coaches to deliver local weekly sessions, providing opportunities for girls aged five to 11 to develop fundamental skills and experience football in a safe and fun environment. All organisations delivering Wildcats centres receive a £900 start-up grant and 30 branded footballs in their first year of running the programme to help develop and increase girl's participation. Through this, it is likely that the growth in affiliated female demand will exceed that shown through team generation rates and club aspirations, although to what extent is not currently quantifiable.

The total future demand expressed by the clubs amounts to 49 match equivalent sessions. Most of this is identified in the Central Dudley Analysis Area (18 match sessions) and on mini 5v5 pitches (14 match sessions). However, some level of future demand is identified on every pitch type and in every analysis area, as summarised in the table below.

Table 2.12: Summary of future demand expressed by clubs

Analysis area	Future demand (match equivalent sessions)					
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
Brierley Hill	1	1	1	2	2	7
Central Dudley	1.5	4	4.5	4	4	18
Halesowen	1	0.5	-	1	2.5	5
North Dudley	-	2	3	2.5	4.5	12
Stourbridge	-	3	2	1	1	7
<b>Dudley</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>49</b>

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### *Future demand summary*

In the supply and demand analysis at the end of this section of the report, only future demand identified through participation increases are included due to the large increases expressed by clubs. This demand is considered more aspirational, and it is unlikely that it will all be achieved. However, the preceding Strategy document will include a scenario to identify the impact it would have if the growth was realised.

### **2.4: Capacity analysis**

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

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

Taking into consideration the guidelines on capacity, the following ratings are used in Dudley:

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

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

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

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

### ***Education sites***

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

# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

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

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

### ***Informal use***

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

### ***Peak time***

Spare capacity can only be considered as actual spare capacity if pitches are available at peak time, which can differ for each pitch type depending on when leagues operate for each format of play. In Dudley, peak time for all types of football is Sunday AM, based on current demand levels.

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

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

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

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

The table overleaf identifies the way actual spare capacity is represented in Table 2.14.

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*Table 2.13: Spare capacity examples*

Spare capacity in peak period (examples)	Explanation of spare capacity
1	If the cell is highlighted in green with a number, it means that the pitches have actual spare capacity at peak time.
-	If the cell has a dash in it, this means that the pitch is unavailable in the peak period. If it was to be made available, actual spare capacity could exist.
0	If the cell has a 0 in it, this means that the pitch is played to capacity, either overall or during the peak period.
1	If the cell has a number in it but is not highlighted, it means the pitch has spare capacity in the peak period; however, this is discounted. This is most commonly due to unsecure tenure and/or poor pitch quality.



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Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	Agreed quality rating	No. of pitches	Site capacity	Current play	Capacity balance	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
1	Abbey St Recreation Ground	DY3 2PG	North Dudley	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	Poor	1	1	1	0	0	Played to capacity
							Mini	(5v5)	Poor	1	2	1.5	0.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
2	Amblecote Recreation Ground	DY8 4LZ	Stourbridge	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		Poor	1	1	1	0	0	Played to capacity
3	Ashwood Park Primary School	DY8 5DJ	Stourbridge	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use
4	Bartley Green Football Club	B62 0HF	Halesowen	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		Good	1	3	2	1	0	Played to capacity at peak time
5	Beacon Hill Academy	DY3 1BP	North Dudley	No	School	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	Standard	2	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use
							Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use
8	Blanford Mere Primary School	DY6 7EA	Brierley Hill	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	Standard	1	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use
10	Bromley Hills Primary School	DY6 8LW	Brierley Hill	Yes	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	4	1.5	2.5	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure
11	Buffery Park	DY2 8SH	Central Dudley	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		Poor	1	1	1	0	0	Played to capacity
							Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	2	1.5	0.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
12	Burton Road Playing Fields	DY1 3DB	Central Dudley	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		Poor	1	1	1	0	0	Played to capacity
							Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	1	1.5	0.5	0	Overplayed
							Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	2	2	0	0	At capacity
14	Cavalier Drive Playing Field	B63 4SQ	Halesowen	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	1	2	1	0	Overplayed
16	Clayton Park	WV14 8XX	North Dudley	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	1	1.5	0.5	0	Overplayed
							Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	2	3	1	0	Overplayed
							Mini	(5v5)	Poor	1	2	2	0	0	Played to capacity
20	Coseley Leisure Centre	WV14 9JW	North Dudley	Yes	School	Secure	Adult		Standard	1	2	3	1	0	Overplayed
							Youth	(11v11)	Standard	4	8	9	1	0	Overplayed
21	Cot Lane Open Space	DY6 9SD	Brierley Hill	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		Poor	1	1	1	0	0	Played to capacity
							Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	2	1	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
22	Cotwall End Primary School	DY3 3YG	North Dudley	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use
23	Cradley Town Football Club	DY3 3YG	Brierley Hill	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		Good	1	3	2.5	0.5	0.5	Minimal spare capacity discounted to protect quality
25	Dawley Brook Primary School	DY6 9BP	Brierley Hill	Yes	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	4	1.5	2.5	2.5	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure
26	Dingle Primary School	DY6 8PF	Brierley Hill	Yes	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	2	1.5	0.5	0.5	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
27	Donkey Pool Playing Fields	DY1 4DS	North Dudley	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		Poor	1	1	2.5	1.5	0	Overplayed
							Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	1	2	1	0	Overplayed
							Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	2	2	0	0	Played to capacity
							Mini	(5v5)	Poor	1	2	3.5	1.5	0	Overplayed
28	Dudley College (Castle View)	DY1 3HP	Central Dudley	Yes	College	Secure	Adult		Good	2	6	5	1	0.5	Minimal spare capacity discounted to protect quality
29	Dudley Sport Junior & Girls Football Club	DY5 3QJ	Central Dudley	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		Good	1	3	3	0	0	At capacity
							Youth	(9v9)	Good	2	8	4.5	3.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
							Mini	(7v7)	Good	1	6	3	3	0	Played to capacity at peak time

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## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	Agreed quality rating	No. of pitches	Site capacity	Current play	Capacity balance	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
30	Dudley Wood Playing Field	DY2 0DE	Central Dudley	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		Poor	1	1	2.5	1.5	0	Overplayed
							Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	1	3	2	0	Overplayed
							Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	2	3	1	0	Overplayed
32	Envile Road	DY6 0JT	Brierley Hill	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	2	0.5	1.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity
33	Fairhaven Primary School	DY8 5PY	Brierley Hill	Yes	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	4	3	1	0	Played to capacity at peak time
							Mini	(5v5)	Standard	1	4	3	1	0	Played to capacity at peak time
36	Glynne Primary School	DY6 9TH	Brierley Hill	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	Poor	1	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use
38	Gornal Athletic Football Club	DY3 2NR	North Dudley	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		Standard	1	2	3.5	1.5	0	Overplayed
40	Green Park Sports Complex	DY2 7LY	Central Dudley	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		Standard	1	2	2.5	0.5	0	Overplayed
							Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	4	2	2	0.5	Actual spare capacity
41	Greenfields Open Space	DY6 8AP	Brierley Hill	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	Poor	1	1	1	0	0	At capacity
							Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	1	0.5	0.5	0.5	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
42	Greenhill Alternative Learning Campus	B62 9JT	Halesowen	Yes	School	Secure	Adult		Standard	1	2	2	0	0	Played to capacity
							Youth	(11v11)	Standard	1	2	2	0	0	Played to capacity
							Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	2	1.5	0.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
44	Halesowen College	B63 3NA	Halesowen	Yes	College	Secure	Adult		Standard	1	2	3.5	1.5	0	Overplayed
							Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	2	2	0	0	Played to capacity
48	Hawbush Primary School	DY5 3NH	Brierley Hill	Yes	School		Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	2	2	0	0	Played to capacity
49	Hawne Playing Fields	B63 3SS	Halesowen	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		Poor	1	2	-	2	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
50	The Link Academy	DY2 0PB	Central Dudley	No	School	Unsecure	Adult		Standard	1	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use
							Youth	(11v11)	Standard	1	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use
51	Homer Hill Recreation Ground	B63 2UR	Halesowen	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		Standard	1	2	6	2	0	Overplayed
							Youth	(9v9)	Standard	2	4	4	2	0	Overplayed
							Mini	(5v5)	Standard	2	8	9	1	0	Overplayed
52	Huntingtree Park	B63 4EX	Halesowen	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		Poor	1	1	1	0	0	Played to capacity
55	Hurst Hill Recreation Ground	WV14 9AN	North Dudley	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		Poor	1	1	0.5	0.5	0.5	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
56	Junction Road Playing Fields	DY8 1JU	Stourbridge	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	Poor	1	1	2.5	1.5	0	Overplayed
							Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	1	1	0	0	Played to capacity
							Mini	(5v5)	Poor	1	2	1	1	0.5	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
58	King Edward VI College Sports Ground	DY8 2LQ	Stourbridge	Yes	School	Unsecure	Adult		Standard	2	4	3.5	0.5	0.5	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure
59	King George V Park (Stourbridge)	DY8 5BT	Brierley Hill	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		Poor	2	2	2	0	0	Played to capacity
							Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	4	0.5	3.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity
							Mini	(5v5)	Standard	1	4	1	3	0	Played to capacity at peak time
61	Kingswinford Park	DY6 8AZ	Brierley Hill	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	Standard	1	4	1.5	2.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
62	Kinver Street	DY8 5AJ	Brierley Hill	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	1	1	0	0	Played to capacity
							Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	2	2	0	0	Played to capacity
							Mini	(5v5)	Poor	1	2	1.5	0.5	0.5	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality

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Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	Agreed quality rating	No. of pitches	Site capacity	Current play	Capacity balance	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
63	Lapal Primary School	B62 0BZ	Halesowen	Yes	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	4	2.5	1.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
							Mini	(5v5)	Standard	2	8	4.5	3.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
64	Lea Vale Playing Fields	BY8 2BG	Stourbridge	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		Standard	1	2	3	1	0	Overplayed
							Youth	(11v11)	Standard	2	4	4	0	0	Played to capacity
							Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	2	1	1	0	Played to capacity at peak time
							Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	2	1	1	0	Played to capacity at peak time
							Mini	(5v5)	Standard	2	8	1	7	1	Actual spare capacity
66	Lister Road Open Space	DY2 8JR	Central Dudley	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	2	1	1	0	Played to capacity at peak time
							Mini	(5v5)	Standard	1	4	1	3	0	Played to capacity at peak time
67	Lutley Primary School	B63 1BU	Halesowen	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use
68	Lye Town Football Club	DY9 7DH	Stourbridge	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		Standard	1	2	3	0	0	Played to capacity
69	Maidensbridge Primary School	DY6 0HX	Brierley Hill	No	School	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use
72	Mary Stevens Park	DY8 2DN	Stourbridge	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	Poor	2	2	3	1	0	Overplayed
							Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	1	1.5	0.5	0	Overplayed
							Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	2	1	1	1	Actual spare capacity
							Mini	(5v5)	Poor	1	2	0.5	1.5	1	Actual spare capacity
73	Milking Bank Primary School	DY1 2PT	Central Dudley	Yes	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	4	2.5	1.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
75	Netherbrook Primary School	DY2 9RZ	Central Dudley	Yes	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	4	2.5	1.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
76	Netherton Park	DY2 9HA	Central Dudley	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		Standard	1	2	2	0	0	Played to capacity
							Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	2	0.5	1.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
77	Newfield Lane Playing Fields	B63 3SS	Halesowen	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		Poor	1	2	-	2	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
78	Newfield Park Primary School	B63 3TP	Halesowen	Yes	School	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	2	1.5	0.5	0.5	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure
85	Parkes Hall Social Club	DY1 3SR	North Dudley	Yes	Club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	2	1.5	0.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
88	Pedmore High School	DY9 7HS	Stourbridge	Yes	School	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	Standard	1	2	1	1	0	Played to capacity at peak time
							Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	2	2	0	0	Played to capacity
							Mini	(5v5)	Standard	1	4	1	3	0	Played to capacity at peak time
89	Pegasus Academy	DY1 2DU	Central Dudley	Yes	School	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	Standard	1	2	1	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure
							Mini	(5v5)	Standard	1	4	1	3	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure
93	Primrose Hill Playing Field	DY2 9RH	Central Dudley	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	1	0.5	0.5	0.5	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
							Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	2	1	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
94	Priory Park	DY1 4EY	Central Dudley	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	Poor	1	2	1	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
95	Priory Primary School	DY1 4AQ	Central Dudley	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use
97	Quarry Bank Primary School	DY5 2AD	Central Dudley	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use

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Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	Agreed quality rating	No. of pitches	Site capacity	Current play	Capacity balance	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
100	Ridgewood High School	DY8 3NQ	Stourbridge	Yes	School	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	Standard	2	4	3	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure
102	Rufford Primary School	DY9 7NR	Stourbridge	Yes	School	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	2	2.5	0.5	0	Overplayed
105	Silver Jubilee Park	WV14 9SZ	North Dudley	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	Poor	1	2	1	1	0	Played to capacity at peak time
106	Sledmere Playing Fields	DY2 8EX	Central Dudley	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	2	4	1.5	2.5	1.5	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
							Mini	(5v5)	Poor	1	2	0.5	1.5	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
107	Sledmere Primary School	DY2 8EH	Central Dudley	No	School	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	Standard	1	2	3	1	0	Overplayed
							Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	2	2	0	0	Played to capacity
110	South Road Playing Fields	DY8 3RL	Stourbridge	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	Poor	2	2	2.5	0.5	0	Overplayed
111	St James Academy	DY1 3JE	Central Dudley	No	School	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	Standard	1	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use
112	St Marks CE Primary School	DY5 2TH	Brierley Hill	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	Poor	1	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use
116	St James CE Primary School	DY8 4RU	Stourbridge	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use
118	St Mary's C of E School	DY6 7AQ	Brierley Hill	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use
121	War Memorial Athletic Ground	DY8 4HN	Stourbridge	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		Good	1	3	3.5	0.5	0	Overplayed
							Mini	(5v5)	Good	1	6	1	5	1	Actual spare capacity
123	Summerhill School	DY6 9XE	Brierley Hill	Yes	School	Unsecure	Adult		Standard	1	2	3	1	0	Overplayed
							Youth	(11v11)	Standard	1	2	3	1	0	Overplayed
124	Tenscore Playing Field	DY3 3UE	North Dudley	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		Poor	1	1	0.5	0.5	0.5	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
125	The Brook Primary School	DY8 5YN	Brierley Hill	No	School	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use
							Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use
126	The Crestwood School	DY6 8QG	Brierley Hill	Yes	School	Secure	Adult		Standard	1	2	3	1	0	Overplayed
							Youth	(11v11)	Standard	1	2	3	1	0	Overplayed
							Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	2	2	1	0	Overplayed
							Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	4	2.5	1.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
							Mini	(5v5)	Standard	1	4	2	2	0	Played to capacity at peak time
127	The Dell Stadium	DY5 4NE	Brierley Hill	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		Standard	2	4	4	0	0	Played to capacity
128	The Dormston Centre	DY3 1SN	North Dudley	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	Poor	1	1	1	0	0	Played to capacity
129	The Earls High School	B63 3SL	Halesowen	Yes	School	Unsecure	Adult		Standard	2	4	5	1	0	Overplayed
							Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	2	3	1	0	Overplayed
130	The Ellowes Hall Sports College	DY3 2JH	North Dudley	Yes	School	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	Standard	2	4	3.5	0.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity
131	The Grove	B63 3TB	Halesowen	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		Standard	1	2	3	1	0	Overplayed
132	The Kingswinford Academy	DY6 7AD	Brierley Hill	No	School	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	Standard	1	2	1	1	0	Played to capacity at peak time
133	The Mere	DY8 3AX	Stourbridge	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	2	1.5	0.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
134	The Ridge Primary School	DY8 3NF	Stourbridge	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	Poor	1	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use



**DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT**

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	Agreed quality rating	No. of pitches	Site capacity	Current play	Capacity balance	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
136	The Scrolls	B63 3QP	Halesowen	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	1	0.5	0.5	0.5	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
							Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	2	0.5	1.5	0.5	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
137	The Wordsley School	DY8 5SP	Brierley Hill	Yes	School	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	Standard	2	4	4.5	0.5	0	Overplayed
140	Vale Street Recreation Ground	DY3 2DF	North Dudley	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		Poor	1	1	0.5	0.5	0.5	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
							Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	1	-	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
141	Windsor High School & Sixth Form College	B63 4BB	Halesowen	Yes	School	Unsecure	Adult		Poor	1	1	2	1	0	Overplayed
142	Withymoor Playing Fields	DY5 3ES	Stourbridge	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	2	0.5	1.5	0.5	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
							Mini	(5v5)	Poor	2	4	1	3	0.5	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
143	Withymoor Primary School	DY5 3EF	Stourbridge	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	4	2.5	1.5	0.5	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
144	Wollaston Recreation Ground	DY8 3SE	Stourbridge	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		Poor	2	2	4.5	2.5	0	Overplayed
							Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	2	1	1	0.5	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
146	Woodside Park	DY1 2EG	Central Dudley	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		Poor	1	1	-	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
148	Wren's Nest Primary School	DY3 1NQ	Central Dudley	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	Standard	1	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use
170	Cakemore Road Playing Field	B65 0QX	Halesowen	Yes	Club	Unsecure	Adult		Standard	1	2	3	1	0	Overplayed
194	Baggeridge Social Club	DY3 3AA	Central Dudley	Yes	Club	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	Standard	1	4	3.5	0.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
195	Jessons Primary School	DY1 2AQ	Central Dudley	Yes	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	4	1.5	2.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
196	Bryce Road	DY5 4NE	Brierley Hill	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	1	0	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality

# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### Actual spare capacity

The table below identifies actual spare capacity by site and pitch type across Dudley. It totals five match equivalent sessions and is identified across nine pitches at seven sites. This represents comparatively minimal levels.

Table 2.15: Summary of actual spare capacity

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Capacity rating (sessions)
32	Enville Road	Brierley Hill	Youth (9v9)	1	0.5
40	Green Park Sports Complex	Central Dudley	Mini (7v7)	1	0.5
59	King George V Park (Stourbridge)	Brierley Hill	Mini (7v7)	1	0.5
64	Lea Vale Playing Fields	Stourbridge	Mini (5v5)	2	1
72	Mary Stevens Park	Stourbridge	Mini (7v7)	1	1
121	War Memorial Athletic Ground	Stourbridge	Mini (5v5)	1	1
130	The Ellowes Hall Sports College	North Dudley	Youth (9v9)	2	0.5

The Stourbridge Analysis Area provides the largest amount of actual spare capacity, with three match equivalent sessions, whereas none is identified in the Halesowen Analysis Area. Furthermore, no match equivalent sessions of actual spare capacity exist on the adult or youth 11v11 pitch stock.

Table 2.16: Summary of actual spare capacity by analysis area

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions per week)					
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
Brierley Hill	-	-	0.5	0.5	-	1
Central Dudley	-	-	-	0.5	-	0.5
Halesowen	-	-	-	-	-	0
North Dudley	-	-	0.5	-	-	0.5
Stourbridge	-	-	-	1	2	3
<b>Dudley</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>

In addition, it must be noted that an additional 16 match equivalents sessions per week of potential spare capacity have also been discounted due to poor quality, which is significant. Moreover, 4.5 match equivalent sessions per week have been discounted due to unsecure tenure.

### Overplay

Overplay occurs when there is more play accommodated on a site than it can sustain (based on its quality rating), which can often be due to the low carrying capacity of pitches. In Dudley, 44 pitches across 24 sites are overplayed by a combined total of 38 match equivalent sessions per week. This represents considerable levels of overplay and is summarised in the table overleaf.

# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 2.17: Summary of overplay

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Capacity rating (sessions)
12	Burton Road Playing Fields	Central Dudley	Youth (9v9)	1	0.5
14	Cavalier Drive Playing Field	Halesowen	Youth (9v9)	1	1
16	Clayton Park	North Dudley	Youth (9v9)	1	0.5
			Mini (7v7)	1	1
20	Coseley Leisure Centre	North Dudley	Youth (11v11)	4	1
27	Donkey Pool Playing Fields	North Dudley	Youth (9v9)	1	1.5
			Mini (7v7)	1	1
30	Dudley Wood Playing Field	Central Dudley	Adult	1	1.5
			Youth (9v9)	1	2
			Mini (7v7)	1	1
38	Gornal Athletic Football Club	North Dudley	Adult	1	1.5
40	Green Park Sports Complex	Central Dudley	Adult	1	0.5
44	Halesowen College	Halesowen	Adult	1	1.5
51	Homer Hill Recreation Ground	Halesowen	Adult	1	2
			Youth (9v9)	2	2
			Mini (5v5)	2	1
56	Junction Road Playing Fields	Stourbridge	Youth (11v11)	1	1.5
64	Lea Vale Playing Fields	Stourbridge	Adult	1	1
72	Mary Stevens Park	Stourbridge	Youth (11v11)	2	1
			Youth (9v9)	1	0.5
102	Rufford Primary School	Stourbridge	Youth (9v9)	1	0.5
107	Sledmere Primary School	Central Dudley	Youth (11v11)	1	1
110	South Road Playing Fields	Stourbridge	Youth (11v11)	2	0.5
121	War Memorial Athletic Ground	Stourbridge	Adult	1	0.5
123	Summerhill School	Brierley Hill	Adult	1	1
			Youth (11v11)	1	1
126	The Crestwood School	Brierley Hill	Adult	1	1
			Youth (11v11)	1	1
			Youth (9v9)	1	1
129	The Earls High School	Halesowen	Adult	2	1
			Youth (9v9)	1	1
137	The Wordsley School	Brierley Hill	Youth (11v11)	1	0.5
141	Windsor High School & Sixth Form College	Halesowen	Adult	1	1
144	Wollaston Recreation Ground	Stourbridge	Adult	2	2.5
170	Cakemore Road Playing Field	Halesowen	Adult	1	1

In total, there are 16 match equivalent sessions per week of overplay on adult pitches, 7.5 on youth 11v11 pitches, 10.5 on youth 9v9 pitches, three on mini 7v7 and one on mini 5v5 pitches. Each analysis area is experiencing some level of overplay, most prominently in the Halesowen Analysis Area (11.5 match equivalent sessions).



# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 2.18: Summary of overplay by analysis area

Analysis area	Overplay (match equivalent sessions per week)					
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
Brierley Hill	2	2.5	1	-	-	5.5
Central Dudley	2	1	2.5	1	-	6.5
Halesowen	6.5	-	4	-	1	11.5
North Dudley	1.5	1	2	2	-	6.5
Stourbridge	4	3	1	-	-	8
<b>Dudley</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>38</b>

Of the overplayed pitches, 20 are assessed as poor quality where improvements would relieve issues. Additionally, 12 are located at education sites, where curricular and extra-curricular use adds to the capacity issues, in addition to community access.

In addition to the overplayed pitches, it should be noted that 23 pitches across Dudley are currently played to capacity. Any further use of these, without quality improvements, would result in further overplay developing.

### 2.5: Supply and demand analysis

Having considered supply and demand, the tables below identify the current supply and demand balance (i.e., spare capacity taking away overplay) in each of the analysis areas for each pitch type. The future demand balance is then also calculated, based on potential growth identified through team generation rates (club aspirations are not included as these are considered more aspirational).

#### Adult pitch analysis

Overall, there is currently a considerable shortfall of adult capacity in Dudley amounting to 16 match equivalent sessions per week, with shortfalls identified in each analysis area. This is a consequence of several adult pitches being overplayed, without any providing actual spare capacity.

When accounting for future demand, the overall shortfall increases to 19 match equivalent sessions per week.

Table 2.19: Supply and demand balance of adult pitches

Analysis area	Match equivalent sessions (per week)				Total
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	
Brierley Hill	-	2	2	0.5	2.5
Central Dudley	-	2	2	0.5	2.5
Halesowen	-	6.5	6.5	0.5	7
North Dudley	-	1.5	1.5	0.5	2
Stourbridge	-	4	4	1	5
<b>Dudley</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>19</b>

# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### Youth 11v11 pitch analysis

There is currently a capacity shortfall across Dudley on youth 11v11 pitches totalling 7.5 match equivalent sessions per week. This is due to a shortfall in four of the analysis areas, with only the Halesowen Analysis Area not evidencing a deficit (it is instead operating at capacity).

When future demand is considered, the overall shortfall increases to 11.5 match equivalent sessions per week, with shortfalls evident in each analysis area.

Table 2.20: Supply and demand balance of youth 11v11 pitches

Analysis area	Match equivalent sessions (per week)				Total
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	
Brierley Hill	-	2.5	2.5	1	3.5
Central Dudley	-	1	1	0.5	1.5
Halesowen	-	-	0	1	1
North Dudley	-	1	1	0.5	1.5
Stourbridge	-	3	3	1	4
<b>Dudley</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11.5</b>

### Youth 9v9 pitch analysis

There is a current and future overall shortfall of youth 9v9 capacity in Dudley amounting to 9.5 match equivalent sessions per week. This is made up of a shortfall in each analysis area, with a deficit most prominent in the Halesowen Analysis Area.

Table 2.21: Supply and demand balance of youth 9v9 pitches

Analysis area	Match equivalent sessions (per week)				Total
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	
Brierley Hill	0.5	1	0.5	-	0.5
Central Dudley	-	2.5	2.5	-	2.5
Halesowen	-	4	4	-	4
North Dudley	0.5	2	1.5	-	1.5
Stourbridge	-	1	1	-	1
<b>Dudley</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9.5</b>

### Mini 7v7 pitch analysis

Across Dudley, there is a minimal shortfall of capacity on mini 7v7 pitches totalling one match equivalent session per week both currently and in the future. The shortfalls are present in the Central Dudley and North Dudley analysis areas, with capacity existing in the Brierley Hill and Stourbridge analysis areas.

# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 2.22: Supply and demand balance of mini 7v7 pitches

Analysis area	Match equivalent sessions (per week)				Total
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	
Brierley Hill	0.5	-	0.5	-	0.5
Central Dudley	0.5	1	0.5	-	0.5
Halesowen	-	-	0	-	0
North Dudley	-	2	1.5	-	1.5
Stourbridge	1	-	1	-	1
<b>Dudley</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

### Mini 5v5 pitch analysis

There is minimal overall spare capacity on mini 5v5 pitches in Dudley totalling one match equivalent session, which is solely attributed to the Stourbridge Analysis Area. A capacity shortfall is evident in the Halesowen Analysis Area, with the Brierley Hill, Central Dudley and North Dudley analysis areas operating at capacity.

Table 2.23: Supply and demand balance of mini 5v5 pitches

Analysis area	Match equivalent sessions (per week)				Total
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	
Brierley Hill	-	-	0	-	0
Central Dudley	-	-	0	-	0
Halesowen	-	1	1	-	1
North Dudley	-	-	0	-	0
Stourbridge	2	-	2	-	2
<b>Dudley</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

### Overall supply and demand analysis

Using the supply and demand analysis tables above, it is determined that there is a current and future shortfall of adult, youth 11v11, youth 9v9 and mini 7v7 match equivalent sessions in Dudley and sufficient capacity on mini 5v5 pitches, albeit minimal.

Table 2.24: Summary of supply and demand

Pitch type	Match equivalent sessions per week				Total
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	
Adult	-	16	16	3	19
Youth 11v11	-	7.5	7.5	4	11.5
Youth 9v9	1	10.5	9.5	0	9.5
Mini 7v7	2	3	1	0	1
Mini 5v5	2	1	1	0	1

# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

When compared to 2015 findings, it is clear that the overall supply and demand position has worsened in the intervening years. Where there was previously a modest amount of spare capacity or a shortfall within some analysis areas and on some pitch types, there are now new shortfalls and/or increased shortfalls, in particular when accounting for future demand. This is most likely a consequence of there being fewer pitches and a large increase in the number of teams.

### **Football – grass pitch supply and demand summary**

- Actual spare capacity totals six match equivalent sessions per week across football pitches in Dudley, which is a minimal amount.
- A total of 44 pitches across 24 sites are overplayed by a combined total of 38 match equivalent sessions per week.
- There is a current future shortfall of adult, youth 11v11, youth 9v9 and mini 7v7 match equivalent sessions, whilst minimal capacity exists on mini 5v5 pitches.

### **Football – supply summary**

- The audit identifies a total of 182 grass football pitches within Dudley across 96 sites, with 154 pitches available, at some level, for community use across 77 sites.
- As a breakdown, there are 43 adult, 23 youth 11v11, 33 youth 9v9, 29 mini 7v7 and 26 mini 5v5 pitches that are available for community use.
- Lapsed/disused pitches are identified at eight sites.
- In addition to the lapsed and disused sites, nine council sites previously provide more pitches than they currently do.
- The Council and schools are the predominant supplier of football pitches.
- Stourbridge FC expresses an aspiration to take over the sole operation of War Memorial Athletic Ground due to clashes with cricket provision and a general lack of capacity, whilst several other clubs also have asset transfer aspirations.
- Halas Hawks JFC, Dudley Town FC, Cradley Town DC FC and Sedgley & Gornal FC also have ambition to acquire provision.
- Most community available pitches are considered to be standard quality, with 76 assessed as this, although there is also a large quantity assessed as poor (68).
- Only ten pitches are assessed as good quality.
- Quality of ancillary provision is an issue at sites such as Burton Road Playing Fields, Dudley Wood Playing Field, Huntingtree Park, King George V Park (Stourbridge), Lea Vale Playing Field, Lye Town Football Club, Sledmere Playing Fields, South Road Playing Fields and Wollaston Recreation Ground.

### **Football – demand summary**

- Through the audit and assessment, 413 teams from within 100 clubs are identified as playing within Dudley, consisting of 89 adult, 186 youth and 138 mini teams.
- There is a trend of significant growth across Dudley in recent years.
- There are high levels of exported demand, with a large number of teams playing in neighbouring authorities due to a lack of pitch capacity and availability within Dudley.
- Dudley Town FC reports unmet demand in that it has teams that are unable to play due to a lack of pitch provision.
- A total of 16 clubs express latent demand in that they could field more teams if more pitch capacity was available to them.
- Based on population growth, an increase of six adult and eight youth teams is projected (to 2039), whilst 17 clubs report aspirations to grow by a combined total of 98 teams.

# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

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

#### 3.1 Introduction

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

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

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

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

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

#### 3.2 Current provision

A full size 3G pitch is considered by the FA to measure at least 100 x 64 metres (106 x 70 metres including run offs); however, for the purposes of this report, all pitches measuring over 100 x 60 metres (inclusive of run offs) are considered to be full size due to the amount of demand they can accommodate. It is common for such pitches to be slightly undersized, especially when sand-based pitches have been converted as the size requirement for hockey is generally smaller than for football.

As seen in the table below, there are currently four full size 3G pitches within Dudley across the same number sites. All of the pitches are available to the community and floodlit.

*Table 3.1: Full size 3G pitches in Dudley*

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Floodlit?	Size (metres)
65	Leasowes Sport Centre	Halesowen	Yes	Yes	100 x 60
96	Priory Road Football Complex	Central Dudley	Yes	Yes	107 x 70
127	The Dell Stadium	Brierley Hill	Yes	Yes	100 x 65
138	Thorns Leisure Centre	Stourbridge	Yes	Yes	105 x 70

## DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

There is a single pitch located within each of the Halesowen, Central Dudley, Brierley Hill and Stourbridge analysis areas.

In addition to the full size 3G pitches in Dudley, there are also nine sites containing 30 smaller sized pitches that could theoretically help to accommodate some demand. These are all available for community as well as being floodlit.

*Table 3.2: Additional supply of 3G pitches in Dudley*

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Community use?	Floodlit?	Number of pitches	Size (metres)
7	Bishop Milner Catholic College	Central Dudley	Yes	Yes	1	55 x 34
37	Goals Soccer Centre (Dudley)	Halesowen	Yes	Yes	1	43 x 31
					10	31 x 21
44	Halesowen College	Halesowen	Yes	Yes	1	90 x 44
					2	33 x 20
99	Redhill School	Stourbridge	Yes	Yes	1	90 x 45
108	Soccer Zone (Halesowen)	Halesowen	Yes	Yes	1	40 x 30
					6	30 x 20
123	Summerhill School	Brierley Hill	Yes	Yes	1	60 x 40
126	The Crestwood School	Brierley Hill	Yes	Yes	1	65 x 30
128	The Dormston Centre	North Dudley	Yes	Yes	1	72 x 32
130	The Ellowes Hall Sports College	North Dudley	Yes	Yes	4	30 x 20

Nationally, whilst not large enough to accommodate adult match play, smaller size provision can be used to host youth and mini matches, in addition to training demand, providing that they are FA approved. Whilst some of the pitches in Dudley are too small to accommodate any form of demand (as a minimum area of 37 x 27 metres is required for mini 5v5 football), others, such as those at Redhill School and Halesowen College, can serve a purpose in this regard.

Linked to the above, the pitch at Redhill School was considered to be a full size pitch as part of the LFFP process due to the level of demand it can accommodate. Whilst not large enough for adult matches, it can accommodate every other form of play in addition to significant training demand.

### **Future provision**

Sedgley & Gornal United FC has held talks with Birmingham FA regarding the development of 3G provision at Coseley Leisure Centre. As part of this, the Club wants to be a partner club for the conversion of the onsite AGP from sand-based to 3G, as well as taking on management of the five grass pitches.

Similarly, Windsor High School & Sixth Form College is exploring funding opportunities for the conversion of its sand-based AGP to 3G. The current surface is over 20 years old and whilst being available to the community, it is without floodlighting due to neighbouring housing. It would be slightly undersized, with it currently measuring 91 x 53 metres.

Stourbridge FC has aspirations to install a full size 3G pitch at War Memorial Athletic Ground, with discussions reportedly ongoing between the Council, FA and ECB surrounding this. To enable any development, Stourbridge CC would have to relocate.



# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

The Football Foundation reports that it is examining the feasibility of providing a full-size 3G pitch at Burton Road Playing Fields in order to further develop the site.

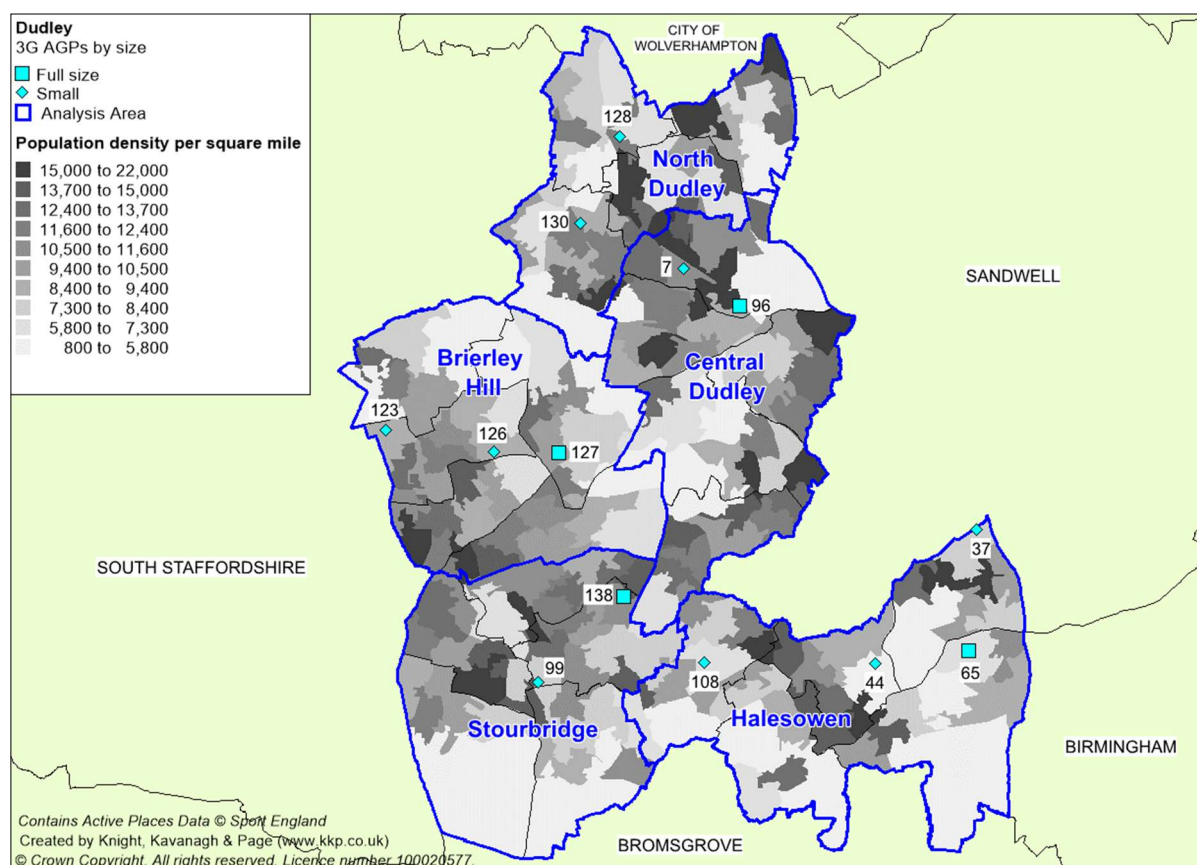
The Football Foundation has also been approached by the Council's management at The Dell Stadium, noting it aspires to convert one of the grass pitches on site to a full-size 3G pitch.

In the LFFP for Dudley, two priority projects are identified; a new full-size, floodlit 3G pitch in North Dudley and a smaller sized floodlit 3G pitch at Bishop Milner Catholic College. The latter was delivered in January 2020, whilst proposals to convert the AGP at Coseley Leisure Centre would meet the priority of a new full-size, floodlit 3G pitch in North Dudley, if it is to be progressed.

Due to significant growth in football demand since the LFFP was produced, it is likely that 3G requirements have now considerably increased. The demand section of this report further explores this and whether additions are required to the project list.

The map below identifies the location of 3G pitches currently servicing Dudley, regardless of size.

*Figure 3.1: Location of 3G pitches in Dudley*



### FA/FIFA approved pitches

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

Pitches undergo testing to become a FIFA Quality pitch or a FIFA Quality Pro pitch, with provision commonly constructed, installed and tested in situ to achieve either accreditation.



# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

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The differences between the accreditations are that FIFA quality pitches are designed to accommodate substantial levels of regular usage, whereas FIFA Quality Pro pitches are more for high level performance, with usage levels therefore more limited to protect the standard. Generally, FIFA Quality pitches can be typically used for 60-85 hours per week, whereas FIFA Quality Pro pitches are able to accommodate 20-30 hours.

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

In Dudley, the full size 3G pitches at Priory Road Football Complex, Leasowes Sport Centre and The Dell Stadium are currently FIFA/FA approved and can therefore host competitive matches. Re-testing is required every three years to ensure that this remains the case. In addition, the smaller sized pitches at Redhill School and Halesowen College are FA approved and could therefore accommodate competitive youth and mini football matches.

The full-size pitch that is not currently accredited is provided at Thorns Leisure Centre.

### ***World Rugby compliant pitches***

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

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

There is one full size World Rugby compliant 3G pitch within Dudley, located at The Dell Stadium. The pitch can therefore be used to accommodate rugby training activity and match play, although it is not currently recorded as doing this.

### ***Management***

The pitches at Leasowes Sport Centre and Thorns Leisure Centre are operated by their respective education providers, whilst Dudley College of Technology owns and manages the 3G pitch at Priory Road Football Complex. The pitch at The Dell Stadium is managed by the Council.

The majority of the smaller size pitches are also operated by educational establishment, with the only exceptions being the pitches at Goals Soccer Centre (Halesowen) and The Soccer Zone).

### ***Availability***

The table below summarises the availability for community use at sites in Dudley providing full size 3G pitches. Each pitch is readily available for community access, both overall and during what is considered to be the peak period. This is based on Sport England's Facilities Planning Model (FPM), which applies an overall peak period for AGPs of 34 hours per week (Monday to Thursday 17:00-21:00; Friday 17:00-19:00; Saturday and Sunday 09:00-17:00).

## DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

*Table 3.3: Summary of availability of full size 3G pitches*

Site ID	Site	Availability	Hours available in the peak period (and overall)
65	Leasowes Sport Centre	Reserved for curricular use until 17:00 then available to the community from 18:00-22:30 during the week. Open from 09:00-13:00 on Saturdays and from 10:00-14:30 on Sundays.	21.5 (31)
96	Priory Road Football Complex	Reserved for curricular use until 19:00. Available to the community from 19:00-21:00 during the week and from 10:00-17:00 during weekends.	22 (24)
127	The Dell Stadium	Available from 09:00-21:00 during the week and from 09:00-18:00 at the weekend.	24 (78)
138	Thorns Leisure Centre	Reserved for curricular use until 16:00 then available to the community until 23:00 during the week. Also available to the community from 09:00-16:30 at weekends.	33 (50)

The picture is similar for the smaller sized pitches, with non-school pitches available throughout each day and school-based pitches having good availability outside of curricular times (except for those unavailable for community use).

*Table 3.4: Summary of smaller sized 3G pitch availability*

Site ID	Site	Availability	Hours available in the peak period (and overall)
7	Bishop Milner Catholic College	Reserved for curricular use until 17:00 then available to the community from 17:00-22:00 during the week and from 09:00-17:00 at weekends.	34 (43)
37	Goals Soccer Centre (Dudley)	Available every day from 09:30-22:00.	34 (91.5)
44	Halesowen College	Reserved for curricular use until 17:00 then available to the community from 17:00-21:00 during the week and from 09:00-16:00 at weekends.	32 (34)
99	Redhill School	Reserved for curricular use until 17:00 then available to the community from 17:00-22:00 during the week, from 09:00-17:00 on Saturdays and from 09:00-18:00 on Sundays.	34 (41)
108	Soccer Zone (Halesowen)	Available every day from 09:00-23:00.	34 (102)
123	Summerhill School	Reserved for curricular use until 18:00 then available to the community from 18:00-22:00 during the week, from 09:00-16:00 on Saturdays and from 09:00-15:00 on Sundays.	26 (33)
126	The Crestwood School	Available at weekends from 10:00-14:00; unavailable during the week.	(8)

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Site ID	Site	Availability	Hours available in the peak period (and overall)
128	The Dormston Centre	Reserved for curricular use until 17:00 then available to the community from 17:00-22:00 during the week and from 09:00-12:30 at weekends.	25 (32)
130	The Ellowes Hall Sports College	Reserved for curricular use until 16:00 then available to the community from 17:00-21:30 during the week and from 09:00-15:00 on Saturdays (unavailable on Sundays).	24 (28.5)

### Quality

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

For the PPOSS, each 3G pitch has been assigned a quality rating of good, standard or poor following site assessments. This rating is most commonly linked to the condition and age of the playing surface, as well as surrounding hard areas and maintenance that is undertaken. For the full assessment criteria, please refer to Appendix 2.

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

*Table 3.5: Summary of quality of full size 3G pitches*

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Year installed/ resurfaced	Quality
65	Leasowes Sport Centre	Halesowen	2017	Good
96	Priory Road Football Complex	Central Dudley	2017	Good
127	The Dell Stadium	Brierley Hill	2018	Good
138	Thorns Leisure Centre	Stourbridge	2009	Poor

As seen, three of the four pitches have been installed or resurfaced in the last four years and are considered to be in good condition, whilst the pitch at Thorns Leisure Centre has exceeded its recommended lifespan and should therefore be prioritised for future refurbishment.

Of the smaller size pitches, the pitches at Redhill School (2007), The Crestwood School (2005) and The Soccer Zone (2004) have also exceeded their recommended lifespans.

### Ancillary facilities

All full size 3G provision is accompanied by ancillary facilities that are considered adequate and no major issues have been discovered via site assessments or through consultation.

# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

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### 3.3: Demand

The 3G pitches currently servicing Dudley are reported to be operating at or close to capacity at peak times, especially during winter months when grass pitches cannot be used for training or recreational demand (due to a lack of floodlighting). This applies not only to midweek capacity but also to weekend capacity on account of all the community available full size pitches being FA approved to host competitive matches.

Currently, it is considered that all community-based activity on 3G pitches is football related, with no other sporting usage identified. The large majority of capacity is being taken up by clubs for training and match play purposes, although there is also a strong presence of recreational football activity taking place (i.e., via unaffiliated groups).

Across the Country, there are often small-sided commercial leagues operating on 3G provision. In Dudley, Soccer Sixes operates at Priory Road Football Complex on Monday evenings.

#### ***Football***

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

#### ***Training demand***

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

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

For the model, in addition to full size pitches being included, some smaller size pitches are also incorporated as many are suitable for accommodating training demand, especially larger ones such as those provided at Halesowen College and Redhill School. To calculate their contribution, a pitch large enough to cater for youth matches (but not adult) is considered to be the equivalent of half a full size pitch (0.5 pitches), whilst a pitch that is large enough for mini matches (but not youth or adult) is the equivalent of quarter of a full size pitch (0.25 pitches). Any pitch smaller than this is discounted, as are any pitches that are unavailable for community use.

Using the above, with 413 teams currently playing in Dudley, there is a calculated need for 10.75 full size 3G pitches (rounded down from 10.86). As such, with six full size pitch equivalents currently provided (including smaller size provision), a shortfall of 4.75 full size pitches is identified. This is a larger shortfall than that identified in Dudley's LFFP, evidencing its need to be updated.

## DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 3.6: Current demand for 3G pitches in Dudley (based on 38 teams per pitch)

Current number of teams	3G requirement <sup>2</sup>	Current number of 3G pitches	Current shortfall
413	10.75	6	4.75

When considering future demand for an additional 14 teams (based on population increases), there is demand for 11.25 full size pitches, which means a future shortfall of 5.25 pitches.

Table 3.7: Future demand for 3G pitches in Dudley (based on 38 teams per pitch)

Future number of teams	3G requirement <sup>3</sup>	Current number of 3G pitches	Future shortfall
427	11.25	6	5.25

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

Table 3.8: Current demand for 3G pitches in Dudley by analysis area

Analysis area	Current number of teams	3G requirement <sup>4</sup>	Current number of 3G pitches	Current shortfall
Brierley Hill	84	2.25	1.50	0.75
Central Dudley	88	2.25	1.25	1.00
Halesowen	82	2.25	1.50	0.75
North Dudley	73	2.00	0.25	1.75
Stourbridge	86	2.25	1.5	0.75
<b>Dudley</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>11.00</b>	<b>6.00</b>	<b>5.00</b>

This identifies a slightly higher need than for Dudley as whole, which is due to rounding the numbers. Moreover, each analysis area has a shortfall, ranging from 1.75 pitches in the North Dudley Analysis Area to a shortfall of 0.75 pitches in the Stourbridge and Brierley Hill analysis areas.

When accounting for future demand, the overall shortfall remains at five pitches.

Table 3.9: Future demand for 3G pitches in Dudley by analysis area

Analysis area	Future number of teams	3G requirement <sup>5</sup>	Current number of 3G pitches	Future shortfall
Brierley Hill	87	2.25	1.50	0.75
Central Dudley	90	2.25	1.25	1.00
Halesowen	85	2.25	1.50	0.75
North Dudley	75	2.00	0.25	1.75
Stourbridge	90	2.25	1.5	0.75
<b>Dudley</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>11.00</b>	<b>6.00</b>	<b>5.00</b>

<sup>2</sup> Rounded to the nearest 0.25

<sup>3</sup> Rounded to the nearest 0.25

<sup>4</sup> Rounded to the nearest 0.25

<sup>5</sup> Rounded to the nearest 0.25

# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Additional potential growth identified through club aspirations will be taken into consideration in the proceeding strategy document, via the running of a scenario. This is not included in the above calculations due to the considerable level of demand identified.

### *Match play demand*

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

Five existing community available pitches in Dudley are FA approved to host competitive fixtures and there is relatively high demand for the provision, with 72 teams currently accessing a 3G facility as their home pitch and with each accredited pitch being in use for this purpose. This is 72 teams that would otherwise be using grass pitches, adding to capacity and quality issues, or alternatively they would not exist at all due to having nowhere suitable to play.

As a breakdown, of the 72 teams utilising 3G pitches for matches, five are adult teams, six are youth 11v11 teams, nine are youth 9v9 teams, 24 are mini 7v7 teams and 28 are mini 5v5 teams.

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

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

### ***Other sports***

No other sports clubs/users are presently identified as accessing the existing stock of 3G pitches in Dudley (outside of some school activity). Furthermore, with limited rugby union and rugby league demand identified in the Borough, and with limited presence of other relevant sports, no demand for access has been uncovered.

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

There is limited spare capacity on the present supply of 3G pitches when teams require access for training purposes, leading to several clubs reporting a need for increased provision. With the FA model suggesting that there is a current shortfall of at least 4.75 full size 3G pitches and a future shortfall of at least five, priority should therefore be placed on the creation of new provision. To that end, precedence should be given to areas with identified shortfalls and potential options will therefore be explored in the proceeding strategy document.

Meeting the 3G pitch shortfall for training will also help alleviate grass pitch shortfalls and quality issues identified in Part 2 of this report, providing that the transfer of play is pursued as and when more pitches are established.



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In addition, it is important to sustain the current pitch stock to ensure that the existing shortfalls are not exacerbated. In that regard, providers should be encouraged to put sinking funds in place and it is also recommended that all new and existing pitches undergo FA testing every three years to remain or become FA approved. This is particularly key in relation to the poor quality pitch at Thorns Leisure Centre given that it has reached the end of its lifespan.

### **3G – supply and demand summary**

- ▶ Priority should be placed on the creation of new 3G pitches to meet the identified shortfalls for football training demand.
- ▶ Meeting the 3G pitch shortfall for training will also help alleviate grass pitch shortfalls and quality issues, providing that the transfer of play is pursued as and when more pitches are established.
- ▶ In addition, it is important to sustain the current pitch stock to ensure that the existing shortfalls are not exacerbated.

### **3G – supply summary**

- ▶ There are four full size 3G pitches in Dudley, of which all are floodlit and available for community use.
- ▶ There are also 30 smaller sized 3G pitches across nine sites, all of which are also floodlit and available for community use.
- ▶ Sedgley & Gornal FC and Stourbridge FC both have aspirations to develop 3G pitches (at Coseley Leisure Centre and War Memorial Athletic Ground), whilst Windsor High School has plans to convert its smaller sized sand-based AGP.
- ▶ The full size 3G pitches at Priory Road Football Complex, Leasowes Sport Centre and The Dell Stadium are currently FIFA/FA approved and can therefore host competitive matches, as are the smaller sized pitches at Redhill School and Halesowen College.
- ▶ The full size pitch at Thorns Leisure Centre is not accredited and it is poor quality having reached the end of its lifespan.
- ▶ The remaining full size 3G pitches are assessed as good quality, although the smaller sized pitches at Redhill School, The Crestwood School and The Soccer Zone also require resurfacing.
- ▶ The pitch at the Dell Stadium is World Rugby compliant, although it is not currently in use for this purpose.

### **3G – demand summary**

- ▶ The existing 3G provision is reported to be operating at or close to capacity at peak times, with all current community activity being football-based.
- ▶ With 413 football teams currently playing in Dudley, there is a calculated shortfall of 4.75 full size 3G pitches to meet training needs.
- ▶ When accounting for future demand for an additional 14 teams (based on population increases), the shortfall increases 5.25 pitches.
- ▶ When assessing 3G pitch need by analysis area there is a current and future shortfall within each analysis area.
- ▶ There are currently 72 football teams using the 3G pitch stock for matches; whilst the number needed for matches will never outweigh the number of 3G pitches needed for training, maximising the pitches that are in place and that are proposed should be fully supported.
- ▶ No demand has been identified from other sports for access to 3G provision.



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### PART 4: CRICKET

#### 4.1: Introduction

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

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

#### Consultation

In total, eight cricket clubs are identified as playing within Dudley. All of these responded to consultation requests, resulting in a response rate of 100%.

*Table 4.1: Cricket club response rate*

Club name	Club response?
Coombs Wood CC	Yes
Coseley CC	Yes
Halesowen CC	Yes
Lye CC	Yes
Netherton CC	Yes
Oldswinford & Stourbridge Social CC	Yes
Pedmore CC	Yes
Stourbridge CC	Yes

#### 4.2: Supply

In total, there are 12 grass wicket cricket squares in Dudley provided across the same number of sites. All but one of these are available for community use, with only the square at Old Swinford Hospital unavailable for community use. Six are located in the Stourbridge Analysis Area, three in the Halesowen Analysis Area and one in the Central Dudley and North Dudley analysis areas. No squares are currently provided in the Brierley Hill Analysis Area.

*Table 4.2: Summary of grass wicket squares available for community use*

Analysis area	Squares available for community use
Brierley Hill	-
Central Dudley	1
Halesowen	3
North Dudley	1
Stourbridge	6
<b>Dudley</b>	<b>11</b>

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### ***Non-turf pitches***

There are non-turf pitches (NTPs) accompanying six grass wickets squares. This is the case at the following sites:

- ◀ Coseley Cricket Club
- ◀ Lea Vale Playing Fields
- ◀ Lye Town Football Club
- ◀ Netherton Cricket Club
- ◀ War Memorial Athletic Ground
- ◀ The Earls High School

Furthermore, Coombs Wood CC reports an aspiration to install an NTP at its site in order to accommodate some training demand (via use of a mobile cage) and some junior match play.

In addition, there are nine standalone NTPs currently provided, with these being located at the following sites:

- |                               |                             |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ◀ Beacon Hill Academy         | ◀ Coseley Leisure Centre    |
| ◀ Ellowes Hall Sports College | ◀ Kingswinford Academy      |
| ◀ Pedmore High School         | ◀ Pegasus Academy           |
| ◀ St James Academy            | ◀ Stevens Park (Wollescote) |
| ◀ Windsor High School         |                             |

Of these, seven are available to the community, whilst the wickets at Beacon Hill Academy and St James Academy are not. In addition, Crestwood School also previously provided an NTP. However, this has recently been removed due to quality issues.

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

Additionally, NTPs are frequently used for junior matches across the Country, although this is seemingly not the case in Dudley as no clubs report that they are using an NTP for this purpose (all use is reportedly for training).

### ***Disused provision***

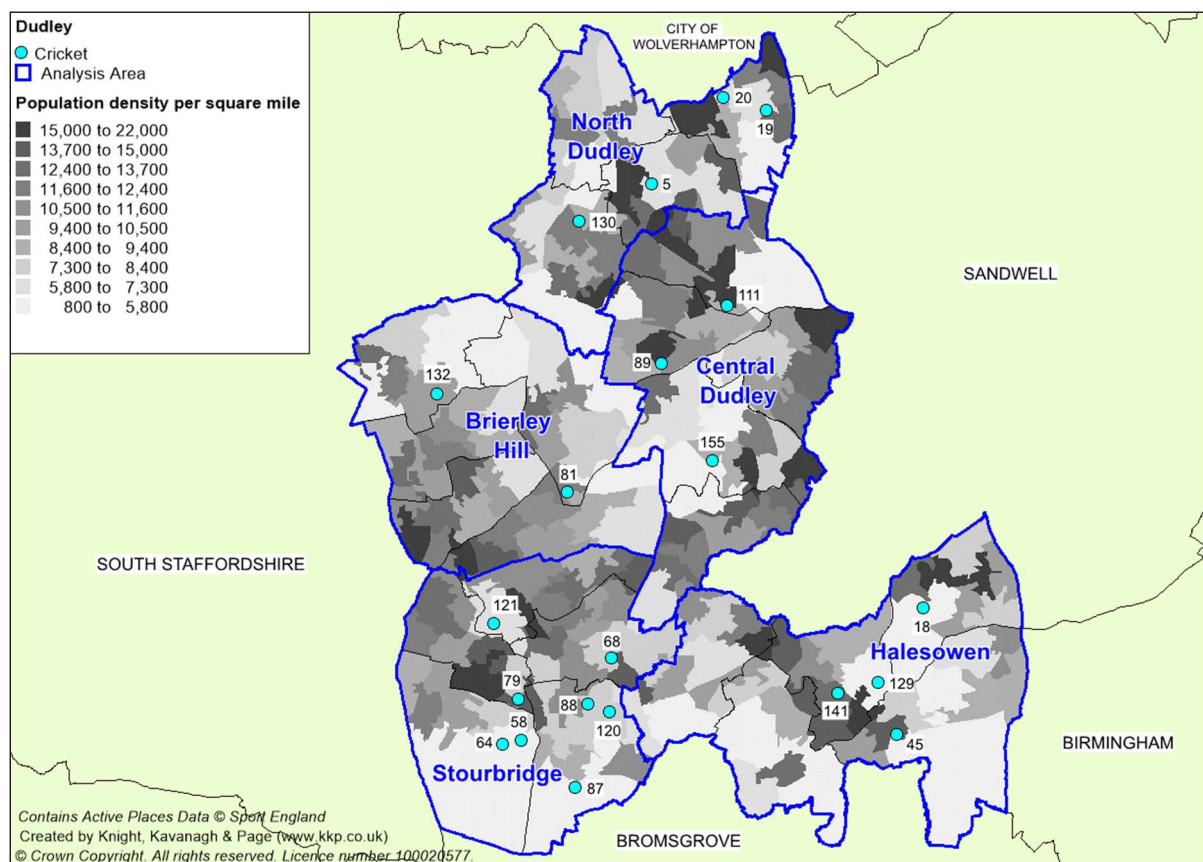
A disused square is located at Oldswinford & Stourbridge Social Cricket Club (Norwood Road), in the Brierley Hill Analysis Area. This was previously used by Oldswinford & Stourbridge Social CC but is now unmaintained for cricket. Wordsley Wasps FC has now been granted a lease agreement with the Council the site and plans to mark football pitches on site and upgrade the existing ancillary provision.

Similarly, there is a disused square on Wollescote Road. A planning application has been submitted for a telecommunications development at the site.

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

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Figure 4.1: Location of cricket pitches within Dudley



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Table 4.3: Key to map of cricket squares

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	No. of squares	No. of wickets	
						Grass	Non-turf
5	Beacon Hill Academy	DY3 1BP	North Dudley	No	1	-	1
18	Coombs Wood Cricket Club	B62 8ND	Halesowen	Yes	1	14	-
19	Coseley Cricket Club	WV14 8YB	North Dudley	Yes	1	10	1
20	Coseley Leisure Centre	WV14 9JW	North Dudley	Yes	1	-	1
45	Halesowen Cricket Club	B63 3EG	Halesowen	Yes	1	14	-
58	King Edward VI College	DY8 2LQ	Stourbridge	Yes	1	8	-
64	Lea Vale Playing Fields	DY8 2BG	Stourbridge	Yes	1	11	1
68	Lye Town Football Club	DY9 7DH	Stourbridge	Yes	1	9	1
72	Mary Stevens Park	DY8 2DN	Stourbridge	Yes	1	3	-
79	Old Swinford Hospital	DY8 1QX	Stourbridge	No	1	6	-
87	Pedmore Cricket Club	DY9 0SR	Stourbridge	Yes	1	16	-
88	Pedmore High School	DY9 7HS	Stourbridge	Yes	1	-	1
89	Pegasus Academy	DY1 2DU	Central Dudley	Yes	1	-	1
111	St James Academy	DY1 3JE	Central Dudley	No	1	-	1
120	Stevens Park (Wollescote)	DY9 7JH	Stourbridge	Yes	1	-	1
121	War Memorial Athletic Ground	DY8 4HN	Stourbridge	Yes	1	14	1
129	The Earls High School	B63 3SL	Halesowen	Yes	1	8	1
130	Ellowes Hall Sports College	DY3 2JH	North Dudley	Yes	1	-	1
132	Kingswinford Academy	DY6 7AD	Brierley Hill	Yes	1	-	1
141	Windsor High School	B63 4BB	Halesowen	Yes	1	-	1
155	Netherton Cricket Club	DY2 0HU	Central Dudley	Yes	1	13	1

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### ***Future provision***

Discussions have taken place regarding the installation of a hockey suitable AGP at Old Swinford Hospital which would replace the cricket square on site. The square is said to be currently unused due to boundary issues.

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

Most clubs in Dudley have lease agreements in place for their primary sites, with only Coombs Wood CC and Coseley CC reporting that they have freehold.

*Table 4.4: Summary of security of tenure for clubs*

Club	Primary site	Agreement
Coombs Wood CC	Coombs Wood Cricket Club	Freehold
Coseley CC	Coseley Cricket Club	Freehold
Halesowen CC	Halesowen Cricket Club	Leased until 2051
Lye CC	Lye Town Football Club	Leased (date unknown)
Netherton CC	Netherton Cricket Club	Leased until 2046
Oldswinford & Stourbridge Social CC	Lea Vale Playing Fields	Leased until 2047
Pedmore CC	Pedmore Cricket Club	Leased until 2025
Stourbridge CC	War Memorial Athletic Ground	Leased until 2032

For the clubs with lease agreements in place, Pedmore CC reports a particular issue in that its agreement, which is acquired from Worcester Diocese, expires in 2025. It reports that it is trying to re-negotiate this but states that the agents for the landowner are requesting additional clauses which may make the arrangement less secure.

The arrangement for Stourbridge CC is also nearing expiry, with its existing lease coming to an end in 2032. Its site is operated by the Council. The agreement is shared with Stourbridge FC, which reports that it would ideally like to take sole control of the site due to the football and cricket pitches overmarking each other, which causes issues when the seasons overlap at both the start and end of each campaign. Furthermore, the Club aspires to expand its provision, which is not possible with the cricket square in place.

Lye CC also leases its site from the Council but reports that it does not know how long remains on the agreement.

The agreements for the remaining clubs are more secure, with Halesowen CC having 30 years left on its lease from the Seth Somers Trust, Oldswinford & Stourbridge Social CC having 26 years remaining on its lease from the Council and Netherton CC having 25 years left on its lease from a church.

In addition to the above, some clubs also rent secondary venues due to a lack of capacity on their main square. This relates to both Halesowen CC and Stourbridge CC, with the former accessing Earl's High School and the latter accessing King Edward VI College. Furthermore, Stourbridge CC also has a fifth team that currently plays all its matches away from home due to not being able to find a suitable venue.

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Coombs Wood, Coseley, Netherton, Oldswinford & Stourbridge Social and Pedmore cricket clubs also all use secondary venues, and all five do so by exporting demand outside of Dudley. Coseley CC accesses RSA Academy in Sandwell and Oldswinford & Stourbridge Social CC uses Kinver Community Centre in South Staffordshire, whilst Coombs Wood CC uses Wilden Cricket Club, Netherton CC uses Chaddesley Corbett Cricket Club and Pedmore CC uses Blakedown Recreation Ground, all of which are located in Wyre Forest. In addition, Pedmore CC also uses Haybridge High School, in Bromsgrove, for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> team fixtures.

### **Pitch quality**

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

- ◀ Good
- ◀ Standard
- ◀ Poor

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

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

The audit of community available grass wicket cricket squares in Dudley found six to be good quality and the remaining five to be standard quality. None are assessed as poor. The site-by-site breakdown of this is shown in the following table.

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

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Square quality
18	Coombs Wood Cricket Club	Halesowen	Good
19	Coseley Cricket Club	North Dudley	Standard
45	Halesowen Cricket Club	Halesowen	Good
58	King Edward VI College	Stourbridge	Standard
64	Lea Vale Playing Fields	Stourbridge	Good
68	Lye Town Football Club	Stourbridge	Good
74	Mary Stevens Park	Stourbridge	Standard
87	Pedmore Cricket Club	Stourbridge	Good
121	War Memorial Athletic Ground	Stourbridge	Standard
129	The Earls High School	Halesowen	Standard
155	Netherton Cricket Club	Central Dudley	Good

Of the squares assessed as standard quality, there are particular concerns in relation to War Memorial Athletic Ground due to the level of cricket and demand accommodated. Drainage is proving problematic in certain areas, whilst some of the wickets are uneven. These issues have been exacerbated in recent years due to overuse.

Quality at War Memorial Athletic Ground is also impacted upon by the site being shared by Stourbridge FC, with two football pitches over marked on the cricket outfield. This causes

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issues when the seasons overlap at the beginning and end of the cricket season and means that post-season remedial work cannot take place as it would at sites that are not dual use.

Despite being assessed as good quality, both Halesowen CC and Pedmore CC report an issue at their sites with dog walking, whilst Oldswinford & Stourbridge Social CC suggests that overmarked football pitches at Lea Vale Playing Fields cause damage to its outfield when the seasons overlap.

No other significant problems are raised by clubs, with the majority indicating that quality has improved over recent years. This applies to Halesowen, Lye, Netherton, Oldswinford & Stourbridge Social and Pedmore cricket clubs, whilst only Stourbridge CC implies that quality has worsened (Coseley CC reports no change). Stourbridge CC attributes the deterioration to a combination of limited maintenance and overuse, whereas clubs reporting an improvement generally point to improved maintenance regimes as a key factor.

To obtain a full technical assessment of wicket and pitches, the ECB recommends a Performance Quality Standard (PQS) assessment. The PQS looks at a cricket square to ascertain whether the pitch meets the required standards, which are benchmarked by the GMA.

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

*Table 4.6: Performance Quality Standard ratings*

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

Of the standalone NTPs available to the community, the wickets at both Lye Town Football Club and War Memorial Athletic Ground are poor quality and in need of replacement. This leads to the provision currently being unused.

### ***Ancillary facilities***

All clubs in Dudley have access to changing room facilities at their home ground, although quality varies. However, all provision is regarded as fit for purpose, with four clubs rating their facilities as good quality and four rating theirs as standard.

Oldswinford & Stourbridge Social CC expresses the biggest concern, noting that it requires an expansion to its social space and the changing rooms at Lea Vale Playing Fields. Linked to this, it wants to improve its compliance to accommodate disability cricket. The current provision available to the Club is dated.



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The provision servicing Halesowen CC is also dated and in need of modernisation, whilst the toilets at War Memorial Athletic Ground are poor quality. No other issues are identified.

### **Training facilities**

Access to cricket nets is important, particularly for pre-season/winter training. In Dudley, of the clubs that responded to consultation, only Coombs Wood CC and Oldswinford & Stourbridge Social CC report no demand for new, improved or additional training facilities.

Coseley, Halesowen and Lye are currently without fixed practice nets, with all three expressing an aspiration to have provision installed. Nevertheless, Halesowen CC acknowledges that there is a lack of space at its site. Both Stourbridge CC and Netherton CC report a need for their existing nets to be refurbished, whilst Pedmore CC wants to acquire a mobile net that it can use on its square/outfield.

Although not included within the scope of this study, five of the seven responsive clubs also identify that accessing indoor facilities for winter training is an issue, with availability being limited and quality being poor. This is often a problem across the Country, with many clubs unable to access facilities at desired times due to capacity being taken up by block bookings that are given priority through accessing the provision year-round.

### **4.3: Demand**

There are eight clubs in Dudley which collectively provide 35 senior men's, six senior women's and 35 junior teams. All of the clubs are relatively large, with the majority containing both senior and junior sections.

*Table 4.7: Summary of teams by club*

Club	Analysis area	No. of teams		
		Senior male	Senior female	Junior
Coombs Wood CC	Halesowen	4	1	4
Coseley CC	North Dudley	3	2	2
Halesowen CC	Halesowen	6	1	9
Lye CC	Stourbridge	4	-	2
Netherton CC	Central Dudley	3	-	-
Oldswinford & Stourbridge Social CC	Brierley Hill	4	-	4
Pedmore CC	Stourbridge	6	1	8
Stourbridge CC	Stourbridge	5	1	6
<b>Total</b>		<b>35</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>35</b>

As seen in the table below, most teams are based in the Stourbridge Analysis Area (33 teams), whereas the fewest are based in the Central Dudley Analysis Area (three teams).

*Table 4.8: Summary of teams by analysis area*

Analysis area	No. of competitive teams		
	Senior men	Senior women	Junior
Brierley Hill	4	-	4
Central Dudley	3	-	-
Halesowen	10	2	13
North Dudley	3	2	2
Stourbridge	15	2	16

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Analysis area	No. of competitive teams		
	Senior men	Senior women	Junior
Dudley	35	6	35

### Participation trends

In comparison to 2015 PPS findings, there has been a small decrease in the number of teams in Dudley (78 were reported). However, there has been a considerable growth in female participation, with six teams now playing as opposed to no teams back in 2015.

More recently, five clubs report that demand has increased over the previous three years at both senior and junior level:

- ◆ Coseley CC
- ◆ Halesowen CC
- ◆ Lye CC
- ◆ Pedmore CC
- ◆ Stourbridge CC

Netherton CC reports no change in demand; Oldswinford & Stourbridge Social CC reports an increase in junior demand and Coombs Wood CC reports an increase in senior women's demand. With no clubs reporting a decline in participation, this suggests that there has been an overall significant increase across Dudley in recent years.

Most clubs attribute the recent growth to the success of initiatives such as All Stars Cricket, which has increased junior participation, and Softball Cricket, which has increased female participation, as well as an increased online presence and advertising.

### Latent demand

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

### Imported demand

Amblecote & Wollaston CC, which is predominantly based in South Staffordshire, accesses War Memorial Athletic Ground occasionally on Sundays. This represents imported demand.

### Exported demand

As identified previously, numerous clubs use secondary venues outside of Dudley due to a lack of capacity on the squares supplied within the Borough. In total, this applies to eight teams from across five clubs, representing a substantial amount of exported demand, as summarised in the table below.

Table 4.9: Summary of exported demand

Club	Team/s	Local authority
Coombs Wood CC	Saturday 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Wyre Forest
Coseley CC	Saturday 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Sandwell
Netherton CC	Saturday 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Wyre Forest
Oldswinford & Stourbridge Social CC	Saturday 3 <sup>rd</sup>	South Staffordshire
Pedmore CC	Saturday 3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup>	Wyre Forest
	Saturday 5 <sup>th</sup> and 6 <sup>th</sup>	Bromsgrove

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Notwithstanding the above, Coombs Wood CC will soon begin to access Old Halesonians Association following a recent merger between the clubs. This site is located in Bromsgrove and, therefore, any usage will still resemble exported demand.

#### ***Additional activity***

The ECB is currently running a number of initiatives across the Country which results in additional cricket demand and use of cricket facilities. Whilst these do not generally utilise grass wickets, they can impact upon availability when sessions are being held due to use of cricket outfield, making squares unusable for matches during these periods. This can mean no availability on one or two nights a week.

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

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

The programme seeks to achieve the following aims:

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

For the 2021 season, all clubs in Dudley are signed up to be part of the initiative, with 223 participants recorded across the Borough. Halesowen CC has the most registered participants (60), whilst Lye CC has the least (13).

#### ***Dynamo's Cricket***

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

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

In Dudley, Halesowen, Netherton, Pedmore and Stourbridge cricket clubs are signed up to deliver Dynamo's, with 128 participants registered across the clubs.

#### ***Softball Cricket***

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

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In Dudley, the following teams currently take part in women's softball activities:

- ◆ Halesowen CC
- ◆ Pedmore CC
- ◆ Stourbridge CC

### *Lye T10 Cricket League*

The Lye T10 Cricket League is a friendly league that currently consists of 16 teams that play on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings. All fixtures are played at Lye Town Football Club, where floodlighting can be used, with some matches being played until 22:30.

All teams playing in the League are unaffiliated to the traditional clubs and are from across the region, meaning not only is Dudley represented but also authorities such as Birmingham, Walsall and Redditch.

### *Wicketz*

Wicketz is a cricket programme designed for young people aged 8-19 living in deprived communities. By establishing sustainable community cricket hubs, it seeks to provide year-round weekly cricket sessions with a focus on breaking down barriers, developing crucial life skills, creating stronger communities and enabling brighter futures for those taking part.

In Dudley, Netherton Cricket Club is used as a hub. It currently has 40 unique participants attending sessions.

### *Chance to Shine*

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

In Dudley, Chance to Shine Street sessions are held at Thorns Leisure Centre.

### *Other usage*

The cricket pitches at Halesowen Cricket Club and War Memorial Athletic Ground are used occasionally by Worcestershire County CC for second team, academy and women's matches. This can involve particularly intensive usage of the site as some matches are played over numerous days.

The square at Mary Stevens Park has no regular usage, but it is accessed for charity games throughout the season.

### ***Future demand***

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

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### Population forecasts

Team generation rates are used below as the basis for calculating the number of teams likely to be generated in the future (2039) based on population growth. Using this, it is predicted that there will be a growth of two senior men's and four junior teams (as seen in the table below).

*Table 4.10: Team generation rates based on population growth (2039)*

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams	Team Generation Rate	Future population within age group	Predicted future number of teams	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population <sup>6</sup>
Senior Men's (18-55)	76,875	35	1:2196	82,086	37	2
Senior Women's (18-55)	23,517	6	1:3919	24,961	6	0
Junior (7-18)	22,731	34	1:639	24,491	38	4

When applied on an analysis area basis, the growth does not equate to a whole team in any of the analysis areas. As such, the overall predicted growth estimated across Dudley may not be realised.

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

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

### Participation increases

Of the responding clubs, six indicate aspirations to increase levels of participation. This amounts to a total predicted growth of 16 teams, equating to three senior men's, four senior women's and nine junior teams.

*Table 4.11: Future demand expressed by clubs*

Club	Analysis area	Senior men's	Senior women's	Junior
Coombs Wood CC	Halesowen	-	1	2
Coseley CC	North Dudley	-	-	2
Halesowen CC	Halesowen	1	1	2
Lye CC	Stourbridge	-	-	1

<sup>6</sup> Rounded to the nearest whole number

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Club	Analysis area	Senior men's	Senior women's	Junior
Netherton CC	Central Dudley	-	-	-
Olswinford & Stourbridge Social CC	Brierley Hill	-	-	-
Pedmore CC	Stourbridge	1	1	-
Stourbridge CC	Stourbridge	1	1	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>

### *Future demand summary*

In the supply and demand analysis at the end of this section of the report, only future demand identified through participation increases are included due to the large increases expressed by clubs. This demand is considered more aspirational, and it is unlikely that it will all be achieved. However, the preceding Strategy document will include a scenario to identify the impact it would have if the growth was realised.

### **Peak time demand**

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

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

### **4.4: Capacity analysis**

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

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

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

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

The above is used to allocate capacity ratings as follows:

<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



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

Please note that NTPs have been discounted from the analysis by means of not distorting the findings. This is because no NTPs are currently recorded as accommodating any match play, meaning none are being used more than their recommended capacity, which is 60 match equivalent sessions per season (0 match equivalent sessions when poor quality). With no NTPs being overused, this translates to overall actual spare capacity for junior play, where the provision is more commonly used and where matches can be played on a variety of days. However, this is not considered to be actual spare capacity for senior cricket due to league requirements generally not allowing usage.

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Table 4.12: Capacity analysis of community available grass cricket squares

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Club users	No. of squares	Square quality	No. of grass wickets	Capacity (sessions per season)	Actual play (sessions per season)	Capacity rating (sessions per season)	Potential spare capacity for senior cricket? (Saturday)	Potential spare capacity for senior cricket? (Sunday)	Potential spare capacity for junior cricket? (Midweek)
18	Coombs Wood Cricket Club	Halesowen	Coombs Wood CC	1	Good	14	70	58	12	No	No	Yes
19	Coseley Cricket Club	North Dudley	Coseley CC	1	Standard	10	40	52	12	No	No	No
20	Coseley Leisure Centre	North Dudley	-	1	Standard	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
45	Halesowen Cricket Club	Halesowen	Halesowen CC	1	Good	14	70	86	16	No	No	No
58	King Edward VI College	Stourbridge	Stourbridge CC	1	Standard	8	32	24	8	No	No	Yes
64	Lea Vale Playing Fields	Stourbridge	Oldwinsford & Stourbridge Social CC	1	Standard	11	44	44	0	No	No	No
68	Lye Town Football Club	Stourbridge	Lye CC	1	Good	9	45	58	13	No	No	No
72	Mary Stevens Park	Stourbridge	-	1	Standard	3	12	4	8	No	No	Yes
87	Pedmore Cricket Club	Stourbridge	Pedmore CC	1	Good	16	80	68	12	No	Yes	No
88	Pedmore High School	Stourbridge	-	1	Standard	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
89	Pegasus Academy	Central Dudley	-	1	Standard	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
120	Stevens Park (Wollescote)	Stourbridge	-	1	Standard	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
121	War Memorial Athletic Ground	Stourbridge	Stourbridge CC	1	Standard	14	56	80	24	No	No	No
129	The Earls High School	Halesowen	Halesowen CC	1	Standard	8	32	20	12	No	Yes	Yes
130	Ellowes Hall Sports College	North Dudley	-	1	Standard	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
132	Kingswinford Academy	Brierley Hill	-	1	Standard	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
141	Windsor High School	Halesowen	-	1	Standard	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
155	Netherton Cricket Club	Central Dudley	Netherton CC	1	Good	13	65	24	41	No	Yes	Yes

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### **Actual spare capacity**

Although a large amount of spare capacity is identified, it is not as simple as to aggregate this into a general oversupply of cricket squares. Despite seven squares displaying some form of spare capacity, only one is available for further senior cricket activity on a Saturday, with this being the square at Old Swinford Hospital. However, this requires discounting on account of no security of tenure being provided, meaning long term access cannot be guaranteed.

All remaining squares are used to capacity on Saturdays, either because two teams are already assigned to them as a home venue or because the level of spare capacity is insufficient to accommodate an additional team without overplay being created or exacerbated (at least 12 match equivalent sessions of spare capacity are required).

*Table 4.13: Actual spare capacity for senior cricket (Saturday) by analysis area*

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (sessions per season)
Brierley Hill	-
Central Dudley	-
Halesowen	-
North Dudley	-
Stourbridge	-
<b>Dudley</b>	-

For Sunday cricket, actual spare capacity is provided at Netherton Cricket Club, Pedmore Cricket Club and the Earls High School. This amounts to total actual spare capacity of 65 match equivalent sessions.

*Table 4.14: Summary of actual spare capacity for senior cricket (Sunday) by site*

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	No. of squares	Actual spare capacity (sessions per season)	Number of additional teams that could be accommodated
87	Pedmore Cricket Club	Stourbridge	1	12	1
129	The Earls High School	Halesowen	1	12	1
155	Netherton Cricket Club	Central Dudley	1	41	2

The actual spare capacity identified is split across the Central Dudley, Halesowen and Stourbridge analysis areas.

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

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (sessions per season)
Brierley Hill	-
Central Dudley	41
Halesowen	12
North Dudley	-
Stourbridge	12
<b>Dudley</b>	<b>65</b>

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

For junior midweek cricket, five squares have actual spare capacity. This totals 81 match equivalent sessions.

*Table 4.16: Summary of actual spare capacity for junior cricket by site*

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	No. of squares	Actual spare capacity (sessions per season)	Number of additional teams that could be accommodated
18	Coombs Wood Cricket Club	Halesowen	1	12	2
58	King Edward VI College	Stourbridge	1	8	1
74	Mary Stevens Park	Stourbridge	1	8	1
129	The Earls High School	Halesowen	1	12	2
155	Netherton Cricket Club	Central Dudley	1	41	6

As with Sunday capacity, the actual spare capacity for midweek cricket is split across the Central Dudley, Halesowen and Stourbridge analysis areas.

*Table 4.17: Actual spare capacity for junior cricket by analysis area*

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (sessions per season)
Brierley Hill	-
Central Dudley	41
Halesowen	24
North Dudley	-
Stourbridge	16
<b>Dudley</b>	<b>81</b>

The reason for midweek capacity being higher than the capacity for weekend cricket is because fixtures can be split across numerous days, meaning more than two home teams can be assigned to a square. In addition, junior teams can utilise NTPs where they are provided, although this is not currently the case at any site in Dudley. It is therefore only clubs with a significant junior membership base that struggle for capacity, such as Halesowen, Pedmore and Stourbridge cricket clubs.

### *Actual spare capacity analysis*

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

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### Overplay

Overplay translates to a site accommodating more demand than it can sustain based on the number of wickets provided and the quality of the square. On this basis, four sites in Dudley are overplayed by a total of 65 match equivalent sessions, as seen in the table below.

*Table 4.18: Summary of overplay*

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Overplay (matches per season)
19	Coseley Cricket Club	North Dudley	12
45	Halesowen Cricket Club	Halesowen	16
68	Lye Town Football Club	Stourbridge	13
121	War Memorial Athletic Ground	Stourbridge	24
<b>Total</b>			<b>65</b>

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

The highest level of overplay is seen at War Memorial Athletic Ground. No overplay is evident in the Brierley Hill Analysis Area (as no provision is in place) or the Central Analysis Area.

*Table 4.19: Summary of overplay by analysis area*

Analysis area	Overplay (sessions per season)
Brierley Hill	-
Central Dudley	-
Halesowen	16
North Dudley	12
Stourbridge	37
<b>Dudley</b>	<b>65</b>

### 4.5: Supply and demand analysis

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

#### **Senior cricket supply and demand analysis (Saturday)**

The table below looks at the supply and demand balance during the peak period for senior men's cricket (Saturday). For actual spare capacity, please note that this is converted from the number of match equivalent sessions identified above to the number of match equivalent sessions that could feasibly be utilised by a growth in demand.

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The above is calculated by using the average number of matches played per season by senior teams (12) multiplied by the number of additional teams that can be fielded at peak time (two teams per square that is available). The entirety of the spare capacity at each site is not used as this number of matches may not be able to be accommodated at peak time.

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

Analysis area	Demand (match equivalent sessions)				
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Brierley Hill	-	-	-	-	-
Central Dudley	-	-	-	-	-
Halesowen	-	16	16	-	16
North Dudley	-	12	12	-	12
Stourbridge	-	37	37	-	37
<b>Dudley</b>	-	<b>65</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>65</b>

As seen in the table above, there is a shortfall of grass wicket squares in Dudley on Saturdays amounting to 65 match equivalent sessions. This is attributed to the Halesowen, North Dudley and Stourbridge analysis areas.

### **Senior cricket supply and demand analysis (Sunday)**

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

This shows a current shortfall of provision amounting to 17 match equivalent sessions per season, which can be attributed to the Halesowen, North Dudley and Stourbridge analysis areas. However, spare capacity does exist in the Central Dudley Analysis Area.

*Table 4.21: Supply and demand analysis of cricket squares for senior cricket (Sunday)*

Analysis area	Demand (match equivalent sessions)				
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Brierley Hill	-	-	-	-	-
Central Dudley	24	-	24	-	24
Halesowen	12	16	4	-	4
North Dudley	-	12	12	-	12
Stourbridge	12	37	25	-	25
<b>Dudley</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17</b>

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

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

This is because junior demand at peak time is not limited to one day, although some capacity should be reserved for activity such as All Stars and Dynamo's Cricket.



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Table 4.22: Supply and demand analysis of cricket squares for junior cricket

Analysis area	Demand (match equivalent sessions)				
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Brierley Hill	-	-	-	-	-
Central Dudley	36	-	36	-	36
Halesowen	22	16	6	-	6
North Dudley	-	12	12	-	12
Stourbridge	16	37	21	-	21
<b>Dudley</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>

There is overall spare capacity for midweek cricket amounting to nine match equivalent sessions, although shortfalls are evident in the North Dudley and Stourbridge analysis areas.

# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

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

- There are seven squares that show potential spare capacity on grass wickets; however, none of these are considered to have actual spare capacity for senior cricket on a Saturday.
- Three squares have actual spare capacity on Sunday's, whilst five do during midweek for junior cricket.
- Four squares are overplayed, with total overplay equating to 65 match equivalent sessions.
- For senior cricket, both current and future shortfalls are evidenced on Saturdays and Sundays, whilst there is overall spare capacity during midweek for junior cricket.

### **Cricket – supply summary**

- In total, there are 12 grass cricket squares in Dudley, 11 of which are available for community use. Only the grass square at Old Swinford Hospital is unavailable for community use.
- There are no squares provided in the Brierley Hill Analysis Area, whilst only one square is present in both the Central Dudley and the North Dudley analysis areas.
- A disused square is located at Oldswinford & Stourbridge Social Cricket Club (Norwood Road); the Council reports that it is in the process of leasing the site for football use.
- There are NTPs accompanying grass wicket squares at six sites and there are standalone NTPs at nine sites.
- Of the clubs with lease arrangements in place, Pedmore CC reports a particular issue in that the agreement for its site, which is acquired from Worcester Diocese, expires in 2025.
- The audit of community available grass wicket cricket squares found six to be good quality and the remaining five to be standard quality; none are assessed as poor.
- The NTPs servicing the squares at Lye Town Football Club and War Memorial Athletic Ground are considered to be poor quality.
- Oldswinford & Stourbridge Social CC has an aspiration to expand its social space and its changing rooms, whilst the provision servicing Halesowen CC also requires modernisation.
- Six clubs report a demand for new, improved or additional training facilities.

### **Cricket – demand summary**

- There are eight clubs in Dudley which collectively provide 35 senior men's, six senior women's and 35 junior teams.
- Six clubs report that demand has increased over the previous three years, with none expressing a reduction in their number of teams.
- Amblecote & Wollaston CC, which is predominantly based in South Staffordshire, imports demand to War Memorial Athletic Ground on ad hoc basis on Sundays.
- Five Dudley-based clubs export demand (eight teams) to neighbouring local authorities, representing a substantial amount of exported demand.
- All clubs in Dudley form part of the All Stars initiative, whilst four clubs are running Dynamo's sessions.
- Three clubs take part in women's softball activities (Halesowen, Pedmore and Stourbridge cricket clubs).
- In addition to affiliated activity, the Lye T10 Cricket League operates from Lye Town Football Club, with 16 teams currently forming part of this.
- Netherton Cricket Club is used as a hub for Wicketz, whilst Thorns Leisure Centre is used for Chance to Shine Street activity.
- Future demand for two senior men's and four junior teams is predicted via population growth, whilst six clubs indicate aspirations to increase levels of participation, equating to three senior men's, four senior women's and nine junior teams.

# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### PART 5: RUGBY UNION

#### 5.1: Introduction

The Rugby Football Union (RFU) is split into four areas across the country with a workforce team that covers development, coaching, governance and competitions. As part of this, Club Developers and a team of community rugby coaches deliver programmes in schools and clubs across Dudley.

The RFU governs a variety of formats and programmes, including 15-a-side, 10-a-side, 7-a-side and Tag rugby as well as the Touch Union programme. Its aim is to increase and retain participation within the game, with facilities needing to be appropriate, affordable and accessible in order to enable this.

#### Consultation

No affiliated rugby union clubs are identified as playing within Dudley. However, Dudley Kingswinford, Stourbridge, Stourbridge Lions and Old Halesonians rugby clubs traditionally draw their player bases from Dudley despite playing just outside of the Borough. As such, these have been consulted with to inform this study.

#### 5.2: Supply

All four clubs that draw players from Dudley play outside of Dudley and either have ownership of their sites or a lease arrangement in place. As such, none have a need or a want to play within the Borough, meaning that there is no clear requirement for community available rugby union pitches.

Notwithstanding the above, there are six school sites within Dudley that contain a total of seven senior and three junior rugby union pitches (no mini pitches have been identified). Of the pitches, two senior and one junior pitch is available for community use across three sites (Summerhill School, The Ellowes Hall Sports College and Windsor High School & Sixth Form College).

The Brierley Hill, Halesowen and North Dudley analysis areas all have a single pitch available to the community whereas the Stourbridge Analysis Area contains no community available provision (it does have two unavailable pitches).

*Table 5.1: Summary of grass rugby union pitches available for community use.*

Analysis area	No. of senior pitches	No. of junior pitches
Brierley Hill	1	-
Halesowen	-	1
North Dudley	1	-
Stourbridge	-	-
<b>Dudley</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>

The audit only identifies dedicated, line marked pitches, with recommended dimensions shown in the table below. However, it is common for junior and mini matches to be played on senior pitches via the use of cones, particularly at sites used by clubs.

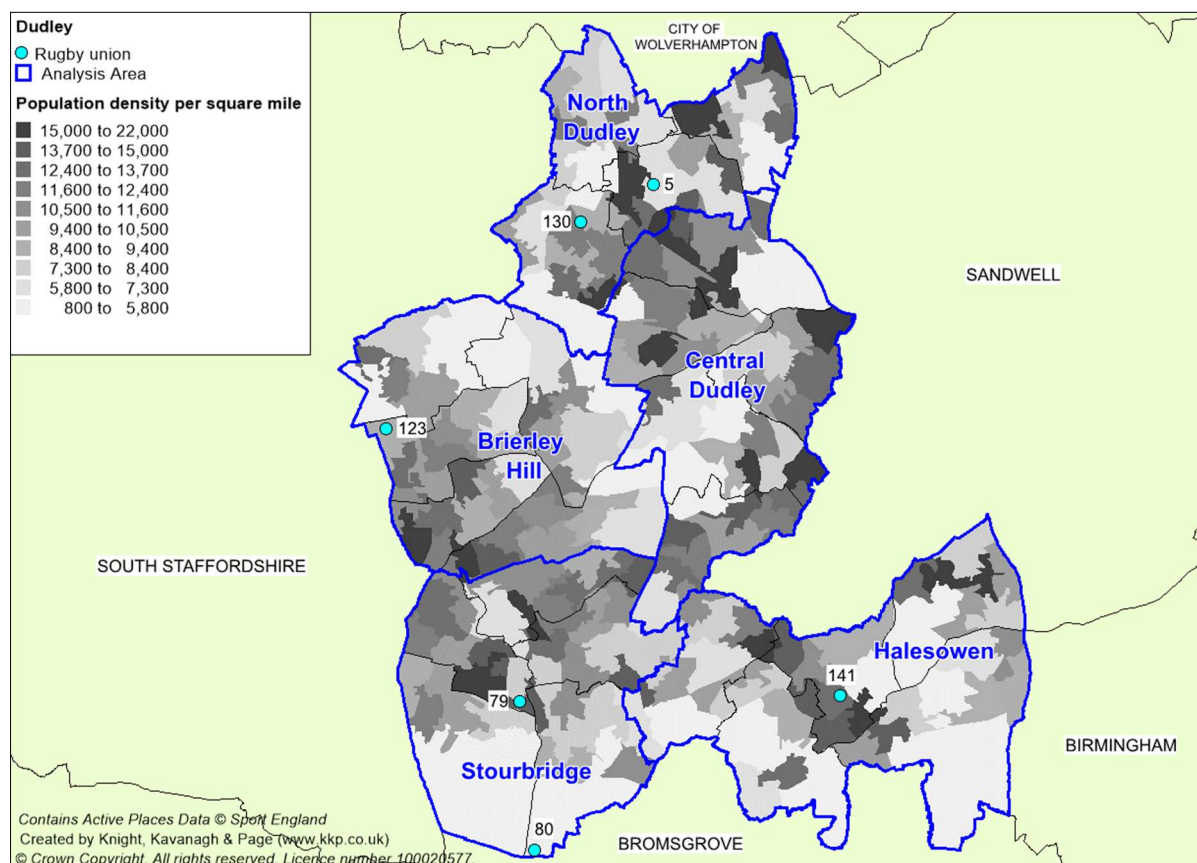
# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 5.2: Pitch dimensions

Age	Pitch type	Maximum pitch dimensions (metres) <sup>7</sup>
U7	Mini	20 x 12
U8	Mini	45 x 22
U9	Mini	60 x 30
U10	Mini	60 x 35
U11	Mini	60 x 43
U12	Mini	60 x 43
U13	Junior	90 x 60 (60 x 43 for girls)
U14 +	Senior	100 x 70 <sup>8</sup>

Figure 5.1 highlights all rugby union pitches currently within Dudley, regardless of community use. For a key to the map, see Table 5.7.

Figure 5.1: Location of rugby union pitches within Dudley



<sup>7</sup> Recommended run off area for all pitch types requires five-metres each way and a minimum in-goal length of six metres.

<sup>8</sup> Minimum dimensions of 94 x 68 metres are accepted.

# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### **Security of tenure**

Tenure at all rugby union sites in Dudley is deemed to be unsecure because, due to no affiliated rugby demand taking place in Dudley, no clubs have an agreement in place for use of any of the facilities. That being said, all clubs drawing players from Dudley have secure tenure at the sites that they do use.

Stourbridge RUFC and Stourbridge Lions RUFC use Stourton Park, in South Staffordshire, whilst Dudley Kingsford RUFC uses Dudley Kingswinford Rugby Football Club, also in South Staffordshire. Old Halesonians RUFC uses Old Halesonians Rugby Club, which is in Bromsgrove.

### **Future provision**

No future proposals or aspirations are in place relating to provision within Dudley, although both Dudley Kingswinford RUFC and Stourbridge RUFC have plans outside of the Borough.

Dudley Kingswinford RUFC has plans to install an artificial pitch at Dudley Kingswinford Rugby Football Club to accommodate the Club's training demand. This would ideally replace the current grass training pitch at the site.

Stourbridge RUFC has ambitions to purchase land adjacent to its existing site from a private owner to provide another senior pitch and two mini pitches. However, the cost to purchase the land is currently unconvulsive.

### **Pitch quality**

The quality of rugby pitches across Dudley has been assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments as determined by RFU) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating on a scale of good, standard and poor.

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

For the full assessment criteria, please see Appendix 2.

*Table 5.3: Definition of maintenance categories*

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

*Table 5.4: Definition of drainage categories*

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

# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 5.5: Quality ratings based on maintenance and drainage scores

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

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.

Overall, in Dudley there is one senior pitch available for community use assessed as standard quality and one as poor quality. The junior pitch at Windsor High School and Sixth Form is assessed as standard quality.

No pitches are rated as good, with no adequate drainage systems in place and maintenance being at best adequate. This is to be expected given that all the pitches are school-based, as opposed to being club-based.

Table 5.6: Quality of pitches available for community use

Senior pitches			Junior pitches		
Good	Standard	Poor	Good	Standard	Poor
-	1	1	-	1	-

The table overleaf shows the agreed quality ratings for each of the pitches.



## DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 5.7: Site quality ratings

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Tenure	No. of pitches	Pitch type	Floodlit?	Non tech score	Quality rating
5	Beacon Hill Academy	North Dudley	No	Unsecure	1	Senior	No	M2 / D0	Standard
79	Old Swinford Hospital	Stourbridge	No	Unsecure	2	Senior	No	M1 / D1	Standard
80	Old Swinford Hospital (Treherns Fields)	Stourbridge	No	Unsecure	4	Senior	No	M1 / D1	Standard
123	Summerhill School	Brierley Hill	Yes-unused	Unsecure	1	Senior	No	M1 / D1	Standard
130	The Ellowes Hall Sports College	North Dudley	Yes-unused	Unsecure	1	Senior	No	M0 / D1	Poor
141	Windsor High School & Sixth Form	Halesowen	Yes-unused	Unsecure	1	Senior	No	M1 / D1	Standard

# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### ***Ancillary facilities***

As there is no community rugby union demand within Dudley, there is no specific ancillary facility requirements in the Borough. Therefore, pitches only need to be serviced by changing facilities to adequately accommodate curricular use.

Elsewhere, Dudley Kingswinford RUFC has aspirations to tarmac the rest of the car park and provide an external café area at Dudley Kingswinford Rugby Football Club.

The flow of traffic into Stourton Park is reported as an issue by Stourbridge RUFC. With a single one-track lane, access to and from the site is problematic at peak times. The Club has planning permission to build a second exit onto the main road although it does not currently have the funding in place for the development. In addition, the Club also runs a course in partnership with Sandwell College and it would like this to be located on site, meaning it has ambitions to provide dedicated facilities for the students including two new changing rooms and a gym area.

### **5.3: Demand**

As mentioned previously, no affiliated rugby union demand is located in Dudley. However, as Dudley Kingswinford, Stourbridge, Stourbridge Lions and Old Halesonians rugby clubs traditionally draw their playing bases from Dudley, these are considered in the section below.

### ***Competitive play***

Four community rugby union clubs are considered to draw players from Dudley, consisting of 11 senior men's, two senior women's, 13 junior boys', two junior girls' and 23 mini teams. The clubs vary in size, with Dudley Kingswinford RUFC, Old Halesonians RUFC and Stourbridge RUFC catering for numerous teams within each format, compared to Stourbridge Lions RUFC, which provides just one team.

Dudley Kingswinford, Stourbridge and Stourbridge Lions rugby clubs all play in South Staffordshire, whilst Old Halesonians RUFC plays in Bromsgrove.

*Table 5.8: Summary of demand*

Club	Local Authority	No. of rugby union teams				
		Senior male	Senior female	Junior boys	Junior girls	Mini mixed
Dudley Kingswinford RFC	South Staffordshire	3	1	5	-	12
Stourbridge RFC	South Staffordshire	3	-	5	-	6
Stourbridge Lions RFC	South Staffordshire	1	-	-	-	-
Old Halesonians RFC	Bromsgrove	4	1	3	2	5
<b>Total</b>		<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>23</b>

In comparison to 2015 PPS findings, the level of demand is broadly consistent.

### ***Training***

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

# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

With no club-based pitches in Dudley, none of the provision is floodlit, meaning none would be suitable for training demand if such demand existed. That being said, the 3G provision at Goals Soccer Centre is used on occasion by Old Halesonians RUFC for junior training, albeit this is non-contact due to the provision not being World Rugby compliant. This alleviates pressure on the Club's grass pitches, which are used for all other training activity.

Elsewhere, Stourbridge RUFC and Stourbridge Lions RUFC both utilise the 3G pitch at Stourton Park for training demand, whilst Dudley Kingswinford RUFC has a dedicated floodlit training pitch which, as previously mentioned, it aspires to replace with an artificial surface.

### **Future demand**

Future demand can be defined in two ways, through participation increases and using population forecasts. In addition, the proceeding Strategy & Action Plan document will contain housing growth scenarios that will estimate the additional demand for rugby union arising from housing developments within Dudley.

#### *Population forecasts*

Team generation rates are used as the basis for calculating the number of teams likely to be generated in the future based on population growth. However, as there is no current rugby union demand in Dudley, no teams are expected to be generated through population growth alone.

#### *Participation increases*

Future demand is expressed by three of the clubs that draw players from Dudley, as seen in the table below. The total growth equates to an increase of three senior and five junior teams but is likely to be fulfilled outside of Dudley given where the clubs are based.

*Table 5.9: Future demand expressed by clubs*

Club	Local Authority	No. of rugby union teams				
		Senior male	Senior female	Junior boys	Junior girls	Mini mixed
Dudley Kingswinford RUFC	South Staffordshire	1	-	-	3	-
Stourbridge RUFC	South Staffordshire	-	1	-	2	-
Stourbridge Lions RUFC	South Staffordshire	-	-	-	-	-
Old Halesonians RUFC	Bromsgrove	-	1	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>

### **5.4: Capacity analysis**

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.

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.

# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

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

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

Despite no club-based rugby union taking place within Dudley, there is likely to be limited capacity on the pitches that are provided given that they are all based at schools, where curricular and extra-curricular use will limit what should be utilised by the community. Furthermore, any spare capacity that does exist should not be considered as actual spare capacity given the unsecure nature of the provision.

Discussions have taken place regarding Dudley Kingswinford RUFC using Summerhill School as an overspill venue; however, the Club is reportedly reluctant to use secondary sites.

For the club venues outside of Dudley, the three senior pitches at Dudley Kingswinford Rugby Football Club are considered to be played to capacity in the South Staffordshire PPS (completed in 2020), with particular issues identified on Sundays. The future demand expressed by the Club is therefore likely to result in overplay, unless quality improvements take place.

At Stourton Park, all three senior pitches are displaying spare capacity in the South Staffordshire PPS, although they are played to capacity at peak time. However, as Stourbridge RUFC's future demand aspirations are for teams playing outside of peak time, this could be adequately accommodated without causing overplay.

As the PPS for Bromsgrove is outdated (completed in 2015), the current capacity picture for Old Halesonians RUFC is unknown. However, with only two senior and four junior pitches provided on site, and with training demand taking place on one of the pitches, it is predicted overplay would be evident given the size of the Club.

### 5.5: Supply and demand analysis

As no community demand exists for access to rugby union pitches in Dudley, there is no requirement for pitch provision away from school-based activity, although retaining some as community available should be encouraged as an option for alleviating capacity issues. That being said, these can likely be resolved at the existing club sites.

Based on the above, focus should be placed on school activity and ensuring that curricular and extra-curricular needs are being met. However, this will need to be re-visited should any community demand arise in the future i.e., through the formation of an additional club.

# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

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### **Rugby union supply and demand summary**

- ▶ As no affiliated rugby union demand takes place within Dudley and as no future demand for access has been identified, there is currently sufficient provision within the Borough.
- ▶ Whilst some of the clubs drawing players from Dudley have capacity issues and development aspirations, these can likely be resolved at their existing sites and therefore require no action within the Borough.

### **Rugby union supply summary**

- ▶ Despite four clubs drawing players from Dudley, none have a need or a want to play within the Borough, meaning that there is no clear requirement for community available rugby union pitches.
- ▶ Despite the above, there are six sites containing a total of seven senior and three junior rugby union pitches, of which two senior and one junior pitch is available for community use.
- ▶ All of the pitches are school-based.
- ▶ Each pitch is assessed as either standard or poor quality.
- ▶ All four clubs drawing players from Dudley have security of tenure outside of the Borough, through ownership or a lease arrangement.

### **Rugby union demand summary**

- ▶ No affiliated rugby union demand is located in Dudley although Dudley Kingswinford, Stourbridge, Stourbridge Lions and Old Halesonians rugby clubs traditionally draw their playing bases from Dudley.
- ▶ Dudley Kingswinford, Stourbridge and Stourbridge Lions rugby clubs are based in South Staffordshire, whilst Old Halesonians RUFC is based in Bromsgrove.
- ▶ In total, the clubs' field 11 senior men's, two senior women's, 13 junior boys', two junior girls' and 23 mini teams.
- ▶ Future demand is expressed by Dudley Kingswinford, Old Halesonians and Stourbridge rugby clubs and amounts to three senior and five junior teams.
- ▶ Dudley Kingswinford Rugby Football Club (used by Dudley Kingswinford RUFC) is considered to be played to capacity in the South Staffordshire PPS, whilst Stourton Park (used by Stourbridge RUFC and Stourbridge Lions RUFC) has capacity for growth.
- ▶ The current capacity picture at Old Halesonians Rugby Club (used by Old Halesonians RUFC) is unknown; however, it is predicted overplay would be evident given the size of the Club.

# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

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### PART 6: RUGBY LEAGUE

#### 6.1: Introduction

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

Most community club rugby league is played throughout the summer season (from February to October). However, rugby league is considered as a winter season sport within schools, colleges and universities and therefore pitch provision for matches and training is also required throughout the winter months.

Senior rugby league is played on a field measuring 100 x 68 metres. The preferred pitch size for U7s, U8s and U9s is 60 x 40 metres, whereas for U10s and U11s it is 80 x 30 metres, with U12s and above generally playing on senior pitches. Teams from U7s to U11s are known as primary teams, with teams from U12s to U18s known as junior teams.

#### 6.2: Supply

There are no rugby league pitches in Dudley.

There are also no rugby league pitches provided across the four Black Country authorities. The nearest provision is at Kings Norton Rugby Club, in Bromsgrove, where a rugby union pitch doubles up to accommodate Birmingham Bulldogs RLFC.

#### 6.3: Demand

No demand has been identified for rugby league in Dudley. In effect, any residual need is unlikely to be sufficient enough for a club to be created, with individuals instead likely to travel to form part of the clubs based in other, nearby authorities.

#### 6.4: Supply and demand analysis

As no demand has been identified within Dudley, there is no need at this time for any provision to be established. Instead, focus should be placed on ensuring that any demand that does exist can be accommodated within clubs outside of the Borough.

##### **Rugby league – supply and demand summary**

- ◆ As no demand has been identified within Dudley, there is no need at this time for any provision to be established.
- ◆ Focus should be placed on ensuring that any demand that does exist can be accommodated within clubs outside of the Borough.

##### **Rugby league – supply summary**

- ◆ There are no rugby league pitches in Dudley.
- ◆ The nearest provision is provided in Bromsgrove.

##### **Rugby league – demand summary**

- ◆ No demand has been identified for rugby league in Dudley.
- ◆ Any residual need is unlikely to be sufficient enough for a club to be created, with individuals instead likely to travel to form part of the clubs based in other, nearby authorities.



# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### PART 7: HOCKEY

#### 7.1: Introduction

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

*Table 7.1: England Hockey guidelines on artificial surface types suitable for hockey*

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

In addition to the above pitch types, EH reports that it is currently trialling a different multi-sport surface in order to better accommodate lower levels of hockey demand on a pitch that is also suitable for other sports such as netball and tennis. The surface type, known as Gen 2<sup>9</sup>, is a versatile surface that will ensure that the sports do not need to compromise on the playing experience; it will be a sand dressed synthetic turf with a compatible shock pad. The concept is designed to provide facilities, including schools, with a dynamic surface which reduces the amount of space required and enables the provision to be utilised to its full potential.

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.englishhockey.co.uk/page.asp?section=2596&sectionTitle=Gen+2+Playing+Surface>

# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

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

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

### Consultation

There are no affiliated hockey clubs identified as playing within Dudley. However, Kingswinford, Old Halesonians and Dudley Ladies hockey clubs have previously played in Dudley and continue to draw some of their player bases from Dudley despite playing outside of the Borough. They have therefore been consulted to inform this study.

### 7.2: Supply

The audit identifies one hockey suitable AGP in Dudley. This is floodlit, available for community use and located at Coseley Leisure Centre. It is located within the North Dudley Analysis Area.

*Table 7.2: Summary of full size hockey suitable AGPs*

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Community use?	Floodlit?	Size (metres)
20	Coseley Leisure Centre	North Dudley	Yes	Yes	110 x 71

There were previously additional full size AGPs provided, at Leasowes Sports Centre and The Dell Stadium; however, these have recently been converted to a 3G surface. The smaller sized 3G pitch at Halesowen College was also developed via a conversion.

### Smaller size provision

In addition to the full size AGP, there are also seven smaller sized pitches provided in Dudley, as summarised below. Six of these are available to the community and four are serviced by floodlights (the pitches at Manor Way Primary Academy and Windsor High School & Sixth Form College are available to the community but not floodlit).

Three of the pitches are provided at Hillcrest School & Community College.

*Table 7.3: Smaller size AGPs in Dudley*

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Floodlit?	Size (metres)
50	Hillcrest School & Community College	Central Dudley	Yes	Yes	34 x 18
			Yes	Yes	34 x 18
			Yes	Yes	34 x 18
70	Manor Way Primary Academy	Halesowen	Yes	No	44 x 23
129	The Earls High School	Halesowen	Yes	Yes	90 x 60
132	The Kingswinford Academy	Brierley Hill	No	No	42 x 30
141	Windsor High School & Sixth Form College	Halesowen	Yes	No	91 x 53

# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

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Whilst too short and/or narrow for senior matches, the pitches at The Earls High School and Windsor High School & Sixth Form College are of sufficient size for most other activity, including training demand and junior play. In contrast, the remaining smaller sized pitches are considered too small to accommodate any purposeful hockey demand and are therefore discounted from this point onwards.

### ***Future supply***

Sedgley & Gornal United FC aspires to manage its own facility and has held talks with Birmingham FA regarding using Coseley Leisure Centre for this purpose. The Club wants to be a partner club for the conversion of the onsite AGP from sand-based to 3G, although EH notes that a Primary Academy is due to move to the site and questions whether 3G would be an appropriate surface.

Similarly, Windsor High School & Sixth Form College is exploring funding opportunities for the conversion of its slightly undersized sand-based AGP to 3G. The current surface is over 20 years old and whilst being available to the community, it is without floodlighting due to neighbouring housing and does not receive much usage.

EH indicates concerns about the lack of hockey-suitable facilities within Dudley, which forms part of the reason as to why Kingswinford, Old Halesonians and Dudley Ladies hockey clubs now play outside of the Borough. As such, it is currently searching for a site where suitable hockey provision could be accommodated, with both The Dell Stadium and Old Swinford Hospital being discussed to date. With the latter, the installation of a hockey suitable AGP would replace the cricket square on site, which is said to be currently unused due to boundary issues.

The need for a new pitch will only be exacerbated should the abovementioned conversion at Coseley Leisure Centre take place.

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

The pitch at Coseley Leisure Centre is managed by the Council, whereas the pitches at The Earls High School and Windsor High School & Sixth Form College are both managed internally by the respective schools.

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

As there is no formal hockey demand taking place in Dudley, no users are known to have secure tenure agreements for any hockey suitable pitches in the Borough. However, the pitch at Coseley Leisure Centre is deemed to be secure as it is Council operated, although not necessarily secure for hockey use (given the 3G conversion aspirations that exist).

The remaining school based pitches are considered to be unsecure as no community use agreements are in place.

Dudley Ladies HC is without security of tenure in Wolverhampton.

### ***Availability***

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

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Using this, the AGP at Coseley Leisure Centre is fully available throughout the peak period. It is available to the community from 16:30 until 23:00 during weekdays and from 09:00 until 18:00 at weekends.

The smaller sized pitch at Windsor High School & Sixth Form College is available from 09:00 until 16:00 during weekends and theoretically is available on weekday evenings, although this is not relevant outside of summer months due to the lack of floodlighting.

The pitch at The Earls High School is reserved for internal use until 18:00 on weekdays, before being available to the community until 21:30. At weekends, it is available from 09:00 until 18:00 on Saturdays and until 16:00 on Sundays.

### Quality

Depending on use, it is considered that the carpet of an AGP usually lasts for approximately ten years and it is the age of the surface, together with maintenance levels, that most commonly affects quality. An issue for hockey nationally is that many providers did not financially plan to replace the carpet when first installed.

The pitch at Coseley Leisure Centre is assessed as poor quality and is not known to have been resurfaced since it was installed in 2000. This means that it is in desperate need of a resurface, with it currently being unsuitable to accommodate hockey demand.

Table 7.4: Summary of full-size AGP quality

Site ID	Site	Year installed/resurfaced	Quality
20	Coseley Leisure Centre	2000	Poor

The smaller sized pitch at Windsor High School & Sixth Form College is also significantly over its recommended lifespan and has severe quality issues.

### Ancillary provision

Changing facilities across the sites are considered to be of adequate quality, with no specific issues identified via site assessments. However, improvements may be required should hockey demand begin utilising the provision.

### 7.3: Demand

There are no affiliated hockey clubs identified as currently playing within Dudley; however, Dudley Ladies, Kingswinford and Old Halesonians hockey clubs previously played in Dudley and therefore need to be considered. They continue to draw their player bases from Dudley despite playing outside of the Borough.

The three hockey clubs collectively provide 13 teams which, as a breakdown, totals eight senior men's, two senior women's and three junior teams.

Table 7.5: Summary of demand

Name of club	No. of competitive teams			No. of members
	Senior men	Senior women	Junior	
Dudley Ladies HC	-	1	-	15

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Name of club	No. of competitive teams			No. of members
	Senior men	Senior women	Junior	
Old Halesonians HC	5	1	3	81
Kingswinford HC	3	-	-	66

In comparison to 2015 PPS findings, the level of demand is broadly consistent.

### ***Dudley Ladies HC***

Dudley Ladies HC fields one senior women's team, consisting of 15 senior members and one junior member. The Club previously had as many as three teams playing at The Dell Stadium, with this reducing to one team when it relocated due to the conversion of the pitch to 3G.

The Club now plays and trains at Ormiston SWB Academy, in Wolverhampton, as it indicates that no hockey-suitable provision is available in Dudley. However, for training, it is only able to hire a third of a pitch on Wednesday evenings and the surface is said to be dated, poorly maintained and, thus, in poor condition. The changing and toilet facilities are also closed on Saturdays, meaning the Club can only access portable toilets on matchdays.

The Club fears that it is at risk of folding completely and has previously considered combining with another hockey club in Wolverhampton to ensure sustainability.

### ***Old Halesonians HC***

Old Halesonians HC currently fields five senior men's, one senior women's and three junior teams. The Club plays home matches at either Ormiston Forge Academy, in Sandwell, or at King Edward VI Five Ways High School, in Birmingham. Training takes place at the latter on Saturdays.

Additionally, the Club forms part of the wider Old Halesonians Sports Association, which also includes Old Halesonians RUFC and Old Halesonians CC. As part of this, the Club is formally based in Bromsgrove, accessing clubhouse provision at Old Halesonians Association.

The Club previously played in Dudley and has a preference for this if a facility of adequate quality was provided.

### ***Kingswinford HC***

Kingswinford HC currently fields three senior men's teams. Matches and training take place at the Doug Ellis Sports Centre (Birmingham), with training taking place at the same on Wednesday evenings. Prior to this, the Club accessed the pitch at The Dell Stadium, before its conversion to 3G.

Notwithstanding the above, EH considers Kingswinford HC to be a Birmingham-based club, rather than a Dudley-based club. This is due to the time it has spent playing in the City and its partnership with Birmingham City University.

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

Both Old Halesonians HC and Dudley Ladies HC are considered to be Dudley-based clubs, meaning that all their demand is exported. They would return their demand if suitable provision was provided.

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The situation for Kingswinford HC is different given that it is considered to be a Birmingham-based club, despite its previous presence in Dudley.

### ***Latent demand***

Whilst no formal latent demand is identified by the clubs, it is generally considered that clubs based at a single site are able to recruit new members more effectively. Therefore, it is likely that each club could increase membership if it was based at a single site, rather than being based outside of the Borough and split across multiple venues.

### ***Future demand***

Dudley Ladies HC has no plans to increase its membership, instead focusing on retaining the single senior women's team that it currently fields and ensuring that it remains viable.

Conversely, Old Halesonians HC and Kingswinford HC have aspirations to increase demand in the future, although neither quantify this due to a lack of pitch capacity. They cannot currently grow demand, despite having a desire to do so.

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

### ***EH initiatives***

There are several initiatives supported by EH that operate across the Country, including:

- ◀ Back to Hockey
- ◀ Hockey Heroes
- ◀ Walking Hockey

When ran, these initiatives add to the demand picture for hockey and are likely to result in future growth within the affiliated clubs. However, none are currently relevant to Dudley as a consequence of no clubs playing in the Borough and no pitches being suitable to accommodate play.

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

For matches, senior hockey activity typically takes place on a Saturday, whereas junior activity generally occurs on a Sunday. For training, peak time is midweek evenings, although preference is generally given for Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

### ***Usage***

Whilst no hockey demand is received on the pitch at Coseley Leisure Centre, it is booked for football purposes. Predominately, this is by clubs for training, with these generally being clubs that are unable to access 3G pitches due to the stock of pitches being at capacity at peak times. However, access is also received from recreational and informal groups.

The pitch is operating at around 60% capacity during the peak period, meaning capacity exists for an increase in activity.

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At Windsor High School & Sixth Form Centre, the pitch caters for very little demand from the community as a consequence of no floodlighting being provided and due to the quality of the provision. The School reports that only adhoc bookings are received.

The pitch at The Earls High School receives more demand, although capacity is reported to exist on each day. As with the pitch at Coseley Leisure Centre, all demand is currently football-based.

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

It is suggested that a floodlit pitch is able to accommodate four match equivalent sessions on one day. With teams playing on a home and away basis, this equates to one AGP being able to cater for eight 'home' teams at peak time (one team requires 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week on its 'home' pitch).

Based on the above, with seven senior teams exported from Dudley (accounting for Dudley Ladies HC and Old Halesonians HC but not Kingswinford HC), there is a need for one full size pitch to ensure that the demand could be returned to the Borough. With one full size pitch currently provided, this means that the demand could be catered for; however, this is not the case given that the current quality issues at Coseley Leisure Centre make it unsuitable for hockey.

For junior hockey matches, the need for pitches is generally less than it is for senior hockey. This is because younger age groups can play on half a pitch (meaning two fixtures can take place at one time) and because there are significantly fewer junior teams (three) in Dudley than there are senior teams (seven). As such, provision adequate to accommodate senior demand would also be adequate to accommodate junior demand.

### **Conclusion**

Focus should be placed on ensuring that at least one suitable venue for hockey is provided within Dudley. As such, there is either a need to improve the quality at Coseley Leisure Centre, or, if 3G proposals at the site are to go ahead, there is a requirement to develop a new full size sand-based AGP elsewhere within the Borough. If this is the preferred approach, the pitch at Coseley Leisure Centre should be protected for hockey until the new pitch is in place.

As only one suitable pitch is provided, to ensure that all future demand can be met within Dudley and to enable future growth within the clubs, the creation of a second hockey-suitable AGP could also be sought. Options for this will be explored in the proceeding Strategy document.



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### **Hockey supply and demand summary**

- Focus should be placed on ensuring that at least one suitable venue for hockey is provided within Dudley.
- There is either a need to improve the quality at Coseley Leisure Centre, or, if 3G proposals at the site are to go ahead, there is a requirement to develop a new full size sand-based AGP elsewhere within the Borough.
- The creation of a second hockey-suitable AGP could also be sought to ensure that all future can be met within Dudley.

### **Hockey supply summary**

- There is one full size hockey suitable AGP in Dudley, provided at Coseley Leisure Centre.
- The pitch is floodlit and available to the community.
- There are seven smaller size pitches, of which two (at Windsor High School & Sixth College and The Earls High School) are large enough for some form of hockey demand.
- The pitch at Windsor High School & Sixth Form College is without floodlighting.
- Aspirations exists to convert the pitches at Coseley Leisure Centre and Windsor High School & Sixth Form College to 3G.
- England Hockey is concerned about the lack of hockey suitable provision in the Borough and is currently searching for a site where a new facility could be provided.
- The pitch at Coseley Leisure Centre is assessed as poor quality and is not known to have been resurfaced since it was installed in 2000.
- The pitch at Windsor High School & Sixth Form College is also poor quality.

### **Hockey demand summary**

- There are no affiliated hockey clubs identified as playing within Dudley although Kingswinford, Old Halesonians and Dudley Ladies hockey previously played in the Borough.
- These three hockey clubs provide 13 teams, consisting of eight senior men's, two senior women's and three junior teams.
- Dudley Ladies HC and Kingswinford HC previously accessed The Dell Stadium before its conversion to 3G.
- Dudley Ladies and Old Halesonians hockey clubs have a preference to return their demand to Dudley, whereas Kingswinford HC is considered to be a Birmingham-based club given how long it has played in the City for.
- No EH initiatives are held in the Borough due to no club being based in Dudley and due to a lack of a suitable pitch.
- All usage of the hockey suitable AGP in Dudley is from other activities, most notably in terms of football whether that be through formal training or via informal social use.
- The pitches are deemed to have significant spare capacity although quality improvements are required to safely return hockey demand to Dudley.

# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

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### PART 8: TENNIS

#### 8.1: Introduction

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

#### *Consultation*

There are three tennis clubs in Dudley; Halesowen, Quarry Bank and Wall Heath tennis clubs. All three responded to consultation requests, resulting in a response rate of 100%.

#### 8.2: Supply

There are 89 tennis courts identified in Dudley across 28 sites. Of the courts, 49 are categorised as being available for community use at 17 sites compared to 40 that are unavailable at 11 sites.

The Brierley Hill and Halesowen analysis areas contain the highest number of available courts (12), whereas the North Dudley Analysis Area provides the fewest (five).

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

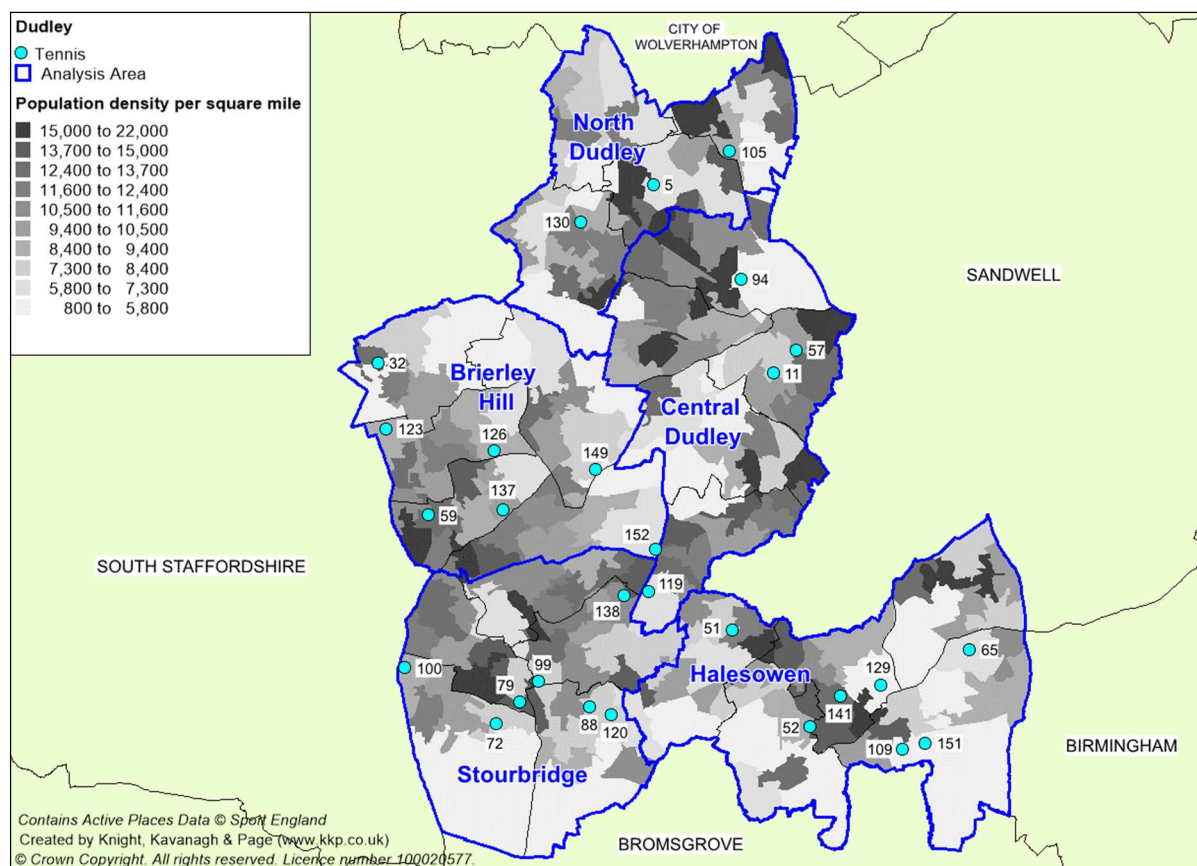
Analysis area	Courts available for community use	Courts unavailable for community use
Brierley Hill	16	13
Central Dudley	6	1
Halesowen	12	7
North Dudley	5	6
Stourbridge	10	13
<b>Dudley</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>40</b>

Please note that courts are classified as being available for community use provided that they are deemed to be easily accessible to the general population, either via pay and play or through a membership at a club (or a mixture of both). However, this is not applicable when the price of membership is significant enough to prevent inclusive access, as is considered to be the case at David Lloyd Club. All remaining courts identified as being unavailable are located at school sites.

Figure 8.1 shows the location of the courts servicing Dudley, regardless of community use. For a key to the map, see Table 8.2.

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Figure 8.1: Location of tennis courts in Dudley



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Table 8.2: Tennis courts in Dudley

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Ownership	Community use?	No. of courts	Floodlit?	Court type	Court quality
5	Beacon Hill Academy	DY3 1BP	North Dudley	School	No	6	No	Macadam	Poor
11	Buffery Park	DY2 8SH	Central Dudley	Council	Yes	1	No	Macadam	Poor
32	Enville Road	DY6 0JT	Brierley Hill	Club	Yes	2	Yes	Macadam	Good
						2	No	Macadam	Good
51	Homer Hill Recreation Ground	B63 2UR	Halesowen	Council	Yes	1	No	Artificial	Good
52	Huntingtree Park	B63 4EX	Halesowen	Council	Yes	1	No	Macadam	Poor
57	Kates Hill Primary School	DY2 7HP	Central Dudley	School	No	1	No	Macadam	Standard
59	King George V Park (Stourbridge)	DY8 5BT	Brierley Hill	Council	Yes	4	No	Macadam	Poor
65	Leasowes Sports Centre	B62 8PJ	Halesowen	School	Yes	4	Yes	Macadam	Poor
72	Mary Stevens Park	DY8 2DN	Stourbridge	Council	Yes	3	No	Macadam	Standard
79	Old Swinford Hospital	DY8 1QX	Stourbridge	School	No	2	Yes	Macadam	Good
						2	Yes	Artificial	Good
88	Pedmore High School	DY9 7HS	Stourbridge	School	No	2	No	Macadam	Poor
94	Priory Park	DY1 4EY	Central Dudley	Council	Yes	2	Yes	Macadam	Standard
						2	No	Macadam	Standard
99	Redhill School	DY8 1JX	Stourbridge	School	Yes	4	No	Macadam	Standard
100	Ridgewood High School	DY8 3NQ	Stourbridge	School	No	6	No	Macadam	Standard
105	Silver Jubilee Park	WV14 9SZ	North Dudley	Council	Yes	2	No	Macadam	Standard
109	Somers Sports & Social Club	B62 0JH	Halesowen	Club	Yes	2	No	Macadam	Poor
119	Stevens Park	DY5 2HR	Central Dudley	Council	Yes	1	No	Macadam	Standard
120	Stevens Park (Wollescote)	DY9 7JH	Stourbridge	Council	Yes	3	No	Macadam	Poor
123	Summerhill School	DY6 9XE	Brierley Hill	School	No	4	No	Macadam	Standard
126	The Crestwood School	DY6 8QG	Brierley Hill	School	No	3	No	Macadam	Poor
129	The Earls High School	B63 3SL	Halesowen	School	No	5	No	Macadam	Poor
130	The Ellowes Hall Sports College	DY3 2JH	North Dudley	School	Yes	3	No	Macadam	Poor
137	The Wordsley School	DY8 5SP	Brierley Hill	School	Yes	4	No	Macadam	Good
138	Thorns Leisure Centre (Academy)	DY5 2NU	Stourbridge	School	No	1	No	Macadam	Standard
141	Windsor High School	B63 4BB	Halesowen	School	No	2	No	Macadam	Poor

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Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Ownership	Community use?	No. of courts	Floodlit?	Court type	Court quality
149	David Lloyd Club	DY5 3YP	Brierley Hill	Commercial	No	3	Yes	Macadam	Good
						3	No	Artificial	Standard
151	Manor Abbey Stadium	B62 8RW	Halesowen	Club	Yes	3	Yes	Clay	Good
						1	Yes	Macadam	Good
152	Quarry Bank Tennis Club	DY5 1SA	Brierley Hill	Club	Yes	4	Yes	Artificial	Good

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### ***Future supply***

Halesowen TC is said to be exploring the feasibility of installing an additional court at Manor Abbey Stadium.

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

The table below highlights the management of tennis courts within Dudley. The majority are operated by schools, although only 31% of these are available for community use, with more local authority operated courts considered to be accessible.

*Table 8.3: Tennis courts by management type*

Community use?	Number of courts			
	Club	Council <sup>10</sup>	Education	Other
Available	14	20	15	-
Unavailable	-	-	34	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>6</b>

A total of 14 courts are managed by clubs, with four of these provided at Quarry Bank Tennis Club. The Club has freehold of these. Similarly, the four provided at Enville Road are owned by Wall Heath TC, whilst Halesowen TC forms part of a trust that has freehold of the four courts at Manor Abbey Stadium.

### ***Court type***

Most outdoor tennis courts in Dudley have a macadam surface, with 76 being of this type and 41 of these being available for community use. The estimated lifespan of a macadam court is ten years, depending on levels of use and maintenance levels. To ensure courts can continue to be used beyond this time frame, it is recommended that a sinking fund is put into place for eventual refurbishment.

Ten of the remaining courts have an artificial surface, with three of these provided at David Lloyd Club, four at Quarry Bank Tennis Club, two at Old Swinford Hospital and one at Homer Hill Recreation Ground. The remaining three non-macadam courts are at Manor Abbey Stadium and have a clay surface.

### ***Floodlighting***

Floodlit courts enable use throughout the year and are identified by the LTA as being a key priority for growing participation nationally. The LTA reports that floodlights allow for a 35% increase in available court time on an annual basis.

In Dudley, only 23 of the 89 tennis courts are serviced by floodlights, representing just 26% of the provision, which is a relatively low amount when compared to other local authorities nationally. The floodlit courts are located at:

- ◀ David Lloyd Club
- ◀ Leasowes Sports Centre
- ◀ Priory Park
- ◀ Quarry Bank Tennis Club
- ◀ Enville Road
- ◀ Manor Abbey Stadium
- ◀ Old Swinford Hospital

<sup>10</sup> Includes parish/town council courts.

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Of the floodlit courts, 15 are available for community use (the three at David Lloyd Club and four at Old Swinford Hospital are not considered to be available).

A lack of floodlighting at many of the school sites presents a key reason as to why many of the courts are unavailable for community use. Many of the providers state that making them available for lettings would not be financially viable as usage would be limited, although the LTA does offer solutions to help overcome this including initiatives such as Clubspark and Gate Access (detailed further on). Only 50% of non-floodlit courts are accessible to the community compared to 65% of floodlit courts.

Access to floodlit courts is considered particularly key for clubs as it allows for more usage of provision, which in turn can help accommodate more members. To that end, it must be noted that all three clubs in Dudley have access to floodlit courts, although Wall Heath TC expresses an aspiration to install additional floodlighting on its two courts that are currently not serviced. The LTA is supportive of this ambition.

### ***LTA Quick Access Loan Scheme***

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

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

### ***Over markings***

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

In Dudley, 45 courts are overmarked by netball provision, with the majority of these located at school sites where curriculum activity makes this necessary. For more information, see Part 9 of this report.

One of the courts at King George V Park (Stourbridge) is overmarked by a basketball court, whilst a court previously marked out at Sedgley Hall Farm Park has been replaced by multi-use game area markings.

### ***Quality***

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

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



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Of the courts in Dudley, most (40%) are assessed as poor quality, whilst relatively few (27%) are assessed as good quality. Most of the good quality courts are available for community use, whereas less than half of the standard and poor quality courts are.

*Table 8.4: Quality of community available tennis courts*

Community use?	Quality		
	Good	Standard	Poor
Available	17	14	18
Unavailable	7	15	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>36</b>

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

- ◀ Beacon Hill Academy
- ◀ Huntingtree Park
- ◀ Leasowes Sports Centre
- ◀ Pedmore High School
- ◀ Stevens Park (Wollecote)
- ◀ The Earls High School
- ◀ Windsor High School
- ◀ Buffery Park
- ◀ King George V Park (Stourbridge)
- ◀ Old Swinford Hospital
- ◀ Somers Sports & Social Club
- ◀ The Crestwood School
- ◀ The Ellowes Hall Sports College

Issues recorded during site assessments include poor grip underfoot, the presence of moss, worn line markings and loose gravel, with maintenance also considered to be basic and infrequent at most of the sites. This leads to further deterioration in quality.

Four of the sites containing poor quality courts are operated by the Council (King George V Park, Huntingtree Park, Stevens Park and Buffery Park). Improving such courts is currently a national priority for the LTA, with a focus on suitable sites that cater for high levels of recreational demand or that have the potential to do so. This is especially the case if the provision is serviced (or could be serviced) by changing facilities and floodlighting, whereby a sustainable tennis programme could be supported.

To help inform the above, the LTA has produced a condition report in relation to park courts in Dudley, identifying issues at each site and detailing project costs to bring them up to an appropriate standard. The findings of this report are summarised for each venue in the table below.

*Table 8.5: Summary of park courts condition report*

Site ID	Site name	Summary
11	Buffery Park	Court is in poor condition; fencing is in good condition. Tree overhang causing moss and lead issues in corners. Clean and repaint required.
52	Huntingtree Park	Court is in average condition but the chain mesh fencing is good. Clean and repaint is required, with nets and posts needing to be replaced.
59	King George V Park (Stourbridge)	Fencing is in poor condition, with holes created to gain access. Moss and leaf issues, with dips in courts. Clean and repaint also required.
72	Mary Stevens Park	Dips in courts, tree overhang causing moss issue
94	Priory Park	The two floodlit courts are in better condition than the non-floodlit courts. Minor cracking and dips present on the non-floodlit courts. Clean and repaint required.

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Site ID	Site name	Summary
105	Silver Jubilee Park	Tree hang is causing moss and leaf issues. Main gate needs repair. Clean and repaint required.
120	Stevens Park	Court condition is adequate but there are no gates, meaning open access. Clean and repaint required.
121	Stevens Park (Wollescote)	Courts are in extremely poor condition. Significant tree overhang is causing moss growth, whilst the chain mesh fencing is poor.

In contrast to the poor quality courts, the courts at David Lloyd Club, Enville Road, Homer Hill Recreation Ground, Manor Abbey Stadium and Quarry Bank Tennis Club are assessed as good quality. This means that all three clubs in the Borough are serviced by good quality courts. At both Manor Abbey Stadium and Quarry Bank Tennis Club, this is a direct result of the courts being refurbished within the last 12 months.

### ***Ancillary provision***

The ancillary facilities servicing Wall Heath Tennis Club are considered to be poor quality, with only small and basic provision in situ. The Club is hoping to rectify this in the near future and is working on a grant application to help fund a new clubhouse building.

At Manor Abbey Stadium and Quarry Bank Tennis Club, the facilities are adequate, with changing rooms provided at both sites albeit some modernisation is required. Halesowen TC also has access to the facilities that cater for the athletics club at Manor Abbey Stadium, if/when this is necessary.

For non-club courts, ancillary provision is generally considered to be problematic, although good quality ancillary facilities are provided at Priory Park and Silver Jubilee Park. Whilst most of the other sites do provide changing facilities and/or toilets, they are not specific for tennis and are generally too far away from the courts to be realistically used. Often, the facilities predominately service football/cricket pitch users and therefore are not readily available or suited to tennis court users. In some instances, quality is also poor.

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

### **8.3: Demand**

It is reported that demand for tennis provision during the Covid-19 pandemic has increased substantially compared to prior levels when court restrictions have not been in place (potentially linked to tennis being one of the first sports to be allowed to resume). This should therefore be monitored moving forward to ensure that any growth can be accommodated for if the increases are sustained.

### ***Competitive tennis***

There are three tennis clubs in Dudley which collectively cater for 668 members, which equates to 393 senior and 275 junior members. All three clubs are relatively large, with Halesowen TC providing for the most members (290) and Quarry Bank TC providing for the least (174 members). The average club membership is 223.

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*Table 8.6: Summary of tennis club demand*

Club	No. of members	
	Senior	Junior
Halesowen TC	185	105
Quarry Bank TC	98	76
Wall Heath TC	110	94
<b>Total</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>275</b>

### **Participation trends**

Both Halesowen TC and Wall Heath TC report that their demand has increased at both senior and junior level over recent years, with the former attributing this to better quality facilities and the latter stating that it is due to the introduction of a family membership package.

Quarry Bank TC reports that its senior membership has remained static, but that its junior membership has increased by around 30%. It attributes this to having a better programme, with various coaching sessions and initiatives held.

### **Latent/unmet demand**

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

Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in tennis but 'are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 5,375 people within Dudley, which is a comparably high figure; by way of comparison 4,852 people are identified in Sandwell, 4,180 in Walsall and 3,933 in Wolverhampton.

In relation to clubs, Wall Heath TC reports unmet demand in that it believes that it would be able to accommodate more junior members if it had a greater number of courts. This is because more coaching sessions could be run. The Club states that it would be able to put together four additional junior teams if capacity was not limited.

### **Future demand**

All three clubs report future growth aspirations, with total future demand amounting to 115 potential additional members (45 senior and 70 junior). Wall Heath TC has the greatest ambitions, with hopes to grow by 60 members.

*Table 8.7: Summary of future tennis club demand*

Club	Future demand (members)	
	Senior	Junior
Halesowen TC	20	20
Quarry Bank TC	5	10
Wall Heath TC	20	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>70</b>

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Anecdotally, the LTA suggests that the above aspirations are modest in relation to its own expectations, which it primarily bases on its insight tools. The levels of latent and unmet demand it identifies is significantly higher, suggesting that future growth may exceed club ambitions. However, such demand is also likely to include demand outside of the club-environment.

### ***Informal and parks tennis***

It is considered that all local authority courts available for community use in Dudley have spare capacity for a growth in demand, although this is difficult to quantify as use is not always recorded due to the open access nature of many sites. Most of the current use is assumed to take place throughout the summer months although it is also accepted that many courts are accessed unofficially for activities unrelated to tennis.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The LTA has developed a package of support for local authorities to grow the use of park tennis courts by removing key barriers to participation. The three products are ClubSpark, Rally and Smart Access and can be used individually or in combination. In Dudley, these are currently utilised at only Enville Road and Manor Abbey Stadium, although Quarry Bank TC is also considering implementation. It is therefore not in place at any sites operated by the Council e.g. park sites. However, Huntingtree Park, Mary Stevens Park, Priory Park and Silver Jubilee Park have been prioritised.

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

The LTA and Government have also in 2021 announced a £30 million package to refurbish more than 4,500 public tennis courts in poor or unplayable condition at more than 1,500 venues in the most deprived parts of the UK<sup>11</sup>.

### *ClubSpark – Improving the booking process*

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

- ✦ Managed website - create and manage a mobile friendly website tailored to LA/club requirements to promote events and activities.
- ✦ Managed coaching – set up coaching lessons and courses online.
- ✦ Membership management - improve membership engagement by making it easier for the venue and for members to pay, renew and keep in touch (includes online payments, direct debits and the monitoring of revenue streams; membership modules can also be used to take season ticket payments for venues operating a non-traditional annual facility fee).
- ✦ Organise payments - set the way payments are taken, whether it's immediate pay and play, or bookable as part of a membership package
- ✦ Court bookings – reduced administration for managing bookings; give staff, coaches, members and the general public access to book and pay for courts, classes or other resources online.
- ✦ Scheduling - set unique booking and price rules to suit the venue and enable lights to switch on/off automatically when linked to the LTA Premium Gate Access system.
- ✦ Book and pay remotely - customers can make bookings and payments for a venue anytime, anywhere via the real-time booking app.
- ✦ Reporting - ClubSpark allows administrators to view reports highlighting income, court usage, revenue and number of members and season ticket holders; this allows for identification of trends and patterns and evidence to demonstrate participation levels and impact.

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/30-million-package-to-refurbish-4500-public-tennis-courts-in-deprived-parts-of-uk-announced>

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### *Rally*

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

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

### *Smart Access*

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

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

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

### ***Additional demand***

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

### *Parks tennis*

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

In Dudley, a league is in operation, with primary venues considered to be Mary Stevens Park, Priory Park, Stevens Park, Stevens Park (Wollescote) and King George V Park (Stourbridge).

### *LTA Youth Programme*

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



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Youth stages:

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

Key points:

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

### *LTA Youth Start*

This is the fun starter course for children who have never played the sport before or may have played very little. Packed full of fun games and training drills, it also gives parents the chance to join in too. For £25, kids get six weeks coaching by an LTA Accredited coach, along with a free racket, pack of balls and personalised t-shirt so that they can continue playing.

There are currently no LTA Youth Start sessions operating in Dudley, with the closest sessions running in Worcestershire.

### *Tennis for Free*

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

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

Through its offer, Tennis for Free aims to:

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

No Tennis for Free sessions currently operate in Dudley.

### *LTA Big Tennis Weekend*

The LTA Big Tennis Weekend (BTW)<sup>12</sup> is an LTA initiative which all registered venues can access. Clubs have the ability to sign up to host a GBTW open day, which are free of charge, and create a relaxed and welcoming environment for those new to tennis to participate. This in turn can potentially lead to the clubs attracting new members.

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<sup>12</sup> [www.lta.org.uk/gbtw](http://www.lta.org.uk/gbtw).



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

No venues in Dudley currently host the Big Tennis Weekend.

### *Mini tennis*

Mini tennis provides children with the perfect opportunity to learn the fundamentals of tennis at an early age. Designed for children aged between 4-10, mini tennis utilises smaller courts, nets and rackets as well as lower-bouncing tennis balls to develop vital tennis skills and techniques.

The game is split out into three levels, with the LTA stating that each stage has key aims and goals as follows:

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

No dedicated mini tennis courts have been identified in Dudley.

### *Padel*

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

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

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

There are currently no paddle tennis courts in Dudley. The nearest are located in Birmingham at Sutton Coldfield Tennis Club and in Walsall at Streetly Academy.

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#### 8.4: Supply and demand analysis

The LTA suggests that a non-floodlit court can accommodate a maximum of 40 members, whereas a floodlit court can accommodate 60 members. Using this, the table below identifies the capacity balance at all sites currently used by clubs, taking into account both current demand and future demand.

Notwithstanding the above, it must be noted that the capacity figures are just used as a guide. In reality, many clubs operating above recommended capacity limits will not see this as an issue and will be able to function without a problem.

*Table 8.8: Capacity analysis (club courts)*

Site ID	Site	Club users	Current demand (members)	Future demand (members)	No of courts	Floodlit?	Capacity (members)	Current capacity balance	Future capacity balance
32	Enville Road	Wall Heath TC	204	60	2	Yes	200	4	64
					2	No			
151	Manor Abbey Stadium	Halesowen TC	290	40	4	Yes	240	50	90
152	Quarry Bank Tennis Club	Quarry Bank TC	174	15	3	Yes	180	6	9

As identified in the table above, both Halesowen TC and Wall Heath TC have current and future capacity issues, whilst Quarry Bank TC could also have capacity issues if it realises its future growth aspirations. That being said, neither Halesowen TC nor Quarry Bank TC consider themselves to be in need of more court provision, with both stating that demand can be accommodated on the existing supply. However, this is something that should continue to be monitored.

Conversely, Wall Heath TC does report capacity issues, with this linked to the Club's aspirations for additional floodlighting to be installed as well as it reporting a need for additional courts to be provided in order to accommodate unmet demand. The proceeding Strategy document will identify options to potentially overcome this.

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

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

- Both Halesowen TC and Quarry Bank TC have potential capacity issues; however, neither report this as being a concern, with both stating that demand can be accommodated on the existing supply of courts.
- Conversely, Wall Heath TC does report capacity issues, with this linked to the Club's aspirations for additional floodlighting to be installed as well as it reporting a need for additional courts to be provided.
- As no non-club courts are identified as have any capacity issues, precedence should be placed on improving quality to an adequate standard for informal play, particularly at publicly available sites hosting multiple courts such as King George V Park (Stourbridge).

### **Tennis – supply summary**

- There are a total of 89 tennis courts identified in Dudley across 28 sites, with 49 courts categorised as being available for community use at 17 sites.
- The majority of courts are operated by schools, although only 31% of these are available for community use.
- The large majority of courts have a macadam surface, with 76 being of this type compared to ten having an artificial surface and the remaining three having a clay surface.
- In total, 23 of the 89 tennis courts are serviced by floodlights, representing just 26% of the provision, which is a relatively low amount when compared to other local authorities.
- Of the courts, 24 are assessed as good quality, 29 as standard quality and 36 as poor quality.
- The ancillary facilities servicing Wall Heath Tennis Club are considered to be poor quality, with the Club working on a grant application to help fund a new clubhouse building.
- At Manor Abbey Stadium and Quarry Bank Tennis Club, the facilities are adequate, with changing rooms provided at both sites albeit some modernisation is required.
- For non-club courts, ancillary provision is generally considered to be problematic, although good quality ancillary facilities are provided at Priory Park and Silver Jubilee Park.

### **Tennis – demand summary**

- There are three tennis clubs in Dudley which collectively cater for 668 members, which as a breakdown equates to 393 senior and 275 junior members.
- All three clubs report that participation has increased in recent years.
- Wall Heath TC reports unmet demand in that it believes that it would be able to accommodate more junior members if it had a greater number of courts.
- All three clubs report future growth aspirations, with total future demand amounting to 115 potential additional members (45 senior and 70 junior).
- Away from clubs, it is considered that all local authority courts available for community use in Dudley have spare capacity for a growth in demand, although this is difficult to quantify as use is not always recorded due to the open access nature of many sites.
- Clubspark is utilised at only Enville Road and Manor Abbey Stadium, meaning it is not in place at any sites operated by the Council, although Mary Stevens Park, Priory Park and Silver Jubilee Park have been prioritised for implementation.
- A Local Tennis League is in operation, with primary venues considered to be Mary Stevens Park, Priory Park, Stevens Park, Stevens Park (Wollescote) and King George V Park (Stourbridge).

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### PART 9: NETBALL

#### 9.1: Introduction

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

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

#### **Consultation**

Information to inform this section of the report was primarily obtained through discussions with England Netball. In addition, consultation has taken place with the Dudley Netball League.

#### 9.2: Supply

There is a large supply of outdoor netball courts across Dudley, with 87 identified across 60 sites. However, of these, only 14 courts at five sites are available for community use and most of these are without floodlighting which can limit usage during winter months. All of the courts that are unavailable for community use are located at education sites, primarily within primary schools.

There are no community available courts in the Central Dudley and North Dudley analysis areas. Six are located in the Halesowen Analysis Area, whilst four are in both the Brierley Hill Analysis Area and the Stourbridge Analysis Area.

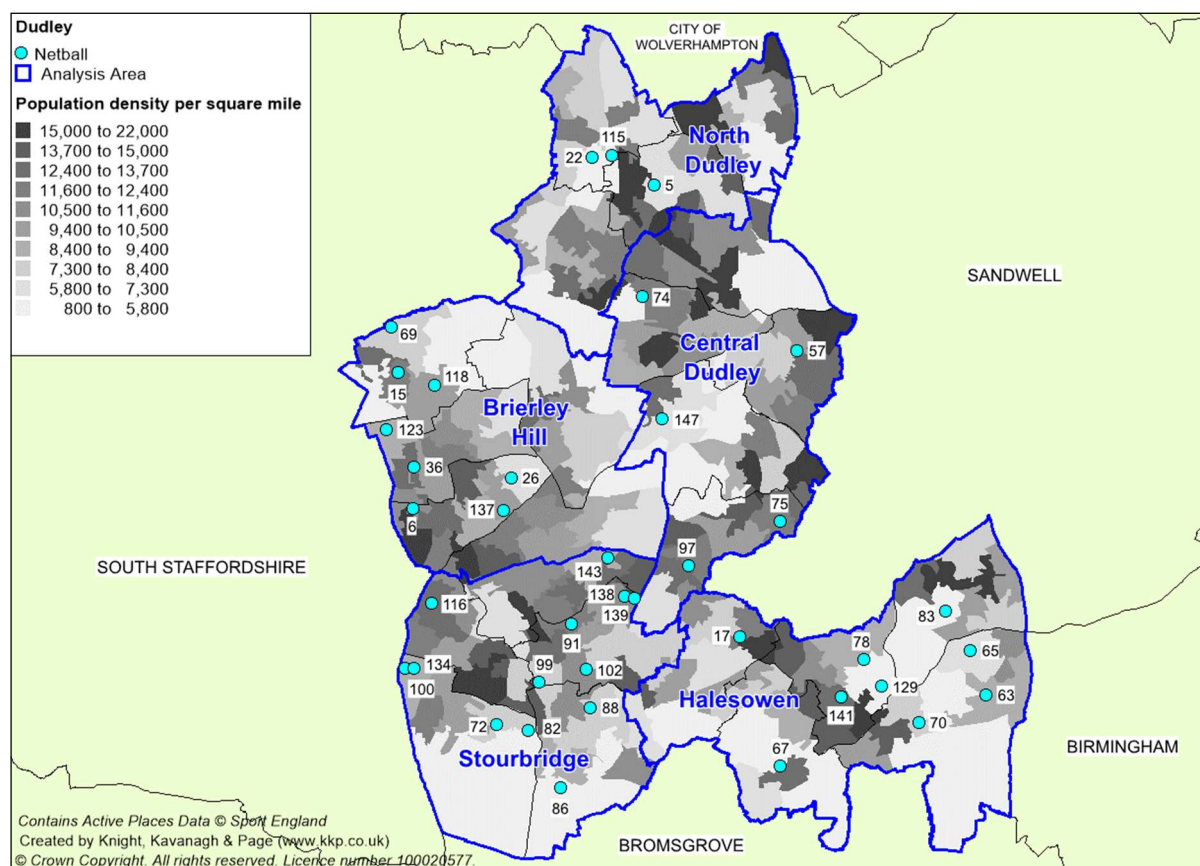
*Table 9.1: Summary of the number of courts by analysis area*

Analysis area	Number of courts available	Number of courts unavailable
Brierley Hill	4	13
Central Dudley	-	11
Halesowen	6	16
North Dudley	-	9
Stourbridge	4	24
<b>Dudley</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>73</b>

For a site-by-site breakdown of the courts supplied across Dudley, please refer to Table 9.2 and Figure 9.1 overleaf.

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Figure 9.1: Location of netball courts in Dudley



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Table 9.2: Netball courts in Dudley

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Ownership	Community use?	No. of courts	Floodlit?	Court type	Overmarked?	Court quality
5	Beacon Hill Academy	DY3 1BP	North Dudley	School	No	3	No	Macadam	Yes	Poor
6	Belle Vue Primary School	DY8 5BZ	Stourbridge	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
7	Bishop Milner Catholic College	DY1 3BY	Central Dudley	School	No	1	No	Artificial	No	Good
15	Church of the Ascension Primary School	DY6 9BD	Brierley Hill	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Poor
17	Colley Lane Primary School	B62 2TN	Halesowen	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
22	Cotwall End Primary School	DY3 3YG	North Dudley	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Poor
26	Dingle Community Primary School	DY6 8PF	Brierley Hill	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
36	Glynne Primary School	DY6 9TH	Brierley Hill	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
57	Kates Hill Primary School	DY2 7HP	Central Dudley	School	No	1	No	Macadam	Yes	Standard
63	Lapal Primary School	B62 0BZ	Halesowen	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Poor
65	Leasowes Sports Centre	B62 8PJ	Halesowen	School	Yes	4	Yes	Macadam	Yes	Poor
67	Lutley Primary School	B63 1BU	Halesowen	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
69	Maidensbridge Primary School	DY6 0HX	Brierley Hill	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Poor
70	Manor Way Primary Academy	B63 3HA	Halesowen	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
72	Mary Stevens Park	DY8 2DN	Stourbridge	Council	Yes	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
74	Milking Bank Primary School	DY1 2SL	Central Dudley	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
75	Netherbrook Primary School	DY2 9RZ	Central Dudley	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard

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Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Ownership	Community use?	No. of courts	Floodlit?	Court type	Overmarked?	Court quality
78	Newfield Park Primary School	B63 3TP	Halesowen	School	Yes	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
						1	No	Artificial	No	Good
82	Oldswinford Primary School	DY8 2JQ	Stourbridge	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
83	Olive Hill Primary School	B62 8JZ	Halesowen	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
86	Pedmore C of E Primary School	DY9 0RH	Stourbridge	School	No	2	No	Macadam	No	Standard
88	Pedmore High School	DY9 7HS	Stourbridge	School	No	2	No	Macadam	Yes	Poor
89	Pegasus Academy	DY1 2DU	Central Dudley	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Poor
91	Peters Hill Primary School	DY5 2QH	Brierley Hill	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
97	Quarry Bank Primary School	DY5 2AD	Brierley Hill	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
99	Redhill School	DY8 1JX	Stourbridge	School	Yes	3	No	Macadam	Yes	Standard
100	Ridgewood High School	DY8 3NQ	Stourbridge	School	No	6	No	Macadam	Yes	Standard
102	Rufford Primary School	DY9 7NR	Stourbridge	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
115	St Chads RC School	DY3 3UE	North Dudley	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Poor
116	St James CE Primary School	DY8 4RU	Stourbridge	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
118	St Marys C of E Primary School	DY6 7AQ	Brierley Hill	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
123	Summerhill School	DY6 9XE	Brierley Hill	School	No	3	No	Macadam	Yes	Standard
129	The Earls High School	B63 3SL	Halesowen	School	No	4	No	Macadam	Yes	Poor
134	The Ridge Primary School	DY8 3NF	Stourbridge	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
137	The Wordsley School	DY8 5SP	Brierley Hill	School	Yes	4	No	Macadam	Yes	Good
138	Thorns Leisure Centre (Academy)	DY5 2NU	Stourbridge	School	No	1	No	Macadam	Yes	Standard
						3	No	Macadam	No	Poor



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Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Ownership	Community use?	No. of courts	Floodlit?	Court type	Overmarked?	Court quality
139	Thorns Primary School	DY3 2JY	Brierley Hill	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
141	Windsor High School	B63 4BB	Halesowen	School	No	2	No	Macadam	Yes	Poor
143	Withymoore Primary School	DY5 2BH	Brierley Hill	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Poor
147	Woodside Primary School & Nursery	DY2 0SN	Central Dudley	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Poor
171	Amblecote Primary School	DY8 4DQ	Stourbridge	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Poor
172	Beechwood Church of England Primary School	DY2 7QA	Central Dudley	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
173	Caslon Primary Community School	B63 2ES	Halesowen	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
174	Christ Church Primary School	WV14 8YB	North Dudley	School	No	1	No	Artificial	No	Standard
175	Cradley Church of England Primary School	B63 2UL	Halesowen	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
176	Dudley Wood Primary School	DY2 0DB	Central Dudley	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
177	Gig Mill Primary School	DY8 3HL	Stourbridge	School	No	2	No	Macadam	No	Standard
178	Greenfield Primary School	DY8 1AL	Stourbridge	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
179	Hob Green Primary School	DY9 9EX	Stourbridge	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
180	Howley Grange Primary School	B62 0HS	Halesowen	School	No	2	No	Macadam	No	Standard
181	Huntingtree Primary School	B63 4HY	Halesowen	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Poor
182	Mount Pleasant Primary School	DY2 2YN	Central Dudley	School	No	1	No	Artificial	No	Standard

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Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Ownership	Community use?	No. of courts	Floodlit?	Court type	Overmarked?	Court quality
183	Northfield Road Primary School	DY2 9ER	Central Dudley	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
184	Red Hall Primary School	DY3 2PA	North Dudley	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
185	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School	DY2 7PW	Central Dudley	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Poor
186	The Bromley-Pensnett Primary School	DY5 4PJ	Brierley Hill	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
187	Wallbrook Primary School	WV14 8YP	North Dudley	School	No	2	No	Macadam	No	Standard

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### ***Future supply***

There were previously three netball courts overmarked on three tennis courts at The Crestwood School. This area was utilised as a construction site during the building of a new school block. Whilst the space is now clear, the School reports that the surface is no longer suitable for sport. It therefore aspires to tarmac this area and remark the three courts.

### ***Management***

All but one outdoor netball court in Dudley is operated by a school, with 52 provided at primary schools and 34 provided at secondary schools. The remaining court is operated by the Council at Mary Stevens Park.

### ***Court type***

Most outdoor netball courts in Dudley have a macadam surface, with 83 being of this type in total and 13 of these being available for community use. The estimated lifespan of a macadam court is ten years, depending on levels of use and maintenance levels.

The remaining four courts all have an artificial surface, with a single artificial court being provided at each of Bishop Milner Catholic College, Newfield Park Primary School, Christ Church Primary School and Mount Pleasant Primary School. Of these, only the court at Newfield Park Primary School allows for community use. As with macadam courts, the estimated lifespan of an artificial court is ten years.

### ***Floodlighting***

Despite 87 outdoor netball courts being provided in Dudley, only four are serviced by floodlighting. These are all provided at Leasowes Sports Centre.

A lack of floodlighting on netball courts is an issue nationwide, with England Netball's national database (updated in April 2020) identifying that only 1,941 of 5,108 outdoor netball courts are floodlit throughout the Country (38%). Whilst this is a minority of courts, it still represents a significantly higher ratio than that found in Dudley, where less than 5% of courts are serviced.

A lack of floodlighting presents a key reason as to why many courts are unavailable for community use in the Borough. Many providers of non-floodlit courts state that making them available would not be financially viable as usage would be significantly limited. However, it is also stated by the majority that there is a lack of perceived demand.

### ***Over markings***

Netball courts, particularly at school sites, are often overmarked, predominately by tennis courts but also on occasion by basketball and/or football courts. Provision such as this tends to receive higher levels of use which can be detrimental to quality over time, as well as potentially causing capacity issues when there is external netball demand.

In Dudley, 45 netball courts are overmarked compared to 40 that are dedicated as netball. However, of the dedicated courts, many are located at primary schools where they are often provided in areas generally used as playgrounds.

The only dedicated courts that are available for community use are provided at Mary Stevens Park and Newfield Park Primary School. At the former, the netball court is provided next to three tennis courts, whilst at the latter one court is provided within a playground and another forms part of an artificial pitch.

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### Quality

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

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

Of the courts in Dudley, six are assessed as good quality, 52 as standard quality and 29 as poor quality. Of the community available courts, five are rated as good quality, with five being standard and four being poor.

Table 9.3: Quality of courts

Community use	Quality		
	Good	Standard	Poor
Available	5	5	4
Unavailable	1	47	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>29</b>

The good quality courts are the four courts at The Wordsley School, which are new, and the artificial court provided at Newfield Park Primary School, which was only established in 2018.

The poor quality courts that are available for community use are located at Leasowes Sports Centre, which is particularly pertinent given that they are the only floodlit courts in the Borough. As the provision should theoretically be able to accommodate and attract the most demand, improvements are a priority. The surface is worn, and the line markings have faded.

### Ancillary provision

Ancillary provision is generally considered to be problematic. Whilst most sites provide changing facilities and/or toilets, they are not specific for netball and are generally located within main school buildings or are provided to predominately service sports halls and/or grass pitches. As such, access can be limited even at sites that allow for community use.

### 9.3: Demand

Demand for outdoor netball tends to come in two forms; league and club-based netball that consists of matches and training, and the various netball-based initiatives such as Back to Netball and Walking Netball.

#### League and club demand

Two clubs are identified as being based in Dudley, with Dudley Leisure Netball Club accessing Dudley College and Libra Lea Netball Club accessing Ellowes Hall Sports College. However, all of this demand is accommodated via the use of indoor sports halls, meaning that neither club utilises any outdoor courts within the Borough. This is because provision is only required for training purposes.

## DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

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Both clubs form part of the Dudley Netball League, with all matches played via a central venue at George Salter Academy, which is located outside of Dudley, in Sandwell. The League operates between April and July each year; however, due to Covid-19, matches have not been played since 2019 (play is expected to resume in 2022). Back then, nine divisions were provided, with 72 teams accommodated. It is suggested that more of these will have drawn players from Dudley, although the level of data required to interrogate this is not available.

Four dedicated netball courts are provided at George Salter Academy, with the Dudley Netball League reporting that this is insufficient as fixtures are tightly congested and have to be split across three evenings (Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays). Ideally, the League would want to access six courts, and it would really like to use a venue in Dudley to facilitate this but states that there is currently no suitable location.

Alternative league structures for Dudley residents to enter are the Wolverhampton City Netball League and the Walsall Netball League. Both also use a central venue format, with the former using Aldersley Leisure Centre, in Wolverhampton, and the latter using Phoenix Collegiate, in Sandwell (despite it being a Walsall based league).

### ***Back to Netball***

Back to Netball is a scheme put into place by England Netball in 2010, with participation increasing ever since. Sessions are running weekly by qualified coaches across England with the aim of re-introducing female players over the age of 16 to the sport.

In Dudley, numerous Back to Netball sessions have been run, mainly at Dudley Leisure Centre. However, this utilised indoor sports space and is no longer in operation.

### ***Walking Netball***

Walking Netball is a lower version of the sport, designed so that anyone can play regardless of age or fitness level. It can give those who are isolated an outlet, provide an activity for those who do not deem themselves fit enough and offer a stepping-stone for those looking for a pathway back into traditional netball.

Walking Netball sessions are hosted across the Black Country and the wider West Midlands region by Netball West Midlands. In Dudley, the court at Mary Stevens Park is utilised.

### ***Netball Now***

Netball Now is a simple, straight forward way to play netball. It is not a competition led by rules or scores but rather a simple session where players can play a variety of positions and even have a go at umpiring.

No Netball Now sessions are in operation in Dudley.

### ***Bee Netball***

A new initiative by England Netball, Bee Netball a programme for children all about friendship, inclusion, fair play and teamwork. Each session is managed by an England Netball accredited coach. Although there are currently no sessions operating in Dudley, it is still in its infancy so one may be established in the near future.

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

As indicated above, all netball demand in Dudley that wants to play within a club and league structure will likely export demand to either Sandwell or Wolverhampton to form part of the Dudley Netball League or the Wolverhampton City Netball League. As the Dudley Netball League states that it wants to host demand in Dudley, options should be explored to enable this.

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

Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in netball but 'are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 685 people within Dudley, which is a relatively minimal amount.

No latent or unmet demand is reported by England Netball or the Dudley Netball League. The League identifies that it grew substantially in the years leading up to Covid-19 and will always find ways to welcome new teams. However, capacity was an issue with 72 teams being accommodated and could therefore become more problematic if demand grows further.

### ***Future demand***

The Dudley Netball League reports that it expects to lose several teams when the League resumes post Covid-19 due to many players being unable to play netball over the past couple of seasons. However, it is hoping that this will then be offset through more junior players joining following the 2022 Commonwealth Games (hosted in Birmingham), with interest in the sport likely to increase.

In addition to the above, it is hoped by England Netball that there will be an increase in the number of its initiatives held in Dudley and the demand for them. However, this is reliant on volunteers hosting and organising the sessions.

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

Whilst there are a large quantity of netball courts provided in Dudley, the large majority are serving no purpose outside of curricular and extra-curricular demand due to a variety of factors including poor quality, a lack of floodlighting and no community use being allowed. This contributes to Dudley Netball League being unable to use a central venue in the Borough, despite it expressing an aspiration to do so. Options should therefore be explored to accommodate such demand.

To increase netball demand away from the club and league environment, focus should also be placed on supporting the various initiatives that are championed by England Netball and ensuring such programmes have suitable provision from which to be ran from. As part of this, priority should be placed on improving the quality of the existing stock, particularly where quality is poor and where curricular and extra-curricular needs are high. Where courts are over marked, this could be carried out in conjunction with improving tennis court quality.

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### **Netball – supply and demand summary**

- ▶ Whilst there is a large quantity of netball courts provided in Dudley, the majority serve no purpose outside of curricular and extra-curricular demand due to a variety of factors including poor quality, a lack of floodlighting and being unavailable for community use.
- ▶ Dudley Netball League is currently unable to use a central venue in the Borough, despite it expressing an aspiration to do so.
- ▶ There is a need to ensure such programmes as provided by England Netball have suitable provision from which to be ran from.

### **Netball – supply summary**

- ▶ There is a large supply of outdoor netball courts across Dudley, with 87 identified across 60 sites; however, only 14 courts at five sites are available for community use.
- ▶ All but one outdoor netball court (at Mary Stevens Park) in Dudley is operated by a school, with 52 provided at primary schools and 34 provided at secondary schools.
- ▶ The majority of outdoor netball courts have a macadam surface, with 83 being of this type; the remaining four courts all have an artificial surface.
- ▶ A total of 45 of the courts are overmarked by other sports provision, whilst many dedicated courts are provided at schools.
- ▶ Only four of the courts are serviced by floodlighting (at Leasowes Sports Centre), which represents a significantly low percentage.
- ▶ Six courts are assessed as good quality, 52 as standard quality and 29 as poor quality; of the community available courts, five are rated as good quality, with five being standard and four being poor.
- ▶ The four poor quality community available courts are provided at Leasowes Sports Centre, which is a particular issue given they are the only courts serviced by floodlighting.

### **Netball – demand summary**

- ▶ Two clubs are identified as being based in Dudley (Dudley Leisure Netball Club and Libra Lea Netball Club); however, all this demand is accommodated via the use of indoor sports halls as access is only needed for training purposes.
- ▶ Both clubs form part of the Dudley Netball League, with all matches played at George Salter Academy, which is located outside of Dudley, in Sandwell (exported demand).
- ▶ The Dudley Netball League operates 72 teams across nine divisions pre Covid-19.
- ▶ The League would like to use a venue in Dudley to better accommodate its demand.
- ▶ An alternative league structure for Dudley residents to enter is the Wolverhampton City Netball League, whilst also utilises a central venue (Aldersley Leisure Centre, in Wolverhampton).
- ▶ Back to Netball has previously been held at Dudley Sports Centre; however, this is no longer the case and indoor provision rather than outdoor was used.
- ▶ Walking Netball sessions are held at Mary Stevens Park.



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## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### PART 10: BOWLS

#### 10.1: Introduction

Outdoor bowls in Dudley is predominately played on crown greens, with a typical season running in the Summer from May until September. The British Crown Green Bowling Association (BCGBA) is the NGB with overall responsibility for ensuring effective governance of the sport.

Flat green bowls is another version of bowls played in England, governed separately by Bowls England. Whilst this is played predominately in the South, there is flat green in Dudley, which has therefore also been included within this study.

#### Consultation

There are 23 crown green and one flat green bowls club identified as currently using provision in Dudley. Of these, 14 responded to consultation requests, equating to a response rate of 61%. A low response rate can be common when it comes to bowls clubs.

*Table 10.1: Summary of consultation*

Name of club	Club type	Responded?
Baggeridge BC	Crown	No
Black Country BC	Flat	Yes
Coombs Wood BC	Crown	No
Coseley Athletic BC	Crown	Yes
Coseley Tavern BC	Crown	No
Cradley Libs BC	Crown	No
Dudley Dell BC	Crown	Yes
Dudley Sports BC	Crown	Yes
Glasscutters BC	Crown	No
Hadcroft BC	Crown	No
Hilly House BC	Crown	Yes
Huntingtree Park BC	Crown	Yes
Kingswinford Cons BC	Crown	Yes
Lye & Wollescote BC	Crown	Yes
Mary Stevens Park BC	Crown	Yes
Netherton Conservative BC	Crown	No
Pensnett Social BC	Crown	No
Royal Oak BC	Crown	No
Sedgley Ex Service BC	Crown	Yes
Sedgley Working Men's BC	Crown	Yes
The Laurels BC	Crown	No
White Horse BC	Crown	Yes
Woodman Mount Pleasant BC	Crown	Yes
Woodman Saltwells BC	Crown	Yes

Where clubs have been unresponsive, information has been provided by the BCGBA and England Bowls.

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### 10.2: Supply

There are currently 28 crown green bowling greens in Dudley provided across 26 sites (two are provided at both Dudley Sport Junior & Girls Football Club and Mary Stevens Park). All of the greens are available for community use, and they are relatively evenly split across the Borough, with the Brierley Hill Analysis Area containing the largest number of greens with eight.

The Brierley Hill Analysis Area contains the most greens, with eight, whilst the remaining analysis areas provide between four and six greens.

*Table 10.2: Summary of the number of greens by analysis area*

Analysis area	Number of greens
Brierley Hill	8
Central Dudley	5
Halesowen	6
North Dudley	5
Stourbridge	4
<b>Dudley</b>	<b>28</b>

In addition, there is one flat green provided at Stevens Park (Wollescote), in the Stourbridge Analysis Area. This is in addition to the crown green at the site.

#### ***Disused provision***

A disused bowling green is identified at Buffery Park. This is not currently being maintained for bowls after Buffery Park BC folded.

In addition, a disused green is supplied at Gornal & Sedgley Labour Club. However, plans are in place to bring this back into use in the near future as the Club, Gornal & Sedgley BC, is looking to reform. It originally fell out of use in 2018.

Figure 10.1 below shows the location of all bowling greens currently servicing Dudley. For a key to the map, see Table 10.3.

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Figure 10.1: Location of bowling greens in Dudley

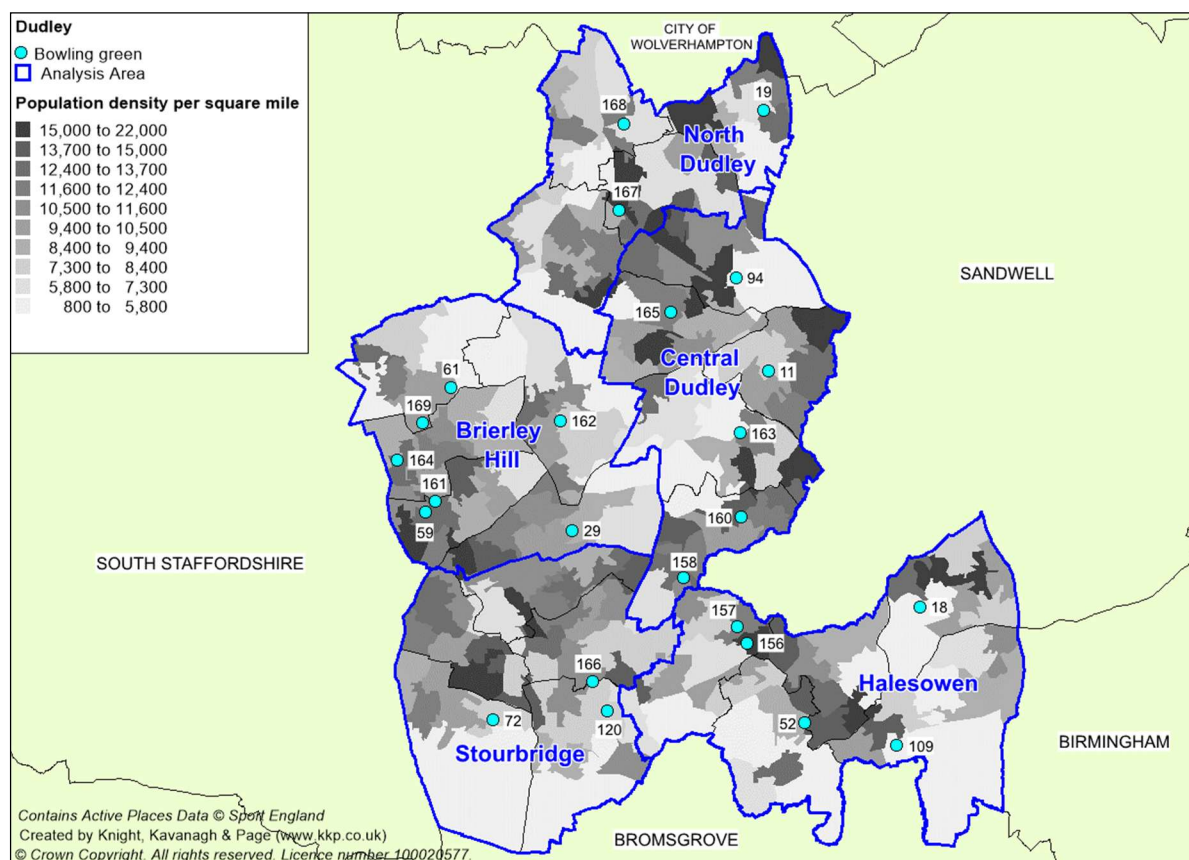


Table 10.3: Key to map

Site ID	Site	Postcode	Analysis area	Club user	No. of greens	Green type
18	Coombs Wood Cricket Club	B62 8ND	Halesowen	Coombs Wood BC	1	Crown
19	Coseley Cricket Club	WV14 8YB	North Dudley	Coseley Athletic BC	1	Crown
29	Dudley Sport Junior & Girls Football Club	DY5 3QJ	Brierley Hill	Dudley Dell BC	2	Crown
52	Huntingtree Park	B63 4EA	Halesowen	Huntingtree Park BC	1	Crown
59	King George V Park (Stourbridge)	DY8 5BT	Brierley Hill	-	1	Crown
61	Kingswinford Park	DY6 8AZ	Brierley Hill	Dudley Sports BC	1	Crown
72	Mary Stevens Park	DY8 2DN	Stourbridge	Mary Stevens Park BC	2	Crown
94	Priory Park	DY1 4EY	Central Dudley	-	1	Crown
109	Somers Sports & Social Club	B62 0JH	Halesowen	-	1	Crown
120	Stevens Park (Wollescote)	DY9 7JH	Stourbridge	Lye & Wollescote BC	1	Crown
				Black Country BC	1	Flat

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Site ID	Site	Postcode	Analysis area	Club user	No. of greens	Green type
156	The Laurels Private Members Club	B63 2BY	Halesowen	The Laurels BC	1	Crown
157	Cradley Libs	B63 2UG	Halesowen	Cradley Libs BC	1	Crown
158	The White Horse Inn	B64 5HU	Central Dudley	White Horse BC	1	Crown
160	Woodman Saltwells	DY2 0BP	Central Dudley	Woodman Saltwells BC	1	Crown
161	The Glasscutters Arms	DY8 5QD	Brierley Hill	Glasscutters BC	1	Crown
162	Pesnett Social Welfare Centre	DY5 4AE	Brierley Hill	Pensnett Social BC	1	Crown
163	Nethertons Conservative Club	DY2 0PJ	Central Dudley	Nethertons Conservative BC	1	Crown
164	Woodman Mount Pleasant	DY6 9ST	Brierley Hill	Woodman Mount Pleasant BC	1	Crown
165	The Hilly House	DY1 2QH	Central Dudley	Hilly House BC	1	Crown
166	The Hadcroft	DY9 7DX	Stourbridge	Hadcroft BC	1	Crown
168	Sedgley Working Men's Club	DY3 1HU	North Dudley	Sedgley Working Mens BC	1	Crown
169	Kingswinford Conservative Club	DY6 9LS	Brierley Hill	Kingswinford Cons BC	1	Crown
188	Baggeridge Social Club	DY3 3AA	North Dudley	Baggeridge BC	1	Crown
189	Coseley Tavern	WV14 9QU	North Dudley	Coseley Tavern BC	1	Crown
190	The Royal Oak	B62 8PZ	Halesowen	Royal Oak BC	1	Crown
191	Sedgley Ex Service Club	DY3 1HU	North Dudley	Sedley Ex Service BC	1	Crown

### Ownership/management

Details around the ownership and management arrangements for clubs which responded to consultation requests are provided in the table below. As seen, five clubs own their greens, four clubs have lease arrangements in place and four clubs rent their greens.

*Table 10.4: Ownership/management arrangements for bowling clubs in Dudley*

Name of club	Ownership/management details
Black Country BC	The Club has a 12-month rolling lease of the flat green at Stevens Park (Wollescote)
Coseley Athletic BC	The Club rents the green at Coseley Cricket Club from the Cricket Club on an annual basis
Dudley Dell BC	The Club leases its greens at Dudley Sport Junior & Girls Football Club from the Council, but does not state the length of this agreement
Dudley Sports BC	The Club rents the green Kingswinford Park from the Council
Hilly House BC	The Club lease the green at the Hilly House from a brewery for an indeterminate length of time
Huntingtree Park	The green is leased to a "friends of" group that supports the Club
Kingswinford Cons BC	The Club owns the green at Kingswinford Conservative Club

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Name of club	Ownership/management details
Lye & Wollescote BC	The Club rents the green at Stevens Park (Wollescote) from the Council
Mary Stevens Park BC	The Club rents the green at Mary Stevens Park from the Council
Sedgley Ex Service BC	The Club owns the green at Sedgley Ex Service Club
Sedgley Working Men's BC	The Club owns the green at Sedgley Working Men's Club
White Horse BC	The Club owns the green at The White Horse Inn
Woodman Mount Pleasant BC	The Club owns the green at Woodman Mount Pleasant
Woodman Saltwells BC	The Club rents the green annually from the pub (Woodman Saltwells)

Woodman Saltwells BC is the only club not considered to have security of tenure given that it rents its green from a private/commercial operator. All remaining clubs with a rental agreement in place have secure tenure as the agreement is either via the Council or via an overarching sports club.

Whilst tenure is secure for Lye & Wollescote BC at Stevens Park (due to the site being owned by the Council), it must be noted that the greens are subject to a covenant that restricts ball games being played on a Sunday. This has an impact on the site's capacity and availability, with league matches and practice sessions not permitted.

The above will also apply to the flat green at the site, which is used by Black Country BC. The Club reports an aspiration to enter into a longer term agreement for this provision; it currently leases the green via a 12-month rolling arrangement.

### Quality

The quality of bowling greens across Dudley have been assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating on a scale of good, standard and poor.

For bowling greens, the non-technical assessment considers several attributes of the site including the surrounding hard surfaces to the green, disability access, evenness, grass coverage and signs off unofficial use. For further detail regarding the site assessment criteria, see Appendix 2.

For the crown greens, nine greens are assessed as good quality, 13 are assessed as standard and six are assessed as poor, whereas the flat green at Stevens Park (Wollescote) is assessed as standard. This is seen site-by-site in the table below.

*Table 10.5: Summary of bowling green quality*

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	No. of greens	Green type	Quality
18	Coombs Wood Cricket Club	Halesowen	1	Crown	Good
19	Coseley Cricket Club	North Dudley	1	Crown	Good
29	Dudley Sport Junior & Girls Football Club	Brierley Hill	2	Crown	Poor
52	Huntingtree Park	Halesowen	1	Crown	Standard
59	King George V Park (Stourbridge)	Brierley Hill	1	Crown	Standard
61	Kingswinford Park	Brierley Hill	1	Crown	Standard
72	Mary Stevens Park	Stourbridge	2	Crown	Standard

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Site ID	Site	Analysis area	No. of greens	Green type	Quality
94	Priory Park	Central Dudley	1	Crown	Standard
109	Somers Sports & Social Club	Halesowen	1	Crown	Good
120	Stevens Park (Wollescote)	Stourbridge	1	Crown	Poor
			1	Flat	Standard
156	The Laurels Private Members Club	Halesowen	1	Crown	Good
157	Cradley Libs	Halesowen	1	Crown	Good
158	The White Horse Inn	Central Dudley	1	Crown	Poor
160	Woodman Saltwells	Central Dudley	1	Crown	Poor
161	The Glasscutters Arms	Brierley Hill	1	Crown	Poor
162	Pesnett Social Welfare Centre	Brierley Hill	1	Crown	Standard
163	Nethertons Conservative Club	Central Dudley	1	Crown	Standard
164	Woodman Mount Pleasant	Brierley Hill	1	Crown	Good
165	The Hilly House	Central Dudley	1	Crown	Good
166	The Hadcroft	Stourbridge	1	Crown	Standard
168	Sedgley Working Men's Club	North Dudley	1	Crown	Standard
169	Kingswinford Conservative Club	Brierley Hill	1	Crown	Good
188	Baggeridge Social Club	North Dudley	1	Crown	Good
189	Coseley Tavern	North Dudley	1	Crown	Standard
190	The Royal Oak	Halesowen	1	Crown	Standard
191	Sedgley Ex Service Club	North Dudley	1	Crown	Standard

The poor quality greens are located at:

- ✦ Dudley Sport Junior & Girls Football Club
- ✦ Stevens Park (Wollescote)
- ✦ The Glasscutters Arms
- ✦ The White Horse Inn
- ✦ Woodman Saltwells

At Dudley Sport Junior & Girls Football Club, the sprinkler system has recently malfunctioned, which has led to the greens not being watered during the summer months. This has led to bare patches forming and significant signs of wear and tear.

At Stevens Park (Wollescote), the green suffers from regular vandalism as well as high levels of unofficial use, with the general public reportedly accessing the provision to play cricket on a frequent basis. Lye & Wollescote BC is hoping to install boundary fencing in the near future to prevent this.

There is a similar situation at the White Horse Inn, where the green doubles up as an outdoor seating area and an outdoor play area. As bowling use has decreased in recent years, use of the green for other purposes has been increased by the pub's landlord.



# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

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At the Glasscutters Arms, the green is assessed as poor quality on account of not currently being used or maintained as a green due to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, Glasscutters BC is expecting to return to the site next year. It is currently sharing Kingswinford Conservative Club.

For Woodman Saltwells, issues are predominately linked to maintenance levels as well as drainage problems. This is also the case at some standard quality sites, although to a lesser extent, such as at Sedgley Ex Service Club, where plans exist for an investment into an irrigation system.

The greens at Mary Stevens Park are also assessed as standard quality. However, Mary Stevens Park BC reports that quality has deteriorated over recent years, predominately due to a lack of maintenance. In addition, unofficial use is reportedly prevalent given the public park location.

### ***Ancillary provision***

All clubs are able to access ancillary provision at their home green and the majority are serviced by adequate quality facilities, although the range of facilities and the condition of them varies site-by-site. The more comprehensive facilities tend to be provided at sites that also service other sports and activities, such as at Coseley Cricket Club.

Hilly House, Woodman Mount Pleasant, Woodman Slatwells and White Horse bowls clubs all report that they are serviced by poor quality ancillary facilities. This is because they all only have access to provision within the accompanying pubs, meaning no changing rooms or showers are provided.

Dudley Dell BC previously applied for planning permission to build a new pavilion at Dudley Sport Junior & Girls Football Club, although this has come to a halt due to Covid-19. It suggests that it will look to secure funding for this development once play resumes to normal.

Black Country BC wants to extend the clubhouse servicing its flat green at Stevens Park (Wollescote).

A number of clubs report that car parking is problematic, such as Hilly House, Kingswinford Cons, Sedgley Ex Service and Woodman Mount Pleasant bowls clubs. For many, this is again linked to provision being attached to a pub as the car park is for shared use.

In terms of other ancillary provision, Hilly House BC reports that it has plans for new sheltered standing areas to be established.

### ***Floodlighting***

In Dudley, seven greens are serviced by floodlighting at the following sites:

- ◀ Baggeridge Social Club
- ◀ Coombs Wood Cricket Club
- ◀ Cradley Libs
- ◀ Dudley Sport Junior & Girls Football Club
- ◀ Gornal & Sedgley Labour Club
- ◀ Nethertons Conservative Club
- ◀ The Hilly House

In addition, Sedgley Ex Service BC reports that it has aspirations to install floodlighting.



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Floodlit greens offer opportunities to access provision for training and matches during evenings outside of the summer months. However, they are relatively rare across the Country, with the level of floodlit supply in Dudley therefore considered to be comparatively high.

### 10.3: Demand

There are 23 crown green clubs using bowling clubs in Dudley. Membership across the clubs, where known, equates to a total of 811 members, made up of 658 senior men, 150 senior women and three juniors. However, membership for Huntingtree Park BC is unknown.

The membership numbers been acquired via consultation with the clubs or, for those unresponsive, via data supplied by the BCGBA.

*Table 10.6: Summary of club membership (crown green)*

Club name	Members		
	Men	Women	Juniors
Baggeridge BC	17	14	-
Coombs Wood BC	48	13	-
Coseley Athletic BC	10	3	-
Coseley Tavern BC	44	-	-
Cradley Libs BC	34	11	-
Dudley Dell BC	52	11	2
Dudley Sports BC	45	7	1
Glasscutters BC	16	4	-
Hadcroft BC	17	-	-
Hilly House BC	20	5	-
Huntingtree Park BC	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Kingswinford Cons BC	40	14	-
Lye & Wollescote BC	38	-	-
Mary Stevens Park BC	33	1	-
Netherton Conservative BC	31	5	-
Pensnett Social BC	20	3	-
Royal Oak BC	54	10	-
Sedley Ex Service BC	30	20	-
Sedgley Working Men's BC	16	6	-
The Laurels BC	39	13	-
White Horse BC	10	-	-
Woodman Mount Pleasant BC	28	2	-
Woodman Saltwells BC	16	8	-

The average club membership is 37 and the largest club is Dudley Dell BC (65 members). In contrast, the smallest club is White Horse BC, which has just 10 members, followed by Coseley Athletic BC, which has 13 members.

In addition, the solitary flat green club, Black Country BC, currently has 90 members. This is following a recent merger with Crystal BC, which previously accessed the same provision but as a separate entity.

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Table 10.7: Summary of club membership (flat green)

Club name	Members		
	Men	Women	Juniors
Black Country BC	65	25	-

### Participation trends

Despite a national trend of declining membership, only three of the clubs that responded to consultation report that membership has decreased in recent years, with these being Hilly House, Kingswinford Cons and White Horse bowls clubs. Conversely, Dudley Dell, Dudley Sports and Woodman Mount Pleasant bowls clubs all report that participation has increased, with all three attributing this to an increase in advertising.

Notwithstanding the above, overall participation is likely to have decreased on account of numerous additional clubs folding.

### Latent demand

Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in bowls but 'are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 583 people within Dudley, which is a relatively high number; by way of comparison, 454 people are identified in Wolverhampton, 488 in Walsall and 495 in Sandwell.

All clubs report that existing membership can be accommodated on the current level of provision available to them and that no potential members are being turned away due to capacity issues. As such, no clubs report any latent or unmet demand, with the majority actively trying to recruit new members.

### Future demand

Using ONS projections the number of persons aged 65 and over is likely to significantly increase for the period up to 2039. Due to this age band being the most likely to play bowls, demand for greens could increase.

From consultation, Dudley Dell BC and Mary Stevens Park BC report an intention to increase their number of members. Both have future demand for 10 additional senior members, whilst the former also has future demand for two junior members.

Black Country BC reports an ambition to add an addition 10 members to its flat green at Stevens Park (Wollescote).

No other clubs report any future demand; however, that is not to say that they are not looking for new members, but rather that they are focusing on sustaining current playing levels. This involves recruiting new members to replace those that leave the clubs or that become unable to participate.

### 10.4: Supply and demand analysis

The capacity of a bowling green is very much dependent on the leagues and the day that they operate. A green may have no spare capacity on an afternoon or evening when a popular league operates but may be unused for the rest of the week. However, in many cases, greens are used during the afternoons by club members who bowl socially, with access a potential issue during peak times if membership is particularly high.

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Neither the BCGBA nor England Bowls have any specific guidance on bowling green capacity, stating that it can vary from site-to-site and from club-to-club. However, as a guide, it is considered that any green used by at least 20 members is generally considered to be sustainable, whilst any green operating with a membership of over 60 may need additional resource to ensure that it is meeting its required level of demand. Therefore, capacity ratings for bowling greens in Dudley are classified as follows:

<b>Within capacity range</b>	Membership ensures green is sustainable without capacity issues
<b>Outside capacity range</b>	Membership is below or above the recommended capacity range

Following this, the table below highlights the level of usage each green in Dudley receives, where the information is known. Where no membership information is known, further communication is required with clubs to fully understand their needs and any potential capacity or sustainability issues.

*Table 10.8: Supply and demand balance of bowling greens in Dudley*

Site ID	Site	No. of greens	Club user	Current members	Future demand
18	Coombs Wood Cricket Club	1	Coombs Wood BC	61	61
19	Coseley Cricket Club	1	Coseley Athletic BC	13	13
29	Dudley Sport Junior & Girls Football Club	2	Dudley Dell BC	65	77
52	Huntingtree Park	1	Huntingtree Park BC	Unknown	Unknown
59	King George V Park (Stourbridge)	1	-	-	-
61	Kingswinford Park	1	Dudley Sports BC	53	53
72	Mary Stevens Park	2	Mary Stevens Park BC	34	44
94	Priory Park	1	-	-	-
109	Somers Sports & Social Club	1	-	-	-
120	Stevens Park (Wollescote)	2	Lye & Wollescote BC	38	38
			Black Country BC	90	100
156	The Laurels Private Members Club	1	The Laurels BC	52	52
157	Cradley Libs	1	Cradley Libs BC	45	45
158	The White Horse Inn	1	White Horse BC	10	10
160	Woodman Saltwells	1	Woodman Saltwells BC	24	24
161	The Glasscutters Arms	1	Glasscutters BC	20	20
162	Pesnett Social Welfare Centre	1	Pensnett Social BC	23	23
163	Nethertons Conservative Club	1	Netherton Coservative BC	36	36
164	Woodman Mount Pleasant	1	Woodman Mount Pleasant BC	30	30
165	The Hilly House	1	Hilly House BC	25	25
166	The Hadcroft	1	Hadcroft BC	17	17
168	Sedgley Working Men Club	1	Sedgley Working Men's BC	22	22
169	Kingswinford Conservative Club	1	Kingswinford Cons BC	54	54
187	Baggeridge Social Club	1	Baggeridge BC	31	31

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Site ID	Site	No. of greens	Club user	Current members	Future demand
188	Coseley Tavern	1	Coseley Tavern BC	44	44
190	The Royal Oak	1	Royal Oak BC	64	64
191	Sedgley Ex Service Club	1	Sedley Ex Service BC	50	50

Three clubs are currently operating over capacity limits. For crown greens, this relates to Coombs Wood BC at Coombs Wood Cricket Club and to Royal Oak BC at The Royal Oak. However, in both cases, the level of overuse is only marginal and is likely to be manageable.

Dudley Dell BC also has a membership of over 60; however, this is not considered to be an issue as it has access to two greens. As such, overall, supply is seemingly sufficient to meet demand, especially given that several greens are unused.

Black Country BC is also operating above capacity on the flat green at Stevens Park (Wollescote) and this is more substantial. Nevertheless, the Club reports no capacity issues and states that it has capacity for growth.

Based on the above, it is considered that the overall supply of greens in Dudley is sufficient to meet demand, especially given that a number of greens are unused.

At the end other end of the scale, Hadcroft BC (17 members), Coseley Athletic BC (13 members) and White Horse BC (10 members) are operating below the level of membership required to ensure that the greens that they use are sustainable. Support may therefore be required to safeguard these clubs and sites.

For some authorities, an amalgamation of clubs can often be a solution when numerous clubs are struggling for membership within a locality. However, this is something that needs to be informed through separate needs assessment studies before any provision that is in use can be lost.

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### **Bowls – supply and demand summary**

- Only two crown green clubs (Coombs Wood BC and The Royal Oak BC) currently operate above the recommended capacity threshold, minimally so, suggesting that overall supply is sufficient to meet demand, especially given that a number of greens are unused.
- The flat green club, Black Country BC, is also operating over capacity, although it reports no issues.
- Hadcroft BC (17 members), Coseley Athletic BC (13 members) and White Horse BC (10 members) are operating below the level of membership required to ensure that the greens that they use are sustainable.

### **Bowls – supply summary**

- There are 28 crown green bowls greens in Dudley provided across 26 sites as well as one flat green at Stevens Park (Wollescote).
- There are also two disused greens, at Buffery Park and Gornal & Sedgley Labour Club, although plans are in place at the latter site to bring it back into use.
- Of clubs which responded to consultation requests, five own their greens, four have lease arrangements in place and four rent their greens.
- A covenant is in place at Stevens Park (Wollescote) which in effect means that its greens cannot be used on a Sunday, which impacts on availability and capacity for three clubs.
- Overall, nine crown greens are assessed as good quality, 13 as standard quality and six as poor quality.
- The flat green at Stevens Park is assessed as standard.
- Hilly House, Woodman Mount Pleasant, Woodman Saltwells and White Horse bowls clubs all report that they are serviced by poor quality ancillary facilities.
- Seven greens are serviced by floodlighting, which is a comparably high amount, whilst Sedgley Ex Service BC reports that it aspires to install floodlighting.

### **Bowls – demand summary**

- There are 23 crown green clubs using bowling greens in Dudley.
- Where membership is known, there are a total of 811 members, equating to 658 senior men, 150 senior women and three juniors.
- The average membership across the clubs is 37.
- There is one flat green club, Black Country BC, which has 90 members.
- Despite a national trend of declining membership, only three of the clubs that responded to consultation report that membership has decreased in recent years, although a number of clubs have also folded.
- Due to a predicted increase in persons aged 65 and over (to 2039), demand is likely to increase for greens over the coming years.
- Only Dudley Dell BC and Mary Stevens Park BC report future demand to increase membership on crown greens, with this equating to 20 senior and two junior members.
- Black Country BC has future demand for 10 additional members on its flat green at Stevens Park (Wollescote).
- All clubs report that existing membership can be accommodated on the current level of provision and that no potential members are being turned away, suggesting that there is no latent or unmet demand.

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### PART 11: CYCLING

#### 11.1: Introduction

British Cycling is the NGB for all forms of cycling. It oversees six sporting disciplines, with each having a dedicated facility type:

- ◀ Track cycling – velodromes
- ◀ Road cycling – closed road circuits
- ◀ Mountain biking – trails
- ◀ BMX racing – race/pump tracks
- ◀ Cycle speedway – cycle speedway tracks
- ◀ Cyclocross – non-dedicated, non-permanent venues

British Cycling aids in the development of all six formats, helping to safeguard those that wish to participate in a competitive and compelling environment. The popularity of cycling has increased since recent, elite sporting success in the Olympics and Paralympics as well as in other major championships.

#### **Consultation**

Information for cycling was gathered through online research and via consultation with British Cycling and Halesowen Cycling Club.

#### 11.2: Supply

Manor Abbey Stadium provides a 400-metre cycling track that is used by Halesowen Cycling Club and operated by a trust that includes the Club as well as athletics and tennis sections. The Club reports that its main issue is that numerous fixtures and sessions are cancelled due to waterlogging, with a canopy required to cover the surface to prevent this.

The track is of an overall adequate quality; however, resurfacing will be required in the near future as it reaches the end of its lifespan. At present, the operators are spending significant sums each year to patch up areas of the track that are becoming worn. It is accompanied by floodlighting, which enables all-year round usage, as well as surrounding fencing that was refurbished in 2014.

Storage is reported to be problematic, with two temporary containers currently used to store bicycles and other equipment. One of these suffers from regular flooding, with a more permanent solution needed. In addition, access is also reported to be an issue, particularly for pedestrians, with no crossing in place.

There are no other dedicated cycling facilities in Dudley. Halesowen Cycling Club has campaigned for an indoor velodrome to be provided in the West Midlands region, particularly to coincide with the 2022 Commonwealth Games, but it was concluded via a feasibility study that the area was sufficiently provided for via facilities in Derby and Newport. The Club, however, still holds aspirations, stating that provision would make cycling more inclusive and enable disability participants to be better provided for.

#### **Cycling routes**

The Council, in collaboration with local cyclists, have recommended cycling routes for people to use. This includes the Stourbridge Arm, a cycle network between Kingswinford and Stourbridge, and the Spine Route, a route running from Dudley to Stourbridge.

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### 11.3: Demand

#### ***Halesowen Cycling Club***

Halesowen Cycling Club currently has 190 members across its various disciplines, which includes track and road racing, cyclocross and mountain biking. It has a strong junior section and estimates that around 30% of its membership is female, but notes that there is a significant drop off when members reach 16.

In addition to holding training sessions at Manor Abbey Stadium, the Club runs a Friday night track league and hosts the Dudley Grand Prix, an annual event featuring various disciplines. Furthermore, away from Manor Abbey Stadium, the Club organises the Halesowen Road Race, although it notes that this can be difficult to organise due to a lack of volunteers.

As well as Halesowen Cycling Club, triathlon clubs and Birmingham University also use the facilities. Moving forward, the operator has an aspiration to improve relationships with local schools to enable more day-time usage of the provision, with the track often lying unused at these times due to a lack of club demand. Some schools currently gain access but this is on an ad hoc basis.

#### ***Stourbridge Cycling Club***

Stourbridge Cycling Club supports both competitive and non-competitive, on and off-road cycling. The Club uses Oakfield Community Centre (DY5 3LT) as a base and takes part in various leagues and competitions including the West Midlands Cyclocross League and the Shropshire & South Staffordshire Road Racing League. It organises over 10 meets each week, including a choice of three off-road and four on-road rides every Saturday.

#### ***Stourbug***

Stourbug is a road cycling club based in Stourbridge that organises regular rides for its members. As well as road rides at various paces, it also caters for a group of off-road cyclists, utilising areas across the Midlands. It also takes part in charity rides and weekend tours. The Club uses the Plough Inn (DY8 3PD) as a base.

#### ***HSBC UK Go-Ride***

HSBC UK Go-Ride is a British Cycling's development programme for young people. It offers a fun and safe way to introduce young people to the sport and provides a platform to improve cycling skills. People can get involved through holiday coaching programmes or through their local accredited club which allows them to sample the various disciplines of the sport. Progression is obtainable with Go-Ride Racing, offering competition for riders to transition from school or club coaching to inter club and open regional competitions.

Go-Ride is being implemented in Dudley via School-based delivery.

#### ***HSBC UK Breeze***

HSBC UK Breeze is a British Cycling's development programme for women. It offers three categories easy going, steady and challenging to allow women of all abilities to get involved. The programme offers exercise whilst also creating a comfortable environment to meet new people.

In Dudley, there is a small but active contingent involved in the programme, with rides arranged from Mary Stevens Park and Baggeridge Park.



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### ***Future/latent demand***

Halesowen Cycling Club expresses future demand although it is unable to quantify this. It reports that it is always open to new membership, especially following the Covid-19 pandemic. It expects some level of uplift following the Tokyo 2020 Olympics.

Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in cycling but are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 12,906 people who would like to participate in the sport within Dudley, which is a high amount. By means of comparison, latent demand of 11,449 is identified in Sandwell, 9,876 in Walsall and 9,210 in Wolverhampton.

Notwithstanding the above, it must be noted that future and latent demand does not account for societal factors or changes in the way people may wish to participate in sport and cannot account for specific targeted development work within certain areas or focused towards certain groups, such as NGB initiatives or coaching within schools. For example, there is a focus by British Cycling to develop youth participation through the HSBC UK Go-Ride or HSBC UK Breeze schemes, which may lead to further increases in demand.

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

High demand for cycling is identified within Dudley, both currently and taking into account latent demand. As such, the track at Manor Abbey Stadium requires protection, with some level of improvement required to ensure that the provision remains adequate. Furthermore, it is imperative that other cycling activity is supported given the on and off-road cycling taking place.

#### **Cycling – supply and demand summary**

- ◆ High demand for cycling is identified within Dudley, both currently and taking into account latent demand.
- ◆ The track at Manor Abbey Stadium requires protection, whilst it is imperative that other cycling activity is supported given the on and off-road cycling taking place.

#### **Cycling – supply summary**

- ◆ Manor Abbey Stadium provides a 400-metre cycling track that is used by Halesowen Cycling Club.
- ◆ The track is of an overall adequate quality; however, resurfacing will be required in the near future as it reaches the end of its lifespan.
- ◆ There are no other dedicated cycling facilities in Dudley; Halesowen Cycling Club has campaigned for an indoor velodrome in the West Midlands region, but it was concluded via a feasibility study that the area was sufficiently provided for via facilities in Derby and Newport.

#### **Cycling – demand summary**

- ◆ Halesowen Cycling Club currently has 190 members across its various disciplines, which includes track and road racing, cyclocross and mountain biking.
- ◆ Stourbridge Cycling Club supports both competitive and non-competitive, on and off-road cycling, using Oakfield Community Centre as a base.
- ◆ Stourbug is a road cycling club based in Stourbridge that uses the Plough Inn as a base.
- ◆ Go-Ride is being implemented in Dudley via School-based delivery.
- ◆ There is a small but active contingent involved in Breeze, with rides arranged from Mary Stevens Park and Baggeridge Park.

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### PART 12: ATHLETICS

#### 12.1: Introduction

As a Governing Body, UK Athletics is responsible for developing and implementing the rules and regulations of athletics, including everything from anti-doping, health and safety, facilities and welfare, to training and education for coaches and officials as well as permitting and licensing.

Locally, the sport is governed through England Athletics, which is the development and membership body for athletics and running clubs in England. It has a National Head of Clubs and Participation as well as a team of five club support managers across the Country, with one of these covering activities in Dudley as part of the Midland region.

#### **Consultation**

Various clubs were consulted via telephone to inform this section of the report, including Action Heart Running Club, Dudley & Stourbridge Harriers Athletics Club and Halesowen Athletics & Cycling Club. Additionally, wider consultation also took place with England Athletics.

#### 12.2: Supply

Consultation with England Athletics reveals that, nationally, no new standard 400-metre athletics tracks are planned to be constructed. Focus is instead on the retention of existing 400-metre facilities and the development of new, innovative, entry level facilities such as mini tracks and endurance loops, particularly if they can be provided as part of floodlit, multi-sport developments.

In Dudley, there are two purpose-built athletics tracks, with one at the Dell Stadium and one at Manor Abbey Stadium. The former is a 400-metre track with eight lanes (as well as a 10-lane straight), whilst the latter is a 350-metre track with four lanes. Both have a synthetic surface and are serviced by floodlighting.

*Table 12.1: Summary of athletics tracks in Dudley*

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Length	Floodlit?	Community use?
127	The Dell Stadium	Brierley Hill	400 metres	Yes	Yes
151	Manor Abbey Stadium	Halesowen	350 metres	Yes	Yes

As seen, the Dell Stadium is in the Brierley Hill Analysis Area, whereas Manor Abbey Stadium is located within the Halesowen Analysis Area. For the specific locations, please see Figure 12.1 overleaf.

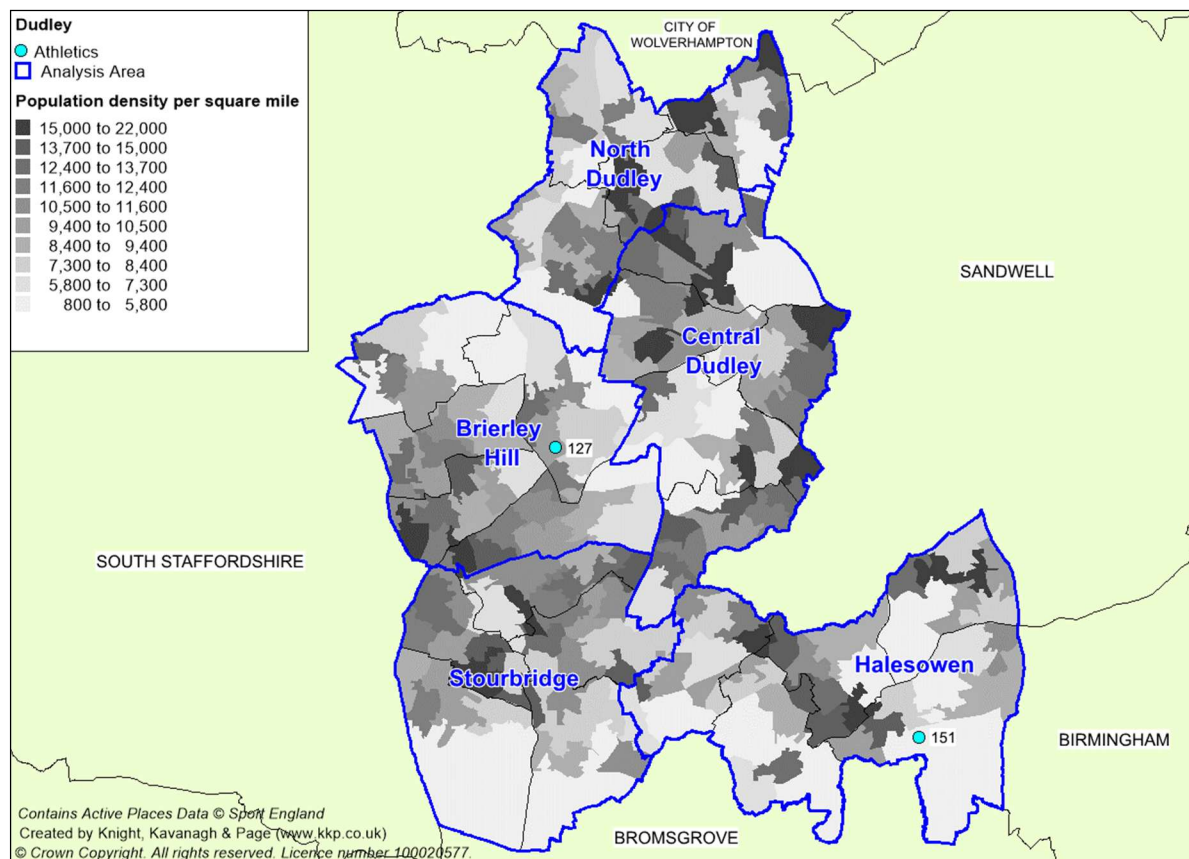
#### **Management**

The track at Dell Stadium is operated by the Council and is therefore widely available to the community to hire. As part of this, it is used by Dudley & Stourbridge Harriers and Dudley Kingswinford Running Club.

The track at Manor Abbey Stadium is operated by a trust, of which, Halesowen Athletics & Cycling Club forms part of. The site is also available to hire for other clubs, with Halesowen Triathlon Club noted as accessing the provision.

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Figure 12.1: Location of athletics tracks in Dudley



## Quality

The tracks at both the Dell Stadium and Manor Abbey Stadium are assessed as good quality; however, the jumping area at the Dell Stadium is identified as being in need of improvement. In addition, the accompanying floodlights are not LED.

Maintenance at the Dell Stadium is carried out by the Council, whereas at Manor Abbey Stadium it is the responsibility of volunteers supplied by Halesowen Athletic & Cycling Club. The trust that operates the latter site has recently invested in a new throwing cage, shot put circle and long jump pit, whilst the throwing cage at the Dell Stadium is also new.

For the site assessment criteria, please see Appendix 2.

Key factors impacting upon the quality ratings include the condition and age of the track surface, the prominence of the line markings and any signs of wear and tear or unofficial use.

## TrackMark

TrackMark is UK Athletics' quality assurance scheme for outdoor track and field athletics facilities. A venue that achieves TrackMark is recognised by UK Athletics as having well managed, compliant facilities that are accessible to participants of all abilities. From 2021, venues that actively choose not to pursue accreditation are not eligible to apply for a competition licence at any level.

In Dudley, the tracks at neither the Dell Stadium nor Manor Abbey Stadium are currently accredited. However, the Dell Stadium is working towards compliance.

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### ***Ancillary facilities***

The Dell Stadium is serviced by a multi-functional clubhouse that was erected in 2000. It provides changing rooms and a function room and is of an overall adequate quality. Furthermore, Dudley & Stourbridge Harriers Athletics Club has its own dedicated club room at the site.

At Manor Abbey Stadium, the track is serviced by a clubhouse that contains changing rooms and a bar as well as a separate health and fitness room that includes weights. However, the building is in need of significant refurbishment as it is extremely dated. The Trust has set up a funding pot albeit there remains a substantial shortfall in relation to what is required.

### **12.3: Demand**

For the purposes of this study, athletics demand is considered to come in various forms, rather than just traditional track and field activity. As such, running clubs are also considered, as are organised running events and various running initiatives, some of which are governed by England Athletics. It is also acknowledged that recreational running forms a large part of demand, although this is difficult to measure.

#### ***Dudley & Stourbridge Harriers Athletics Club***

The Club caters for both senior and juniors, with a current membership of 53 senior (37 male and 16 female) and 54 junior members. It notes that this has reduced over the previous two years, predominately due to the impact of Covid-19.

It trains and competes in all track and field disciplines as well as road running, cross country and race walking. The Dell Stadium is hired for sessions every Tuesday and Thursday evening from 18:30 until 20:30 as well on weekend mornings.

Due to Covid-19, the Club had to temporarily give up its Thursday evening booking as initial lockdown measures meant that it could not access its club room at the site. This has also led to a waiting list forming for access to what the Club refers to as its Academy Group, although this should begin to reduce now that restrictions have been lifted. At the time of consultation, 34 individuals were on the waiting list.

#### ***Halesowen Athletics & Cycling Club***

Halesowen Athletics & Cycling Club competes in all areas of athletics including track and field, road running, cross country, orienteering and fell running. It is based at Manor Abbey Stadium and runs all of its track and field sessions using the venue, whilst utilising the nearby countryside for its other disciplines.

The Club currently has 255 members, which is significantly below its usual operating level of around 400 members. It reports that it had over 350 members prior to Covid-19, with many older members since choosing not to renew. However, it expects membership to increase to pre-pandemic levels in the near future.

Notwithstanding the recent overall decline in membership, the Club continues to have a strong junior membership base. As part of this, it operates two sessions every Saturday for juniors aged eight and over, the purpose of which is to give attendees a taster of all disciplines. Due to substantial demand, a waiting list is currently in operation for these sessions.

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### ***Dudley Kingswinford Running Club***

Dudley Kingswinford Running Club is predominately a road running club that is open to all. It meets four nights a week (Monday-Thursday) as well as on Sunday mornings. Most sessions take place utilising the road network, although the Dell Stadium is also hired for sprint training. The Club uses Dudley Kingswinford Rugby Club as a home base.

As well as hosting its weekly sessions, Dudley Kingswinford Running Club also organises an annual 10k race known as the DK 10k Road Race. This is considered to be the largest mid-week race in the Midlands, beginning at Dudley Kingswinford Rugby Club and utilising quiet, undulating country roads. It has capacity for 1,000 entrants, with the previous two iterations attracting 748 and 712 competitors.

### ***Sedgley Striders***

The Club operates from the Beacon Centre and hold sessions every Tuesday and Thursday evening. Each week, three separate routes are available, known as short, middle and long runs and usually consisting of 3-mile, 5-mile and 7-mile distances. This enables all runners and abilities to be catered for.

Due to the Club's location, membership is relatively evenly split between Dudley residents and Wolverhampton residents.

### ***Action Heart Running Club***

The Club forms part of the Action Heart Cardiac Rehabilitation Programme, which has been in existence since 1978 and is situated to Russells Hall Hospital. Up to 700 patients at any one time can be looked after as part of the scheme, for up to 12 months, based on a programme of exercise and lifestyle management.

Weekly runs are held every Tuesday and Thursday evening, commencing from the Hospital. In addition, the Club also caters for a fitness walking section and has access to a health and fitness suite.

### ***Yellow Army Running Club***

Yellow Army Running Club meets twice a week for friendly, fun and free runs, catering for all speeds and abilities. It uses the Pensnett Social Club as a base, having previously used Crestwood School. Two routes are normally available, one being a 5k route and the other varying between 7k and 15k.

The Club caters for both males and females, although the large majority of its members are female. Juniors are also welcome, although they must be accompanied by an adult and stay within reach of them during runs.

### ***Stourbridge Running Club***

Stourbridge Running Club operates with approximately 100 members, ranging from ages 18 to over 70. It holds sessions every Monday and Wednesday evening, with runs varying in distances and speed. The Club is based at War Memorial Athletic Ground and has access to its bar and social room.

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In addition to its weekly sessions, the Club also organises three annual events. The first of these is the Stourbridge Stagger, which is a 7k multi-terrain race, whilst the second is the Stourbridge Stumble, which is a 10k multi-terrain race. Both take place at Mary Stevens Park. The final event held is a 34-mile “ultra-race”, taking place alongside the River Severn.

### ***Dudley Ladies Running Club***

Dudley Ladies Running Club was a Club that operated with around 200 members of various ages and abilities, beginning in 2002 and growing to become the largest female only running club in the region. However, it folded in May 2021, citing the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

### ***Halesowen Triathlon Club***

Although a triathlon club that affiliates to Triathlon England, Halesowen Triathlon Club is also a member of England Athletics and holds many running sessions that are similar to those held by the various athletics and running clubs in the Borough. As part of this, it holds running sessions every Monday and Tuesday, using Halesowen Leisure Centre and Huntingtree Park as starting points, as well as on Fridays and Saturdays. On these days, the track at Manor Abbey Stadium is hired.

### ***Run Together***

Run Together is an official England Athletics recreational running project which aims to get the whole nation running. Its aim is to provide fun, friendly, supportive and inclusive running opportunities for everyone, regardless of ability and availability. It believes that running is more fun and easier to become part of a lifestyle when shared with others.

In Dudley, both Sedgley Striders Running Club and Yellow Army Running Club form part of the programme. A key focus for England Athletics is increasing demand for participation in initiatives such as Run Together, meaning this could be further targeted moving forward, especially given the number of other clubs that could be involved.

### ***Park Run***

Park Run is a series of 5k runs held on Saturday mornings in areas of open space around the UK, with 1,063 events now operating across the Country. They are open to all, free, and are safe and easy to take part in. Runners must first register online in order to access a printed barcode which gives them access to all Park Run events.

In Dudley, a Park Run event is held each week at the Dell Stadium. It has been held 145 times, with an average attendance of 235.3 runners.

For those aged between 4 and 14, junior Park Run events are also available, with one held in Dudley every Sunday at Stevens Park. This has been held 83 times and averages 40.9 runners.

### ***Other running events***

As well as the aforementioned DK 10k, another annual 10k event known as the Black Country Road Run is also hosted, utilising the streets of Halesowen. It has capacity for 500 runners, with all spaces taken up when the race was last held in 2019 (the 2020 iteration did not take place due to Covid-19).



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The Dudley 5k is also held annually, using the Dell Stadium, whilst another 5k, linked to the Race for Life initiative, takes place every year, commencing at Himley Park (in addition to a 3k alternative). The Race for Life is a series of runs across the Country that gives people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities the chance to come together to help beat cancer. There are more than 150 held across the UK.

### ***Couch to 5k***

Couch to 5k is a national health initiative promoted by the National Health Service (NHS) to encourage absolute beginners get into running as part of establishing and maintaining an active and healthy lifestyle including regular exercise.

The plan consists of three runs per week and a day of rest in between, with a different schedule for each of the nine weeks to completion. It starts with a mix of running and walking, to gradually build up fitness and stamina, in order to create realistic expectations and a sense of achievability to encourage participants to stick with it. The end goal of the plan is for the participant to be able to run 5k.

Through the Couch to 5k plan the NHS particularly promotes the health benefits of running and regular exercise which underpin the initiative, such as improved heart and lung health, weight loss and possible increases in bone density which can help protect against bone diseases such as osteoporosis. This also includes mental benefits of running through goal setting and challenge setting, which can help boost confidence and self-belief. Furthermore, running regularly has been linked to combating depression.

It is believed that an increase in people running through the Couch to 5k plan may increase interest and possibly have a knock-on effect of leading to increased demand at running groups and clubs as people may wish to continue develop their running further.

Whilst no data is available in relation to take up of the Couch to 5k initiative in Dudley, anecdotal evidence suggests that it is popular and also growing in popularity. Furthermore, it is actively promoted by various running clubs as well as organisations such as Dudley Mind.

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

Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in athletics but 'are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies significant latent demand amounting to 6,355 people within Dudley, which is a comparatively high figure; latent demand totals 5,955 people in Sandwell, 4,999 in Walsall and 4,731 in Wolverhampton.

As referenced earlier, both Dudley & Stourbridge Harriers Athletics Club and Halesowen Athletics & Cycling Club have waiting lists in place for some sessions, namely those catering for junior athletes. This represents latent demand; however, it is not due to a lack of facilities. For Dudley & Stourbridge Harriers Athletics Club, the waiting list is linked to the impact of Covid-19, whilst for Halesowen Athletics & Cycling Club it is because of a lack of coaches/volunteers.

Further exploration is required regarding Dudley Ladies Running Club to better understand what has happened to its membership base now that the Club has folded. Many may have dispersed to join other clubs, although it is likely that a proportion will now be uncatered for. This will represent unmet demand in Dudley and may have a significant health and wellbeing impact for some.



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### ***Future demand***

All clubs consulted with express an aspiration to grow membership, although the majority state that this is difficult to quantify as they will do their utmost not to turn demand away. That being said, Dudley & Stourbridge Harriers Athletics Club identify future demand for 25 senior and 20 junior members.

England Athletics also believes that demand is likely to increase in the future, particularly for initiatives such as Park Run, although again to what extent is difficult to quantify.

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

There is high demand for athletics and running in Dudley, as evidenced by the numerous clubs in existence and the variety of events held. However, there is also a good level of supply, with two purpose-built tracks provided that are well located to accommodate demand from across the Borough. With the provision at the Dell Stadium being operated by the Council, there is also sufficient capacity for additional demand to be accommodated as accessibility is not an issue in the way that it can be when clubs operate such facilities.

Based on the above, priority should be placed on protecting the tracks at the Dell Stadium and Manor Abbey Stadium, rather than developing additional provision, and ensuring that they remain of a sufficient quality to accommodate the levels of demand received. In addition, emphasis should also be placed on supporting activity taking place away from the tracks, with a focus on retaining and increasing participation and growing the various initiatives that are in place.

#### **Athletics – supply and demand summary**

- There is high demand for athletics and running in Dudley, as evidenced by the numerous clubs and the variety of events held.
- There is a need to protect the tracks at the Dell Stadium and Manor Abbey Stadium and ensuring that they remain of a sufficient quality to accommodate demand.
- There is also a need to retain and increase participation to grow the initiatives that are in place.

#### **Athletics – supply summary**

- There are two purpose-built athletics tracks, with one at the Dell Stadium and one at Manor Abbey Stadium.
- The Dell Stadium provides a 400-metre track with eight lanes (as well as a 10-lane straight), whilst Manor Abbey Stadium provides a 375-metre track with four lanes; both have a synthetic surface and are serviced by floodlighting.
- The track at Dell Stadium is operated by the Council, whereas the track at Manor Abbey Stadium is operated by Halesowen Athletic & Cycling Club.
- Both tracks are assessed as good quality.
- The Dell Stadium is serviced by a multi-functional clubhouse that was erected in 2000, whereas the ancillary facilities at Manor Abbey Stadium are more limited and dated.

#### **Athletics – demand summary**

- Eight clubs have a current focus on athletics and/or running activity in Dudley.
- Dudley Ladies Running Club has recently folded due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic; it previously catered for over 200 members.
- Both Dudley & Stourbridge Harriers Athletics Club and Halesowen Athletics & Cycling Club have waiting lists in place for some sessions, although this is not due to a lack of facilities.
- Both clubs have seen demand reduce since Covid-19.
- Park Run is held each week at the Dell Stadium and junior Park Run at Stevens Park.
- Annual events include the DK 10k, the Dudley 5k and the Race for Life 5k.
- Most clubs express an aspiration to grow membership, whilst England Athletics also believes that demand is likely to increase in the future, particularly for initiatives such as Park Run.

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### PART 13: GOLF

#### 13.1: Introduction

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

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

#### Consultation

This section was informed via consultation with England Golf, which provided information relating to all facilities and clubs within Dudley.

#### 13.2: Supply

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

*Table 13.1: Definitions of golf facilities*

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

Within Dudley, there are three golf venues that provide facilities conforming with the above definitions, as identified in Table 13.1 and Table 13.2 below. One is located in each of the Halesowen, North Dudley and Stourbridge analysis areas.

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Figure 13.1: Location of golf courses in Dudley

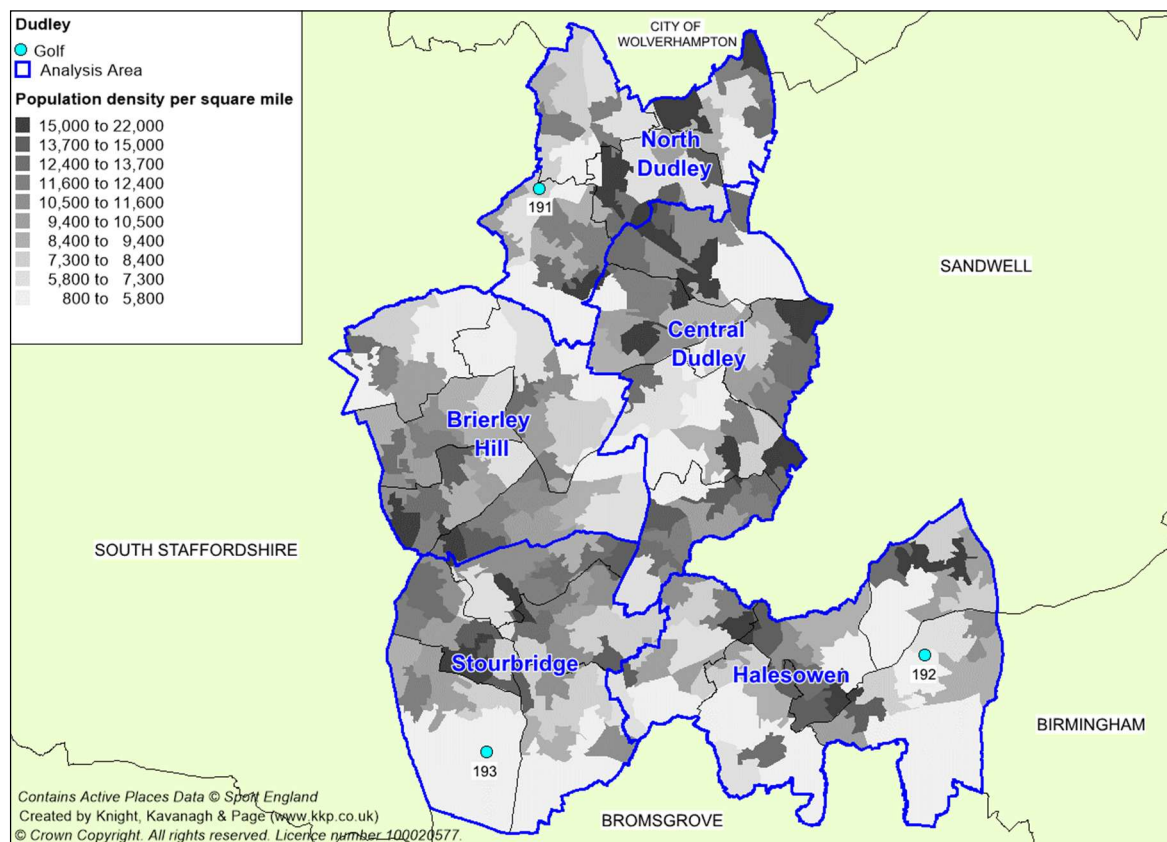


Table 13.2: Golf facilities within Dudley

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area
191	Mark Butler Golf Academy (Sedgley Golf Course)	DY3 3DL	North Dudley
192	Halesowen Golf Club	B62 8QF	Halesowen
193	Stourbridge Golf Club	DY8 2RB	Stourbridge

## Standard hole golf courses

All three golf sites within Dudley provide one standard hole course, with an 18-hole course provided at both Halesowen Golf Club and Stourbridge Golf Club and a 9-hole course provided at Mark Butler Golf Academy (Sedgley Golf Course).

Table 13.3: Summary of standard hole provision in Dudley

Site ID	Site name	Holes	Par	Yardage <sup>13</sup>			Slope rating
191	Mark Butler Golf Academy (Sedgley Golf Course)	9	36	2,828	2,736	2,571	118-124
192	Halesowen Golf Club	18	69	5,739	5,453	4,887	116-122
193	Stourbridge Golf Club	18	70	6,151	5,827	5,507	122-125

Of the two 18 holes courses, Stourbridge Golf Club provides the longest offering, although both are in the range of what you would expect from traditional provision. Shorter courses tend to offer some variety that may appeal more so to a defined market that would not feel comfortable playing lengthier provision e.g. beginner and/or casual golfers.

<sup>13</sup> White denotes Championship tees, yellow denotes men's tees and red denotes ladies' tees.

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Consideration may also need to be given to Himley Hall Golf Centre, which provides a standard 18-hole course. This is located in South Staffordshire but is in close proximity to Dudley and is therefore likely to cater for significant demand from the Borough.

Nationally, many 9-hole courses are shorter than the front or back nine of an 18-hole course, primarily to attract and cater for a different userbase. However, this is not the case at Mark Butler Golf Academy (Sedgley Golf Course), which is similar in length to the 18-hole provision. Moreover, two tee boxes are provided on each hole to allow the course to be played as an 18-hole offer.

### *Slope ratings*

Slope ratings are new to golf across the World. The intention is for them to allow the handicap system to reflect course difficulty and the difference in difficulty for all players compared to scratch golfers. In effect, this enables each player to have a handicap that will vary from course-to-course, depending on difficulty, as well as a general handicap.

The maximum slope rating is 155, whereas the minimum is 55. The standard difficulty is considered to be 113, which means that the three courses in Dudley are considered to be more difficult than the mean.

### **Par 3 golf holes**

Most commonly, Par 3 provision is used by beginner and casual players, although they are also frequented by more traditional golfers wanting to practice their short game. That being said, there are no Par 3 golf courses provided in Dudley, with only one provided across the four Black Country authorities. This is at Fishley Park Leisure Centre, in Walsall.

The closest Par 3 course to Dudley is located at Kingswinford Golf Centre, in South Staffordshire. There are also other Par 3 courses in South Staffordshire, as well as provision in Birmingham.

### **Driving range bays**

Mark Butler Golf Academy (Sedgley Golf Course) provides a covered 16-bay driving range, in addition to its standard hole course. This is available for anyone to use on a pay and play basis and the provision is serviced by floodlighting to allow all-year round and late evening usage.

*Table 13.3: Summary of driving range bays in Dudley*

Site ID	Site name	No. of bays	Floodlit?	Pay and play?
191	Mark Butler Golf Academy (Sedgley Golf Course)	16	Yes	Yes

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

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

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

*Table 13.4: Types of ownership and management of golf facilities*

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

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

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

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

Despite the above generalisations, each golf facility, regardless of management type, will have its own processes in terms of how much focus is placed on membership and pay and play usage, or whether it equally encourages both. There is no correct way to run a site. A club that focuses on members has guaranteed income, but this can often deter more casual players or nomadic golfers through, for example, a lack of peak time availability. In contrast, a site that depends on visitors can struggle to be viable if there are spells of inclement weather during summer months and can discourage people that want to be part of a club environment.

In Dudley, both Halesowen Golf Club and Stourbridge Golf Club are members clubs, whereas Mark Butler Golf Academy (Sedgley Golf Course) is a proprietary facility, although it does have a members club operating out of it (Sedgley Golf Club). There are no municipal facilities.



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Table 13.4: Summary of ownership/management in Dudley

Site ID	Site name	Management type
191	Mark Butler Golf Academy (Sedgley Golf Course)	Proprietary
192	Halesowen Golf Club	Members
193	Stourbridge Golf Club	Members

### Pricing

A key issue for the wider golf population is whether golf courses are available to the general population at a price point which is accessible to the majority of residents. Better quality courses tend to cost more to use, whilst 18-hole provision is generally more expensive to access than 9-hole provision.

Nationally, over the past few years, many facilities have altered their pricing structures to allow for discounts following a previous decline in golf membership. England Golf has positively encouraged this as its view is that clubs are more likely to experience growth when flexible packages are available. For instance, some now offer five and/or six day memberships (whereby members can access the course on specific days but not on one or both weekend days), whilst others provide discounts that are no longer limited solely to junior players (e.g. discounts for those aged 18-21 and 21-30 or for those aged 65 and over). In the past, it was common for many clubs to have waiting lists in place for membership. Before the pandemic, waiting lists had become rare but after being one of the first sports to return to play, demand for golf has been increasing and now around a third of all golf clubs have waiting lists in place.

England Golf reports that the average cost of a full adult membership across the Country is currently £901.00. In Dudley, both Halesowen Golf Club and Stourbridge Golf Club operate above this figure, with costs at the former equating to £1,057 per year and costs at the latter amounting to £1,290 per year. This suggests that both facilities are relatively high-end.

At the other end of the scale, membership to Mark Butler Golf Academy (Sedgley Golf Course) is only £449 per annum, which is considerably below the national average. However, this is likely reflective of it providing a 9-hole course rather than an 18-hole course.

Green fees are available at all three sites, although Stourbridge Golf Club does not actively offer weekend access due to tee times generally being reserved for competitions. Costs for weekday access are £40 at both Halesowen Golf Club and Stourbridge Golf Club, whereas it is £17.50 at Mark Butler Golf Academy (Sedgley Golf Course).

Table 13.5: Pricing structures at golf facilities within Dudley

Site ID	Site name	Joining fee	Full membership (per year)	Green fee (per round) <sup>14</sup>	
				Weekday	Weekend
191	Mark Butler Golf Academy (Sedgley Golf Course)	N/A	£449.00	£17.50	£17.50
192	Halesowen Golf Club	N/A	£1,057.00	£40.00	£45.00
193	Stourbridge Golf Club	N/A	£1,290.00	£40.00	-

In addition to the course at Mark Butler Golf Academy (Sedgley Golf Course), the driving range is accessible for pay and play usage. It costs £4.00 for 50 balls or £6.00 for 100 balls, with £0.50 reductions in place for those with a loyalty card.

<sup>14</sup> Where more than one course is provided, the price displayed is for the larger course.

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### Quality

There are no official national or county golf facility rankings. Generally, the better course quality and supporting infrastructure is, the higher the joining/membership and green fees are likely to be. Some sites gain status through hosting county, national and international golf events and some tend to feature in ranking articles put together by golf magazines.

Quality of the golf courses in Dudley is relatively good across the three sites, with no significant issues identified. Halesowen Golf Club and Stourbridge Golf Club in particular, are considered to be good with both venues having dedicated green keeping staff which provide frequent and sophisticated maintenance regimes that operate all-year round. Halesowen Golf Club is listed Grade I on English Heritage's Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England, whereas Stourbridge Golf Club is built on sand, which means that the course drains comparatively well.

The ancillary facilities are also for the most part good across Dudley, particularly at Halesowen Golf Club which is accompanied by all-encompassing clubhouse that doubles up as an events venue. Golf clubs often need such revenue sources to operate effectively and the provision of a good quality, well equipped clubhouse is a key opportunity to provide a secondary income stream. This emanates from a variety of sources including bar and catering income from members and visitors as well as venue hire for special occasions including weddings, christenings and funerals.

From a golfing perspective, given the current emphasis on increasing levels of female and junior golf membership across the Country, it is also imperative that ancillary provision can adequately cater for all types of members e.g. by providing gender specific changing facilities.

### 13.3: Demand

Around 2004, participation in golf began declining; however, recent signs show that the reduction has not only levelled off but that demand has started to increase, especially following the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions, both in 2020 and 2021. As one of the first sports to be allowed on both occasions, people have been able to play whilst maintaining social distancing and England Golf has provided very clear guidance as to how this should manifest itself (e.g. by not allowing the flag to be taken out or rakes to be used). Some courses have reported a near doubling of usual demand compared to pre-pandemic levels, highlighting that a significant opportunity now exists to retain increased participation in the long-term.

### Membership

England Golf suggests that the average membership of a golf club nationally is 386, which is based on a central national handicap platform.

In Dudley, the table below provides the most recent membership numbers at the golf facilities within the Borough, based on latest England Golf affiliation data.

*Table 13.6: Summary of golf membership within Dudley*

Site ID	Site name	No. of members
191	Mark Butler Golf Academy (Sedgley Golf Course)	100
192	Halesowen Golf Club	549
193	Stourbridge Golf Club	676



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Both Halesowen Golf Club and Stourbridge Golf Club are operating above the national average for membership, and quite significantly so. The former has 549 members, whilst the latter has 676.

Mark Butler Golf Academy (Sedgley Golf Course) has a membership of only 100. Whilst this is considerably below the national average, this would be expected given the nature and operating structure of the site. A lower membership is normal at 9-hole facilities, whilst more emphasis is placed on pay and play usage by the owners.

### **Membership trends**

In line with a national trend of increasing membership, membership at Halesowen Golf Club has increased since 2015 and significantly so, with 253 more members now attached to the site. Membership at Stourbridge Golf Club has grown less considerably, with an additional 65 people that have now joined as members of the Club.

Membership trends at Mark Butler Golf Academy (Sedgley Golf Course) are unknown as the venue has only recently affiliated to England Golf. Its 2015 figures are therefore unavailable.

*Table 13.7: Changes in demand since 2015*

Site ID	Club name	2015 members	Current members	Change in membership
191	Mark Butler Golf Academy (Sedgley Golf Course)	N/A	100	N/A
192	Halesowen Golf Club	296	549	+85.47%
193	Stourbridge Golf Club	611	676	+10.64%

### **Pay and play**

Whilst pay and play usage has generally increased across England in recent years, usage figures at the sites within Dudley is not known as it is not something that is tracked by England Golf. However, it would be expected that demand would be highest at Mark Butler Golf Academy (Sedgley Golf Course) given its operational structure and cheaper price point as well as the presence of its driving range.

### **Unmet demand**

Unmet demand is existing demand that is not getting access to golf facilities. This could be reflected via a waiting list at a club, although it is likely that people on a waiting list are still playing golf elsewhere, either via membership of another club or through pay and play access. As such, unmet demand in Dudley is considered to be very minimal, with none of the sites having any known capacity concerns.

### **Latent demand**

Latent demand is demand for golf that is not currently being realised. This could be for numerous reasons, such as time constraints, financial reasons and a lack of suitable, available provision. To that end, Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in golf but 'are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 3,592 people within Dudley.

Whilst the reasoning for the latent demand is unknown and is likely to be varied, the data does show relatively high demand which would significantly increase membership and/or pay and play usage across facilities if realised. England Golf is supportive of clubs that proactively

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target new audiences in an attempt to tap into such demand i.e. through developing a variety of golfing offers, coaching programmes and a range of membership options.

In addition, England Golf has a mapping tool that enables an assessment of potential demand within a 20-minute drive time of each golf facility, with the population broken down into nine golfing segments. These segments are defined to help provide an indication as to what type of golfing offer each would be most likely to access. They are:

- ◀ Relaxed members
- ◀ Older traditionalists
- ◀ Younger traditionalists
- ◀ Younger fanatics
- ◀ Younger actives
- ◀ Late enthusiasts
- ◀ Occasional time pressed
- ◀ Social couples
- ◀ Casual fun

Across Dudley, Halesowen Golf Club is identified as having the largest potential demand, with 157,094 people falling within the segments within a 20-minute drive time, followed by Stourbridge Golf Club (93,868 people). Mark Butler Golf Academy (Sedgley Golf Course) has the smallest potential demand, equating to 73,773 people.

The demand for each of the sites is relatively evenly split across the nine segments; the highest demand is from “younger traditionalists” (41,222 people), whilst the lowest is from “older traditionalists” (33,744 people).

### ***Future demand***

England Golf has an aim to increase membership of clubs nationally although after reaching its previous membership target, no longer has a fixed target of growth. Nationally, many clubs, especially the most established ones, will be happy to retain current demand levels, whilst many others will be open to growing further and some considerably so. In that regard, England Golf reports that many of the clubs are proactively targeting new audiences through coaching programmes and wider range of membership and playing options.

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

With only three golf facilities in Dudley, supply is relatively low. However, this is seemingly sufficient to meet demand, with a level of variety offered across the sites, with a driving range and 18-hole and 9-hole courses being provided at various price points and with various operational structures. As such, there is no clear requirement for additional facilities, although it is imperative that the three existing sites are protected., especially given the high membership levels at Halesowen and Stourbridge golf clubs.

Whilst there are no municipal or Par 3 offerings, it must be noted that users of golf facilities do not tend to take into account local authority boundaries, perhaps more so than users of most other sports facilities. Often, players are happy to travel further distances to access a site that best suits their needs, whether that be due to, for example, cost, difficulty or social interaction. As such, whilst there are clear gaps within the golfing market in Dudley, it does not necessarily represent an issue as those gaps can and are being filled by neighbouring local authorities. Linked to this, England Golf notes that the Black Country area has a very strong level of provision, especially when compared to regional and national averages.

With significant latent demand identified, emphasis should not only be placed on protecting the facilities that are provided, but to future increase demand levels. England Golf can assist in this regard, primarily through a variety of tools that can be used to better understand the local market. There may also be opportunities for some clubs across the area to work more

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collaboratively in terms of creating pathways where appropriate to collectively cater for all types of players.

### **Golf – supply and demand summary**

- It is considered that there is a sufficient level of golf provision in Dudley, although it is imperative that all three sites are protected.
- Whilst there are clear gaps within the golfing market, it does not necessarily represent an issue as those gaps can and are being filled by neighbouring local authorities.
- Emphasis should be also placed on increasing demand given the levels latent demand identified.

### **Golf – supply summary**

- There are currently three golf sites in Dudley.
- All three provide a standard hole course, with Halesowen Golf Club and Stourbridge Golf Club providing 18-hole courses and Mark Butler Golf Academy (Sedgley Golf Course) providing a 9-hole course.
- No Par 3 course is provided.
- Mark Butler Golf Academy (Sedgley Golf Course) provides a 16-bay, covered and floodlit driving range.
- Halesowen Golf Club and Stourbridge Golf Club are members clubs, whilst Mark Butler Golf Academy (Sedgley Golf Course) is proprietary facility; no municipal courses are provided.
- Both Halesowen Golf Club and Stourbridge Golf Club operate above the national average for membership costs, whereas Mark Butler Golf Academy (Sedgley Golf Course) is considerably below the rate although this is likely reflective of it providing a 9-hole course.
- In terms of quality of the golf facilities, it is relatively good across Dudley with no significant issues identified, especially at Halesowen Golf Club and Stourbridge Golf Club.

### **Golf – demand summary**

- Both Halesowen Golf Club (549 members) and Stourbridge Golf Club (676 members) are operating above the national average for membership (386 members).
- Mark Butler Golf Academy (Sedgley Golf Course) operates below the national average, with only 100 members; however, this is expected given that it only provides a 9-hole course and given that it has more of a focus on pay and play usage.
- In line with a national trend of increasing membership, membership at Halesowen Golf Club has significantly increased since 2015; whilst membership has also increased at Stourbridge Golf Club, albeit at a reduced level.
- England Golf's mapping tool identifies a significant amount of potential demand, with Halesowen Golf Club shown to have a particularly high population base.

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### PART 14: OUTDOOR WATER SPORTS

Water sports in England are governed by various bodies, including:

- ✦ British Canoe Union
- ✦ British Kite Surfing Association
- ✦ British Rowing
- ✦ British Sub-Aqua Club
- ✦ British Swimming
- ✦ British Water Ski
- ✦ Royal Yachting Association
- ✦ Surfing Great Britain

Dudley Water Sports Centre offers various opportunities to participate in water sports in Dudley and is a key venue for water sports across the region.

#### 14.1: Supply

Dudley Water Sports Centre provides facilities that are compatible with a number of water sports and other water-related activities. This includes:

- ✦ Diving
- ✦ Rowing
- ✦ Open water swimming
- ✦ Sailing
- ✦ Snorkelling
- ✦ Wakeboarding
- ✦ Water skiing

The site uses Lodge Farm Reservoir for all activities. In addition, the site is serviced by a clubhouse that includes changing rooms, a kitchen and a meeting room that can be hired externally. Whilst the building is adequate, it would benefit from some level of refurbishment and modernisation, although the changing rooms are new.

In addition to the Water Sports Centre, Dudley Canal is also used for some water sport activities such as canoeing and kayaking, whilst Himley Hall has a lake that is frequently used for sailing.

#### 14.2: Demand

Dudley Water Sports Centre is home to numerous clubs, as follows:

- ✦ Dudley Waterski & Wakeboard Club
- ✦ Dudley Nautilus Sub-Aqua Club
- ✦ Dudley Sailing Club
- ✦ Dudley Dolphin British Sub-Aqua Club
- ✦ Dudley Rowing Club
- ✦ Netherton Open Water Swimming Club
- ✦ Warley Wasps Triathlon & Running Club

In addition, Stourbridge Arm Canoe Club and Himley Hall Sailing Club are also based in Dudley. These are each summarised below.

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### ***Dudley Water-ski & Wakeboard Club***

The Club provides membership and coaching at Dudley Water Sports Centre for those wanting to take part in water skiing, wakeboarding, knee boarding and stand-up paddle boarding. It has access to the site on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays for those that wish to book, whilst on Saturdays it is on site to accommodate anyone turning up. In addition, it accommodates people with various disabilities through providing specialist and adapted equipment.

Annual membership packages vary from £75 to £265, with a bronze package accommodating social members only, a silver package accommodating stand-up paddle boarding only and a gold package providing full access.

### ***Dudley Nautilus Sub-aqua Club***

The Club offers membership for £18 a month, which enables access to Dudley Water Sports Centre every Saturday, as well as monthly dives on a weekday evening. In addition to using Dudley Water Sports Centre, the Club also access swimming pools at local leisure centres and arranges frequent trips to nearby quarries and, further afield, the coast.

Currently, the Club has 40 members, ranging from beginners to advanced divers. It also has three qualified instructors and four assistant instructors.

### ***Dudley Sailing Club***

Full membership to the Club is available for £143.50, reduced to £71.75 for juniors. In addition to offering standard dinghy sailing, the Club is also a keel boat training centre with fully qualified keel boat instructors.

As well as accessing Dudley Water Sports Centre, the Club organises yacht weekends at sea where participants can sail and sleep aboard. It also provides sailing and camping weekends in Wales.

### ***Dudley Dolphin British Sub-Aqua Club***

Dudley Dolphin British Sub-Aqua Club is open to scuba divers of all grades and abilities, currently catering for approximately 43 members. It has access to Dudley Water Sports Centre on Fridays between 18:30-20:00 and on Sundays between 08:00-12:00. In addition, it organises various trips to the coast, such as travel to Cornwall and Northumberland.

Membership costs £162 per annum for seniors and £81 per annum for juniors.

### ***Dudley Rowing Club***

The Club has access to Dudley Water Sports Centre on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays and is open to anyone aged over 10 as well as catering for people of all disabilities. Members have recently began competing in local regattas as the Club continues to grow following its formation in 2013.

### ***Netherton Open Water Swimming Club***

Netherton Open Water Swimming Club operates all year round, hosting sessions twice a week from May until September (on Saturdays and Mondays) as well as once a week from October to April (on Saturdays). Members previously were able to show up and swim, but a booking system is now in place following the Covid-19 pandemic to ensure numbers are controlled.

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### ***Warley Wasps Triathlon & Running Club***

The Club is a triathlon club, primarily based in Sandwell, that uses Dudley Water Sports Centre for its open water swimming sessions. These take place every Monday evening.

### ***Stourbridge Arm Canoe Club***

The Club is based at Ashwood Park and uses Dudley Canal for all its activities, which covers both canoeing and kayaking. It meets every Saturday afternoon from April until September. Outside of these months, it accesses the swimming pool at Haden Hill Leisure Centre.

Current annual membership is £40 for adults and £20 for juniors, with taster sessions available for £10 per session. As well as its regular sessions at Dudley Canal and Haden Hill Leisure Centre, the Club also arranges trips, utilising local rivers as well as those further afield.

Due to recent high demand, the Club currently operates a waiting list for taster sessions and membership. This is predominately due to a lack of equipment.

### ***Himley Hall Sailing Club***

The Club currently has 50 members. It uses the lake at Himley Hall, where it also has its own clubhouse which includes changing rooms, a kitchen and a small eating area. It holds training sessions on Saturdays and races on Sundays.

Membership costs £144 per annum for adults and £50 per annum for juniors.

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

Via Dudley Water Sports Centre, Dudley is particularly well catered for when it comes to outdoor water sports given that it is not a coastal authority. It provides facilities for most activities, with alternative offers also available via Dudley Canal and Himley Hall. This seemingly adequately caters for demand, with the majority of associated clubs openly looking to attract new members. The only exception to this is Stourbridge Arm Canoe Club, which requires additional equipment.

Based on the above, priority should be placed on protecting the provision and ensuring that quality remains sufficient. Given the unique nature of the facilities, support should also be offered to maximise demand, not only from Dudley but from the wider region.

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### **Outdoor water sports – supply and demand summary**

- ▶ Via Dudley Water Sports Centre, Dudley is particularly well catered for when it comes to outdoor water sports given that it is not a coastal authority, with alternative offers also available via Dudley Canal and Himley Hall.
- ▶ Priority should be placed on protecting the provision and ensuring that quality remains sufficient, with support also required to maximise demand given the unique nature of the facilities.

### **Outdoor water sports – supply summary**

- ▶ Dudley Water Sports Centre provides facilities that are compatible with a number of water sports and other water-related activities.
- ▶ In addition, Dudley Canal is also used for some water sport activities such as canoeing and kayaking, whilst Himley Hall has a lake that is frequently used for sailing.

### **Outdoor water sports – demand summary**

- ▶ Dudley Water Sports Centre is home to numerous clubs; Dudley Water Ski & Wakeboard Club, Dudley Nautilus Sub-Aqua Club, Dudley Sailing Club, Dudley Dolphin British Sub-Aqua Club, Dudley Rowing Club, Netherton Open Water Swimming Club and Warley Wasps Triathlon Club.
- ▶ Stourbridge Arm Canoe Club is based at Ashwood Park and uses Dudley Canal for all its activities; it currently operates a waiting list due to a lack of equipment.
- ▶ Himley Hall Sailing Club uses the lake at Himley Hall for its activities.



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### PART 15: OTHER GRASS PITCH SPORTS

#### 15.1: American football

##### *Introduction*

The British American Football Association (BAFA) is responsible for the governance of the sport which is continuing to grow in popularity in the UK and there are now hundreds of clubs and thousands of players competing regularly across the country.

The American football season in England generally runs from May until August.

##### *Consultation*

There is one American football club in Dudley, known as the Black Country Vipers. The Club engaged in a telephone consultation.

##### *Supply*

There are no dedicated American football pitches within Dudley. Instead, the World Rugby compliant 3G pitch at Stourbridge Rugby Club is used by the Black Country Vipers, which is seen as logical by the Club as all of its players are members of the Rugby Club. Furthermore, as the rugby union and American football seasons run at different times of the year, there are also no issues with access.

Use of rugby sites by American football clubs is common across the Country, in part due to a lack of American football pitches but helped by commonalities shared between the sports, such as the need for large changing rooms. As such, the Black Country Vipers reports that it is happy with the current arrangement, noting that Stourbridge Rugby Club is its preferred site and stating that it is well provided for, with a dedicated storage unit recently provided. Often, use of provision by multiple sports can impact on quality and result in overuse, but this is not an issue in this instance on account of a 3G surface being used rather than grass.

Stourbridge Rugby Club is technically within South Staffordshire; however, the site is included within the scope of this study due to its proximity to the Dudley border.

##### *Demand*

Black Country Vipers currently has just one team, which plays at U19 level. It has previously also fielded U13 and U16 teams, but these have since moved to a club based in Birmingham. It has no interest in developing a full senior team but would happily re-grow its junior set up if enough demand was received. One issue preventing this at present is difficulty attracting an adequate number of coaches and other support volunteers.

In total, the Club currently has 19 playing members, which has reduced from a high of 30 before the Covid-19 pandemic. Due to the Club not fielding a senior team, it must replace some of its members each year as existing players become too old, meaning it always has to be looking to attract new players. For example, six current players will become ineligible next season.

The Club plays its matches on a Saturday via a 7v7 format of the game, with an alternative 9v9 offer existing on Sundays although this is not currently an option. It instead holds training sessions on a Sunday as attendance is better than when held during midweek.

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

As the Black Country Vipers accesses a 3G pitch for its activity, there are no supply issues providing that the Club is ensured of long-term access, which it reports should be the case based on its relationship with Stourbridge Rugby Club.

### **15.2: Baseball/softball**

#### ***Introduction***

Baseball and softball are both governed by Baseball and Softball UK (BSUK), which is currently aiming to build the number of teams playing regularly throughout the country. Baseball is played between two teams of nine players, which take turns batting and fielding across nine innings, whilst softball has two varieties: slow-pitch softball and fast-pitch softball. Both sports in England operate from April until September.

#### ***Consultation***

There is one baseball club in Dudley; Stourbridge Titans Baseball Club. The Club engaged in a telephone consultation.

#### ***Supply***

There is one baseball/softball diamond in Dudley, located at Thorns Leisure Centre (Academy). This was previously utilised by Stourbridge Titans Baseball Club, which suggests that quality is adequate. However, the Club has recently relocated to Colton Hills Community School, in Wolverhampton, due to reportedly being priced out of use of Thorns Leisure Centre.

#### ***Demand***

Stourbridge Titans Baseball Club fields a senior baseball team that plays in the West Midlands Baseball League, which has grown from three clubs to seven since its inception in 2019. All matches are played on Sundays, with two matches often played each Sunday (between the same teams).

The Club formed in 2011, previously playing friendly fixtures against other clubs across the Country before the establishment of the West Midlands Baseball League. It has slowly grown its membership base since this time and hopes to be able to field a second team in the near future (it currently has 26 members). It is also keen to grow a junior base to supplement the senior players but notes that there will be a lack of competition in the area unless other clubs are able to do likewise.

The Club only plays baseball, meaning there is no softball activity in the Borough.

As referenced above, the Club currently exports its demand to Wolverhampton. It states it would prefer to play within Dudley and is actively looking for a suitable venue, with Hurst Green Park currently being explored. It only has access to Colton Hills Community School via an annual agreement, meaning limited security of tenure is provided.

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

Given that Stourbridge Titans Baseball Club currently exports out of Dudley, options should be explored to bring the Club back to the Borough. This could be via coming to an agreement at Thorns Leisure Centre, or via developing a new diamond at an alternative site.

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### 15.3: Gaelic football

Britain GAA is the Provincial Council of Gaelic football and hurling outside of Ireland. It is made up of seven counties, with Dudley and the other Black Country authorities falling into the Warwickshire region. The playing season runs from May until August.

#### **Consultation**

N/A

#### **Supply**

There are no Gaelic football pitches provided in Dudley. Within the Black Country, there is provision in Wolverhampton, whilst numerous pitches are also provided in Birmingham.

#### **Demand**

No demand for Gaelic football has been identified in the Borough, with no clubs in existence either currently or historically.

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

N/A

#### **Other grass pitch sports – supply and demand summary**

- As the Black Country Vipers (American Football Club) accesses a 3G pitch for its activity, there are no supply issues providing that the Club is ensured of long-term access.
- Options should be explored to return demand from Stourbridge Titans Baseball Club back to Dudley, either via coming to an agreement at Thorns Leisure Centre or by developing a new diamond at an alternative site.
- No supply or demand is identified in relation to Gaelic football, meaning no action is required.

#### **Other grass pitch sports – supply summary**

- There are no dedicated American football pitches within Dudley; instead, the World Rugby compliant 3G pitch at Stourbridge Rugby Club is used by the Black Country Vipers and the Club is happy with this arrangement.
- There is one baseball/softball diamond in Dudley, located at Thorns Leisure Centre (Academy); however, this is no longer used by Stourbridge Titans Baseball Club due to it being priced out of the venue.
- There are no Gaelic football pitches provided in the Borough.

#### **Other grass pitch sports – demand summary**

- Black Country Vipers currently has just one team, which plays at U19 level; it previously also fielded U13 and U16 teams and would happily re-grow its junior set up if enough demand was received.
- Stourbridge Titans Baseball Club fields a senior baseball team that plays in the West Midlands Baseball League; it currently uses Colton Hills Community School, in Wolverhampton (exported demand).
- No Gaelic football demand is identified, with no clubs existing in the Borough.

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### APPENDIX 1: SPORTING CONTEXT

The following section outlines a series of national, regional and local policies pertaining to the study and which will have an important influence on the Strategy.

#### National context

The provision of high quality and accessible community outdoor sports facilities at a local level is a key requirement for achieving the targets set out by the Government and Sport England. It is vital that this strategy is cognisant of and works towards these targets in addition to local priorities and plans.

#### ***Department of Media Culture and Sport Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation (2015)***

The Government published its strategy for sport in December 2015. This strategy confirms the recognition and understanding that sport makes a positive difference through broader means and that it will help the sector to deliver five simple but fundamental outcomes: physical health, mental health, individual development, social and community development and economic development. In order to measure its success in producing outputs which accord with these aims it has also adopted a series of 23 performance indicators under nine key headings, as follows:

- ◆ More people taking part in sport and physical activity.
- ◆ More people volunteering in sport.
- ◆ More people experiencing live sport.
- ◆ Maximising international sporting success.
- ◆ Maximising domestic sporting success.
- ◆ Maximising domestic sporting success.
- ◆ A more productive sport sector.
- ◆ A more financially and organisationally sustainable sport sector.
- ◆ A more responsible sport sector.

#### ***Sport England: Uniting the Movement 2021***

Sport and physical activity has a big role to play in improving the physical and mental health of the nation, supporting the economy, reconnecting communities and rebuilding a stronger society for all. From this notion, Sport England has recently released its new strategy, Uniting the Movement, its 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity.

It seeks to tackle the inequalities long seen in sport and physical activity. Providing opportunities to people and communities that have traditionally been left behind, and helping to remove the barriers to activity, has never been more important.

There are three key objectives to the Strategy:

- ◆ Advocating for movement, sport and physical activity.
- ◆ Joining forces on five big issues
- ◆ Creating the catalyst for change

In particular, the five big issues are identified where the greatest potential is seen for preventing and tackling inequalities in sport and physical activity. Each one is a building block that, on its own, would make a difference, but together, could change things profoundly:

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**Recover and reinvent:** Recovering from the biggest crisis in a generation and reinventing as a vibrant, relevant and sustainable network of organisations providing sport and physical activity opportunities that meet the needs of different people.

**Connecting communities:** Focusing on sport and physical activity's ability to make better places to live and bring people together.

**Positive experiences for children and young people:** Unrelenting focus on positive experiences for all children and young people as the foundations for a long and healthy life.

**Connecting with health and wellbeing:** Strengthening the connections between sport, physical activity, health and wellbeing, so more people can feel the benefits of, and advocate for, an active life.

**Active environments:** Creating and protecting the places and spaces that make it easier for people to be active.

The specific impact of the Strategy will be captured through programmes funded, interventions made, and partnerships forged. For each specific area of action, a set of key performance indicators will be developed. This hybrid approach will help evidence the overall progress being made by all those involved in supporting sport and physical activity.

### **National Planning Policy Framework (2021)**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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### ***The FA National Football Facilities Strategy (2018-28)***

The Football Association's (FA) National Football Facilities Strategy (NFFS) provides a strategic framework that sets out key priorities and targets for the national game (i.e., football) over a ten-year period.

The Strategy sets out shared aims and objectives it aims to deliver on in conjunction with The Premier League, Sport England and the Government, to be delivered with support of the Football Foundation.

These stakeholders have clearly identified the aspirations for football to contribute directly to nationally important social and health priorities. Alongside this, the strategy is clear that traditional, affiliated football remains an important priority and a core component of the game, whilst recognising and supporting the more informal environments used for the community and recreational game.

Its vision is: *"Within 10 years we aim to deliver great football facilities, wherever they are needed"*

£1.3 billion has been spent by football and Government since 2000 to enhance existing football facilities and build new ones. However, more is needed if football and Government's shared objectives for participation, individual well-being and community cohesion are to be achieved. Nationally, direct investment will be increased – initially to £69 million per annum from football and Government (a 15% increase on recent years).

The NFFS investment priorities can be broadly grouped into six areas, recognising the need to grow the game, support existing players and better understand the different football environments:

- ▶ **Improve 20,000 Natural Turf pitches**, with a focus on addressing drop off due to a poor playing experience;
- ▶ **Deliver 1,000 3G AGP 'equivalents'** (mix of full size and small sided provision, including MUGAs - small sided facilities are likely to have a key role in smaller / rural communities and encouraging multi-sport offers), enhancing the quality of playing experience and supporting a sustainable approach to grass roots provision;
- ▶ **Deliver 1,000 changing pavilions/clubhouses**, linked to multi-pitch or hub sites, supporting growth (particularly in women and girls football), sustainability and providing a facility infrastructure to underpin investment in coaching, officials and football development;
- ▶ **Support access to flexible indoor spaces**, including equipment and court markings, to support growth in futsal, walking football and to support the education and skills outcomes, exploiting opportunities for football to positively impact on personal and social outcomes for young people in particular;
- ▶ **Refurbish existing stock** to maintain current provision, recognising the need to address historic under-investment and issues with refurbishment of existing facilities;
- ▶ **Support testing of technology and innovation**, building on customer insight to deliver hubs for innovation, testing and development of the game.



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### ***The FA: National Game Strategy (2018-2021)***

The FA launched its new National Game Strategy in July 2018 which aims to inspire a life-long journey in football for all. To achieve this, the strategy will focus on five key aspects of the game:

- ◀ A high quality introduction to football
- ◀ Developing clubs and leagues
- ◀ Embrace all formats of football and engage all participants
- ◀ Recruit, develop and support the workforce
- ◀ Develop sustainable facilities

Through these five pillars, The FA's objectives are to:

- ◀ Increase the number of male affiliated and recreational players by 10%.
- ◀ Double the number of female affiliated and recreational players via a growth of 75%.
- ◀ Increase the number of disability affiliated and recreational players by 30%.
- ◀ Ensure affiliated Futsal is available across the country in order to increase the number of Futsal affiliated and recreational players.

The sustainable football facilities should provide support to an agreed portfolio of priority projects that meet National Football Facility Strategy (NFFS) investment priorities.

### ***England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) Inspiring Generations (2020-2024)***

The England and Wales Cricket Board unveiled a new strategic plan in 2019. The strategic plan aims to connect communities and improve lives by inspiring people to discover and share their passion for cricket

The plan sets out six important priorities and activities, these are:

- ◀ **Grow and nurture the core**
  - ◀ Create an infrastructure investment fund for First Class County Clubs (FCCs)
  - ◀ Introduce a new Community Investment Funding for FCCs and County Cricket Boards (CCBs)
  - ◀ Invest in club facilities
  - ◀ Develop the role of National Counties Cricket
  - ◀ Further invest in County Competitions
- ◀ **Inspire through elite teams**
  - ◀ Increase investment in the county talent pathway
  - ◀ Incentivise the counties to develop England Players
  - ◀ Drive the performance system through technology and innovation
  - ◀ Create heroes and connect them with a new generation of fans
- ◀ **Make cricket accessible**
  - ◀ Broaden crickets appeal through the New Competition
  - ◀ Create a new digital community for cricket
  - ◀ Install non-traditional playing facilities in urban areas
  - ◀ Continue to deliver South Asian Action Plans
  - ◀ Launch a new participation product, linked to the New Competition
- ◀ **Engage children and young people**
  - ◀ Double cricket participation in primary schools
  - ◀ Deliver a compelling and coordinated recreational playing offer from age five upwards
  - ◀ Develop our safeguarding to promote safe spaces for children and young people



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### ◀ **Transform women's and girls' cricket**

- ◀ Grow the base through participation and facilities investment
- ◀ Launch centres of excellence and a new elite domestic structure
- ◀ Invest in girls' county age group cricket
- ◀ Deliver a girls' secondary school programme

### ◀ **Support our communities**

- ◀ Double the number of volunteers in the game
- ◀ Create a game-wide approach to Trust and Foundations through the cricket network
- ◀ Develop a new wave of officials and community coaches
- ◀ Increase participation in disability cricket

### ***The Rugby Football Union Strategy 2021 Onwards***

Through the strategy, the RFU aims to enrich lives, introduce more people to rugby union and develop the sport for future generations. The goal is to achieve this by strengthening and uniting rugby union in England and producing consistently winning England teams.

Eight key strategic priorities are identified with all investment decisions aligned to these. The strategy also outlines the RFU's core activities which form the backbone of its business operations and services to the game.

The priorities include four 'Game Objectives' and four 'Driving Objectives' as detailed below.

#### Game Objectives:

- ◀ Enjoyment – enable positive player experiences on and off the field
- ◀ Winning England – create the best possible high-performance system for England Rugby
- ◀ Welfare – enhance player welfare to protect and support the wellbeing of players
- ◀ Flourishing rugby communities – support clubs to sustain and grow themselves and to reflect society

#### Driving Objectives:

- ◀ Diversity & Inclusion – drive rugby union in England to reflect the diversity of society
- ◀ Understand – build a deep understanding of players, volunteers and fans to shape the future of the game
- ◀ Connect – connect with and grow the rugby community and create exceptional experiences
- ◀ Commercial and operational excellence – ensure a sustainable and efficient business model delivered by an inspired workforce

### ***Rugby Football League Strategic Plan 2015 – 2021***

The RFL's most recent strategy aims to establish rugby league as "a growing sport, available throughout the country, that is recognised as providing positive experience for all participants and spectators, in environments that are welcoming, inclusive, vibrant, safe and comfortable - encouraging people to return again and again, featuring:

- ◀ Financially viable and sustainable professional clubs creating stable employment opportunities, showcasing local, national and international playing talent, and leading the sport's development - and making a difference - in their own communities;
- ◀ Welcoming community clubs, putting players first, offering recreational enjoyment for children and adults alike in a safe and inclusive environment;
- ◀ A central organisation that stands out for excellence, innovation, mutual respect, integrity and inclusion that understands its role in servicing the wider sport;
- ◀ A sports that lives its values in all its decisions and actions.

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This vision is underpinned by 13 core principles, including:

- ✦ **An integrated whole sport.** Each constituent part of the sport will have a responsibility to ensure the good health of the entire game;
- ✦ **Return on investment.** Investment will be targeted to ensure the sustainability of member clubs, and growth in the number and quality of players thus seeking an effective return for the game;
- ✦ **Financial parameters.** Financial distributions will be undertaken to ensure the whole of the game will move forward together;
- ✦ **Geographic expansion.** Geographic expansion of the sport should be carried out in a proportionate and sustainable manner.

### ***Rugby League World Cup 'Inspired by 2021' Legacy Programme***

The Rugby League World Cup 2021 will develop a £10 million legacy programme with funds driven into local clubs and community projects. The government investment, delivered by Sport England, is part of an ambitious plan to grow the sport and make it more visible, engaging and welcoming to current and potential participants.

The funding will be split into large transformational community projects, such as changing room improvements and new artificial grass pitches with the remaining funding used for smaller scale initiatives such as supplying new kit and equipment to promote club and community development. The investment will focus on the following four key areas:

- ✦ Creating welcoming environments
- ✦ Encouraging participation growth
- ✦ Building community engagement
- ✦ Cultivating further investment

### ***England Hockey (EH) - A Nation Where Hockey Matters 2013***

The vision is for England to be a 'Nation Where Hockey Matters'.

We know that delivering success on the international stage stimulates the nation's pride in their hockey team and, with the right events in place, we will attract interest from spectators, sponsors and broadcasters alike. The visibility that comes from our success and our occasions will inspire young people and adults to follow in the footsteps of their heroes and, if the right opportunities are there to meet their needs, they will play hockey and enjoy wonderful experiences.

Underpinning all this is the infrastructure which makes our sport function. We know the importance of our volunteers, coaches, officials, clubs and facilities. The more inspirational our people can be, the more progressive we can be and the more befitting our facilities can be, the more we will achieve for our sport. England Hockey will enable this to happen and we are passionate about our role within the sport. We will lead, support, counsel, focus and motivate the Hockey Nation and work tirelessly towards our vision.

As a governing body, we want to have a recognisable presence to participants of the game, be that through club or association website or their communications, or through the work of the many outstanding coaches in our game, so that players understand that their club is part of a wider team working together to a common goal.

The core objectives are as follows:

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- ◀ Grow our Participation
- ◀ Deliver International Success
- ◀ Increase our Visibility
- ◀ Enhance our Infrastructure
- ◀ For England Hockey to be proud and respected custodians of the sport

### *Club participation*

Our club market is well structured and clubs are required to affiliate to England Hockey to play in community leagues. As a result only relatively few occasional teams lie outside our affiliation structure. Schools and Universities are the other two areas where significant hockey is played.

Hockey is clearly benefiting from a double Olympic legacy. After Great Britain's women won bronze in front of a home crowd in London in 2012 the numbers of young girls playing the sport doubled and a historic gold in Rio 2016 saw more than 10,000 players promptly joining clubs. These triumphs have inspired the nation to get active and play hockey. Thanks to the outstanding work of the network of clubs across the country, England Hockey has seen unprecedented growth at both ends of the age range. There has been an 80% increase in the number of boys and girls in clubs, as well as a 54% increase in players over the age of 46.

Hockey clubs have reaped the rewards of the improved profile of the sport, focussing on a link with schools to provide excellent opportunities for young players. Programmes such as Quick sticks – a small-sided version of hockey for 7-11 year olds – in Primary Schools have been hugely successful in allowing new players to take part in the sport from an early age. The growth in the sport since the eve of London 2012 has been seen across the country, examples being a 110% increase in under 16s club participation in London, and a 111% growth in the North West in the same age bracket.

### ***England Hockey Strategy***

England Hockey's Facilities Strategy can be found [here](#).

**Vision:** For every hockey club in England to have appropriate and sustainable facilities that provide excellent experiences for players.

**Mission:** More, Better, Happier Players with access to appropriate and sustainable facilities

The 3 main objectives of the facilities strategy are:

#### **1. PROTECT: To conserve the existing hockey provision**

- There are currently over 800 pitches that are used by hockey clubs (club, school, universities) across the country. It is important to retain the current provision where appropriate to ensure that hockey is maintained across the country.

#### **2. IMPROVE: To improve the existing facilities stock (physically and administratively)**

- The current facilities stock is ageing and there needs to be strategic investment into refurbishing the pitches and ancillary facilities. England Hockey works to provide more support for clubs to obtain better agreements with facilities providers & education around owning an asset.

#### **3. DEVELOP: To strategically build new hockey facilities where there is an identified need and ability to deliver and maintain. This might include consolidating hockey provision in a local area where appropriate.**

## **DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT**

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- England Hockey has identified key areas across the country where there is a lack of suitable hockey provision and there is a need for additional pitches, suitable for hockey. There is an identified demand for multi pitches in the right places to consolidate hockey and allow clubs to have all of their provision catered for at one site.

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## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

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### ***LTA Facilities Investment Strategy – Vision for the 2020 and beyond***

The LTA has developed a programme of action based on seven core strategies. These are:

- ✦ Visibility – Broaden relevance and increase visibility of tennis all year round to build engagement and participation with fans and players.
- ✦ Innovation – Innovate in the delivery of tennis to widen its appeal.
- ✦ Investment – Support community facilities and schools to increase the opportunities to play.
- ✦ Accessibility – Make the customer journey to playing tennis easier and more accessible for anyone.
- ✦ Engagement – Engage and collaborate with everyone involved in delivering tennis in Britain, particularly coaches and volunteers, to attract and maintain more people in the game.
- ✦ Performance – Create a pathway for British champions that nurtures a diverse team of players, people and leaders.
- ✦ Leadership – Create a pathway for British champions that nurtures a diverse team of players, people and leaders.

The LTA Facilities Investment Framework sets out how it intends to deliver the investment to support community accessible tennis facilities. The focus will be on:

- ✦ New and existing indoor tennis centres
- ✦ Park tennis
- ✦ Tennis clubs
- ✦ Schools and other educational establishments

The key principles of the framework are to:

- ✦ Help fund projects through interest free loans.
- ✦ Invest in venues that have a proven record of increasing participation.
- ✦ Invest where there is thorough community engagement.
- ✦ Support venues that encourage participation growth.
- ✦ Targeted investment that is demand-led.
- ✦ Support venues that have successfully sourced partnership funding.

### ***England Netball - Your Game, Your Way 2013-17***

Even though this Plan is out of date, England Netball remains committed to its '10-1-1' mission, vision and values that form the fundamentals for its strategic planning for the future for the sport and business.

To facilitate the successful achievement of Netball 10:1:1 and Goal 4, England Netball will:

- ✦ Accelerate the participation growth by extending our market penetration and reach through the activation of a range of existing and new participant-focused products and programmes that access new and targeted markets.
- ✦ Increase the level of long-term participant retention through targeting programmes at known points of attrition and easy transition through the market segments, supported by an infrastructure that reflects the participant needs and improves their netball experience.
- ✦ Build a sustainable performance pathway and system built on the principles of purposeful practice and appropriate quality athlete coach contact time.

# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

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- ◆ Develop sustainable revenue streams through the commercialisation of a portfolio of products and programmes and increasing membership sales. This will also include the creation of cost efficiencies and improved value for money through innovative partnerships and collaborations in all aspects of the business.
- ◆ Establish high standards of leadership and governance that protect the game and its people and facilitates the on-going growth and transformation of the NGB and sport.

### ***England Athletics Strategic Plan – Athletics & Running: for everyone, forever – 2017 and beyond***

This plan sets out England Athletics' mission, vision and strategic priorities that will direct how they work as an organisation during the coming years: what they do and how they will do it.

**Vision:** Make athletics and running the most inclusive and popular sport in England, led by a network of progressive clubs and organisations and supported by a sustainable, respected and trusted governing body.

For England Athletics to achieve this vision, they will focus on three values:

- ◆ Pride – taking pride in their work and demonstrating to athletes that they recognise the importance of their role in bettering athletics.
- ◆ Integrity – demonstrate integrity to earn respect and to build effective partnerships.
- ◆ Inclusivity – promote inclusivity in all their actions.

**Mission:** To grow opportunities for everyone to experience athletics and running, to enable them to reach their full potential.

In order to achieve their mission, England Athletics will have three strategic priorities.

1. To expand the capacity of the sport by supporting and developing its volunteers and other workforce. The target is to achieve a 6% increase every year of licensed leaders, coaches and officials.
2. To sustain and increase participation and performance levels in our sport. To achieve this, England Athletics' current targets are to increase the number of club registered athletes from (149,000 to 172,000), engage 135,000 people through the RunTogether programme and to increase athlete performance levels across all events and disciplines by 1% every year.
3. To influence participation in the wider athletics market. Their target here is to increase the number of regular athletes or runners by at least one million.

### ***England Athletics Facility Strategy (2018 – 2025)***

The purpose of this document is to set out our long term vision for athletics facilities in England. Facilities form a vital component of the overall England Athletics strategy.

The development, protection and enhancement of facilities will support our strategic plan and help England Athletics contribute to the delivery of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's Sporting Futures: A New Strategy for Sport and Sport England's strategy Towards an Active Nation. Appropriate facilities help to attract and inspire new participants and provide the foundation and focus for a significant proportion of the England Athletics family.

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The England Athletics Strategic Plan notes that the sport increasingly needs to become financially sustainable and that a business-like and innovative approach is a vital component of its future success. Facilities are fundamental, but they are also expensive to create and to maintain. The sport therefore faces a significant challenge to develop, improve and maintain facilities, most of which are currently operated and funded by third parties.

This strategy sets out a challenge to all those involved with the delivery of the sport to be innovative and business like in the operation and development of facilities at a time of financial challenge, as it aims “To create an innovative and inspiring network of sustainable athletic facilities, with the capacity to meet both current and future demand across England”.

### **England Golf Course Planner – Strategic Direction (2021-2025)**

England Golf has always had a mission to lead, support, inspire and deliver for its community of golfers, golf clubs and counties. To help enable this, its Course Planner forms the core of its strategy, with 18 guiding principles established that are designed to best position growth in the game:

- ◆ Strengthen governance in all aspects of the sport
- ◆ Deliver safeguarding throughout the golfing community
- ◆ Utilise data and technology to enhance decision making
- ◆ Drive equality and equity in everything it does
- ◆ Support golf clubs with member recruitment and retention
- ◆ Connect and engage with all golfers
- ◆ Inspire and educate golf's network of volunteers
- ◆ Increase golf's influence
- ◆ Advocate and inform on all elements of sustainability
- ◆ Drive diversity at all levels of golf
- ◆ Create more opportunities for junior and young adults
- ◆ Promote the health and wellbeing of golf
- ◆ Inspire more women and girls to play golf
- ◆ Develop greater access for disabled people
- ◆ Enthuse all golfers through relatable role models
- ◆ Communicate a positive perception change for golf
- ◆ Deliver an excellent talent development pathway
- ◆ Host best-in-class competitions for all golfers



# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### APPENDIX 2: NON TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT SHEETS

#### Grass football pitch non-technical assessment sheet

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Football									
Please complete one form per pitch									
Site reference:				Site Name:					
6 figure grid reference				Pitch ID(s):					
Number of football pitches on site:				Pitch size:	(Adult 11v11, Youth 11v11, 9v9, 7v7 Mini, 5v5, 7v7)				
Availability				Are any other pitches marked out over this pitch?					
				If yes, please indicate what pitches are overmarked? (i.e. one youth pitch is overmarked on a adult pitch) in Pitch Issues					
Weather at time of visit & date of visit									
Pitch Issues:									
Assessment Criteria (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)									
Element (Gathered via a non technical site assessment)	Rating						Guidance notes	Comments	
Playing surface									
Grass Cover	Good >80%		Adequate 60-80%		Poor <60%		Advice is to walk through the middle of the pitch		
Does the pitch meet The FA minimum size?	Yes - as per the FA recommended size		Within FA recommended guidelines		No		See size chart below for recommended dimensions		
Slope of pitch (gradient and cross fall)	Flat		Moderate		Severe				
Length of grass	Good		Too long		Too short		Good 30mm-50mm, Too long 51mm plus, Too short 29mm less		
Evenness of pitch	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Problem Areas: Evidence of dog fouling/glass/litter/vehicle tracks	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Problem Areas: Evidence of unofficial use/damage to the surface	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Problem Areas: Evidence of poor drainage	No evidence of standing water or poor drainage		Some evidence of poor drainage		Yes, poor drainage				
Maintenance programme (information from maintenance schedule/grounds team/club survey)								Section total	
Grass cutting	Yes, as required		Yes, but not frequent enough		No				
Seeded	Yes, as required		Not known		No				
Aerated (per year)	Three or more times		Once/ twice		No				
Sand dressed	Within the last 12 months		Within the last 2 years		No				
Fertilised	Within the last 12 months		Within the last 2 years		No				
Weed killed	Within the last 12 months		Within the last 2 years		No				
								Section total	
NB If none of this information is provided you should assume that only the grass is being cut and the rest of the maintenance items should be marked with the lowest score option.									
PITCH SCORE				0.0%	RATING		Poor		

# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### Cricket non-technical assessment

Element	Rating				Guidance notes	Comments (use the guidance notes to help complete)
<b>About the cricket outfield</b>						
Grass coverage	Good		Acceptable		Poor	<80% falls below the ECB basic standard
Length of grass	Good		Acceptable		Poor	Ideally 12mm - 25mm
Evenness	Even				Uneven	Ball should run without deviation or ramp
Evidence of Dog fouling/glass/stones/litter?	None		Yes		Immediate action required	May also wish to refer to more signage. If yes, refer to maintenance/maintenance
Evidence of Unofficial use?	None		Yes		Immediate action required	eg informal, casual use, unbooked use, kids kickabout etc. May also wish to refer to more signage. If yes, refer to maintenance/maintenance
Evidence of Damage to surface?	None		Yes		Immediate action required	eg from animals/vehicles - rabbit, cattle and horses etc may also wish to refer to more signage
<b>Artificial wickets</b>						
Is the wicket and surrounds married in	Yes			No		There should be no trip points
Evenness of wicket	Even			Uneven		There should be no unevenness in surface levels
Stump holes	Yes			No		Should be no wider than a standard cricket ball
Moss or materials in the surface	Yes			No		There should be none
Rips or surface lifting	Yes			No		If "yes" send to maintenance
Surface worn in high traffic areas - creases	Yes			No		If "yes" send to maintenance
Hardness - does the ball rebound when thrown straight down?	Yes			No		
<b>Grass wickets</b>						
Presence of line markings	Yes			No		
Evidence of rolling - is wicket smooth and uniform	Yes			No		
Evidence of straight cut and height	Yes			No		3mm or more width/12mm or more of square
Evidence of repair work on old wickets	Yes			No		
Grass coverage (square and wickets)	Yes			No		<80% falls below the ECB basic standard
Hardness - does a cricket ball thrown straight down into the surface rebound?	Yes			No		
<b>Changing/ Pavilion</b>						
Umpires provision	Yes			No		
Toilets	Yes			No		
Hot/cold water	Yes			No		
Heating	Yes			No		
Condition of building	Good		Acceptable		Requires attention	
<b>NTP</b>						
Is the wicket and surrounds married in (no trip points)	Yes			No		
Evenness of wicket (no contours in surface levels)	Even			Uneven		
Stump holes (no wider than a standard cricket ball)	Yes			No		
Moss or materials in the surface (should be none)	Yes			No		
No rips or surface lifting	Yes			No		
Surface worn in high traffic areas - crease	Yes			No		
Hardness - does the ball rebound when thrown straight down	Yes			No		
Is the steel frame/posts upright?	Yes			No		
Are steel cross members detached?	Yes			No		
Are all posts and net fixings in place?	Yes			No		
Can a ball pass through any part of the netting?	Yes			No		
Is appropriate safety/supervisory signage present?	Yes			No		

# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### Rugby pitch non-technical assessment sheet

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Rugby Union									
Please complete one form per pitch									
Site reference				Site Name					
6 figure grid reference				Pitch ID(s)					
Date of assessment				Pitch size	(Senior, Mini/Midi)				
Number of pitches on site				Are any other pitches marked out over this pitch?					
Availability				If yes, please indicate what pitches are overmarked? (i.e. one mini/ midi pitch is overmarked on a senior pitch) in Pitch Issues					
Community Use - used, Community Use - unused, No Community Use, Available but Unused									
Weather at time of visit									
General comments/observations									
Assessment Criteria (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)									
Qualitative information (gathered on site)	Rating					Guidance notes	Comments		
Grass Coverage	Good		Adequate		Poor		>90% = good. <80% = poor		
Size of pitch	Acceptable (between recommended minimum and maximum sizes)		Flag for further investigation (below recommended minimum size)		Unacceptable (above maximum size)		Maximum size = width 70m, goal line to goal line 100m, in goal area 22m, run offs 5m where practical. Recommended minimum size = width 68m, goal line to goal line 94m, in goal area 6m, run offs 5m where practical.		
Length of grass	Too Long		Good		Too short		Too long = >75mm. Too short = <50mm		
Problem Areas: Evidence of glass/litter/vehicle tracks/dog fouling	None		Yes - some		Yes lots				
<b>GOALPOSTS</b>									
Are goalposts installed?	Yes		No						
Is there any obvious danger on posts?	Yes		No						
Are the posts stable in the ground?	Yes		No						
Is the crossbar fixed securely?	Yes		No						
Is there evidence of rust on the posts?	Yes		No						
<b>ANCILLARY</b>									
Is the pitch flooded?	Yes		No						
Is there changing accommodation for the pitch?	Yes		No						
Is an appropriate level of car parking available?	Yes		No						
<b>Pitch maintenance (information gathered via club survey/ pitch provider consultation) - refer to the guidance notes below</b>									
Aerated (per year)	three or more times		twice		once		never		
Sand dressed (per year)	three or more times		twice		once		never		
Fertilised (per year)	three or more times		twice		once		never		
Weed killed (per year)	three or more times		twice		once		never		
Chain harrowed	every week		fortnightly		monthly		never		
<b>Drainage</b>									
	Natural (inadequate) SCORE D0		Natural (adequate) SCORE D1		Pipe drained SCORE D2		Pipe and slit drained SCORE D3		
							Unknown SCORE D0		
<b>Natural (adequate)</b> = 3 or less training/match cancellations per season <b>Natural (inadequate)</b> = 4 or more training match cancellations per season *Based on a <b>pipe drained</b> system at 5m centres that has been installed in the previous eight years **Based on a <b>slit drained</b> system at 1m centres completed in the previous five years.									
<b>Pitch Maintenance Score</b>									

# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

*Artificial grass pitches non-technical assessment (including third generation turf pitches)*

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Artificial grass pitches									
Site reference			Site Name						
6 figure grid reference			Pitch ID						
Number of AGPs on site			Pitch size	Full (i.e., 100m x 60m)			Half (i.e., 60m x 40m)		
Availability									
Community Use - used, Community Use - unused, No Community Use, Available but Unused									
Type of pitch	Long Pile 3G (65mm with shock pad)		Medium Pile 3G (55-60mm)		Short Pile 3G (40mm)				
	Sand Dressed		Sand Filled		Water based				
Assessment Criteria (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)									
Element	Rating						Guidance notes	Site comments	
Age of Surface	less than 2 years		2-5 years		5-10 years		over 10 years		
Evidence of moss/lichen (all surfaces)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Loose gravel (macadam surface)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Holes or rips in surface (macadam, art. grass or polymeric surfaces)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Grip underfoot	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Line markings - quality	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Problem Areas: Evidence of Glass/ stones/ litter	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Problem Areas: Evidence of inappropriate use	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Problem Areas: Evidence of damage to surface	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots		If no evidence, assume none.		
Access for disabled players. i.e.: ramps onto courts, width of gates	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Condition of posts/ nets/ goals	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Surrounding fencing	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Adequate safety margins (w here appropriate)	Yes - fully		No- but adequate		No - not adequate				
Is the AGP floodlit?	Yes		No						
Is the AGP left open at all times?	Yes		No						
Are there dug outs?	Yes		No						
Are there youth shelters/spectator seating around AGP?	Yes		No						
Is there changing accommodation for the AGP?	Yes		No						
Maximum score	93	Scoring:	Poor	<=50	Total Score	0			
			Standard	51-79					
			Good	80+	Potential Rating	Poor			

*Court non-technical assessment (netball and tennis)*

<b>KKPref</b>									
<b>Site name:</b>									
<b>Number of courts -</b>	<b>Tennis</b>		<b>Netball</b>		<b>Basketball</b>		<b>Five-a-side</b>		
<b>General Playground or specific sports court area?</b>									
<b>Court surface</b>				<b>Management</b>			<b>Community Use?</b>		
	Artificial turf, Clay, Grass, Macadam, Polymeric, Shale			Club, LA - Parks, Parish Council, Public, School					

Element	Rating						Comments				
<b>About the courts</b>											
Evidence of moss/lichen (all surfaces)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots						
Loose gravel (macadam surface)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots						
Holes or rips in surface (macadam, art. grass or polymeric surface)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots						
Grip underfoot	Good		Adequate		Poor						
Line markings - quality	Good		Adequate		Poor						
Surrounding fencing	Good		Adequate		Poor						
Size of courts	Yes - fully		No - but adequate		No - not adequate						
Adequate safety margins	Yes - fully		No - but adequate		No - not adequate						
Slope of courts	Flat		Slight		Gentle		Moderate		Severe		
Problem Areas: Evidence of Glass/ stones/ litter	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots						
Problem Areas: Evidence of inappropriate use	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots						
Access for disabled players - ie: ramps onto courts, width of gates	Good		Adequate		Poor						
<b>Changing Accomodation</b>											
Changing Accomodation	Yes		No								
<b>About the equipment</b>											
Posts and net	Good		Adequate		Poor						
Are the courts locked when not in use?	Yes		No								
Practice wall	Yes		No								

# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### Bowling green non-technical assessment

### Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Bowling green

KKPref

Site name:

Number of greens

Flat/crown

Community Use?

**Assessment Criteria** (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)

Element	Rating			Comments
<b>About the greens</b>				
Grass cover	Over 70%	40-69%	less than 40%	
Evenness of surface	Good	Adequate	Poor	
Signs of wear and tear	None	Yes - some	Yes - lots	
Condition of ditches/boarding	Good	Adequate	Poor	
Surface of surrounding hard areas	Good	Adequate	Poor	
Is the green and surrounding area fenced?	Yes	No		
Fencing around the green and ancillaries	Good	Adequate	Poor	
Problem areas: litter, glass, fouling, leaf fall on the green	None	Yes - some	Yes - lots	
Problem Areas: Evidence of inappropriate use on the green	None	Yes - some	Yes - lots	
Access for disabled players/spectators - ie: ramps onto greens, width of gates	Good	Adequate	Poor	
<b>Ancillary facilities</b>				
Changing Accommodation	Yes	No		
Toilets	Yes	No		
Car parking	Yes	No		
<b>General comments about the site:</b>				

# DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### Athletics tracks non-technical assessment

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Athletics Tracks									
KKPref									
Site name:									
Track surface				Grass, polymeric, cinder, other specify	Specify If 'Other'				
No. of Lanes			Length of track:			Community Use:			
Assessment Criteria (please rank each of the following aspects for each track with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)									
Bement	Rating						Comments		
About the track facilities									
Damage to the track surface	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Grip underfoot	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Line markings - quality	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Track edging	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Disabled access	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Problem Areas: Evidence of Glass/ stones/ litter	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Floodlighting	Yes		No						
Is the track fenced?	Yes		No						
Surface of run ups - long/triple jump, high jump									
	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Adequate landing areas - jumps	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Adequate safety margins	Yes - fully		No-but adequate		No-not adequate				
Take off boards	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Landing mats	Yes		No						
Surface of throw ing areas - shot, discuss, hammer	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Adequate safety margins - throw s	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Throw ing cages	Yes		No						
Access to toilets									
	Yes		No						
Changing accomodation	Yes		No						
Changing accomodation - quality	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Club room	Yes		No						
Car parking	Good		Adequate		Poor				
General Comments									
						ENTER Athletics		Please make sure there is no filter on in sheet At_db !	