

Swale Borough Council

Built Facility Assessment and Strategy

2024-2038



A report by

Strategic Leisure Limited

February 2024

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Glossary of Terms

Terms	Explanation
Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance (ANOG)	The Sport England guidance on preparing and developing needs assessments for built sports facilities, which provides the evidence to support a Local Plan.
Community Use	A facility has community use if it is open for use by sports clubs/community groups and pay and play use (use by individuals in the community).
Community Use Agreement (CUA)	A CUA is a formal agreement between an education facility and a Local Authority (and sometimes also Sport England) for community use of a sports facility on an education site out of school hours.
Affordable Fitness Facilities	These are fitness facilities which may be in the public, private or voluntary sectors, which offer similar prices as those operated by Swale Borough Council; these facilities are therefore considered to be accessible, and potentially comparatively affordable, providing for at least some of the community, in a way that membership only facilities may not.
Facility Planning Model (FPM)	The FPM is a facility modelling toolkit, developed by Sport England to inform the current and future need for provision of sports halls and swimming pools
Swale, Swale Borough or Swale Borough Council	Reference to Swale or Swale Borough, means the entirety of the geographic area for which Swale Borough Council is responsible.
Sheppey	Reference to Sheppey means the settlements within the Isle of Sheppey
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies and how they are expected to be applied. It covers both plan -making and development management.
Pay and Play	Sports facilities which are available for use by the general public; facilities can be booked by individuals or groups, without membership necessarily being required.
School Lettings	A school open for lettings provides community access but these tend to just be for clubs/groups i.e., pre-organised groups as opposed to individual pay and play use.
Sports Facility Calculator (SFC)	The SFC is a facility modelling toolkit, developed by Sport England to calculate the future need for provision of sports halls, swimming pools and indoor bowls, based on a specified population increase in an identified location.
Strategic Size	Strategic size refers to either a sports hall of minimum 3 badminton courts, or a pool of a minimum 160 sqm. These are definitions used by Sport England in the FPM. Any sports hall less than 3 badminton court size is likely to be excluded from the FPM unless it is on an education site, where, if a main hall provides for community use, the smaller hall will be included in FPM modelling. SLL take account all halls in our supply and demand assessments.
vpwpp	Visits per week in the peak period

1. Executive Summary

1.1. The Vision for future provision of sport and leisure in Swale is:

“That the residents of Swale are encouraged, motivated, informed and have the opportunity to be more active and healthier. Enabling them to live life to the full, be happy and well, reaching their full potential, by:

- 1) Providing the right activities in the right places to the right people; and
- 2) Providing accessible, affordable and good quality facilities and places to participate in sport and physical activity’.

1.2. Sustainable, high quality, and accessible facility provision has a critical role to play in delivering these opportunities. Swale Borough Council (SBC) needs to plan for the investment requirements of its existing facilities, to ensure its health and well-being priorities can be delivered, and work in partnership with other providers and stakeholders to address the other priorities identified through this Strategy.

Aims

1.3. The aims of providing sufficient high quality, fit for purpose and accessible provision, places and spaces are to:

- Increase the proportion of the population that is physically active; the level of activity undertaken will support efforts to further reduce health inequalities;
- Develop additional facility provision where need is evidenced e.g. as a result of population growth;
- Design in flexibility; future facility provision may need to be more multi-purpose in nature, reflecting changing participation trends and opportunities;
- Encourage new participants to start taking part in physical activity;
- Enable opportunities for participation to be provided in a wider range of places and spaces, and particularly at a very local level, using e.g. community centres/halls;
- Facilitate the continued development of healthier lifestyles across Swale’s communities;
- Contribute to a reduction in health inequalities, and specifically obesity, reduced inactivity, across Swale; and
- Create active environments where the opportunity to be more physically active is an integral part of everyday life.

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- 1.4. As the Built Facility Strategy (BFS) is part of the evidence base for the Local Plan it is important that Swale Borough Council (SBC) should aim for its facilities to contribute to meeting future demand, taking into account population/housing growth.
- 1.5. It is important to stress that this BFS study focusses on facility provision in the context of health and wellbeing. Facility investment priorities will reflect locally identified needs to deliver opportunities for the local community to be more active.
- 1.6. Based on the facility supply and demand analysis and priority for future provision summarised in Table 1, there is clearly a need to:
- Seek to redevelop and extend swimming pool provision at Sheppey Pool from 6 lanes to 8 lanes
 - Retaining existing levels and quality of community accessible (including pay and play) sports halls, swimming pools, and fitness stations as a minimum; and
 - Consider how best to facilitate enhanced and dedicated gymnastics facilities and explore feasibility of increasing indoor bowls provision.
- 1.7. Retaining and improving the quality of provision is important in Swale to ensure that participation levels are retained and wherever possible increased. Active Lives¹ highlights that 28% of the Swale community is not active enough to have any health benefit.
- 1.8. The provision of good quality, local community facilities, accessible and affordable to meet identified need, is key to facilitating participation growth, and contributing to a reduction in the health inequalities in the Borough. This reflects Public Health and Swale Borough Council's health and well-being priorities, to facilitate sustained behaviour change to reduce obesity, improve health, contribute to addressing mental health issues and increase participation.
- 1.9. Based on the quality audits and assessments, and the supply and demand analysis, the priorities for future investment in facility provision are:

Table 1: Summary of Facility Priorities

Facility Type	Priority for Future Provision	Location
Sports Halls	Retain provision of existing levels of community accessible and affordable sports hall facilities as a minimum	Boroughwide
	Community access to an additional 9.5 badminton courts by 2038 (sport specific needs to address include: badminton, boccia, hockey, netball and table tennis)	Boroughwide
	Refurbish/redevelopment of existing ageing facilities	Education sites and SBC facilities (Sheppey dryside is being re-developed as part of the Levelling Up project) e.g. Fulston Manor School, Oasis Academy, Queen Elizabeth's Academy and The Abbey School.

¹ Source: April 2023, data November 21/22

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Facility Type	Priority for Future Provision	Location
	<p>It may also be possible to secure additional access for community pay and play at existing education facilities.</p> <p>Potential to use planning obligations CIL from housing developments to improve facilities. Link to formal community use agreements.</p>	
Swimming Pools	Retain provision of existing levels and quality of community accessible and affordable swimming facilities as a minimum	Boroughwide
	Seek to redevelop and extend water provision at Sheppey Pool from 6 lanes to 8 lanes (under-supply of water space of 188.49 sq. m by 2038). Potentially s106 funding could contribute to this investment.	Sheppey Pool
	Consideration should also be given to reviewing the current pool programmes at the public pay and play pool facilities in Swale to ensure that the majority of hours are given to the most popular activities.	Sheerness/Sheppey and Faversham Pools
Health and Fitness	Maintain provision of pay and play accessible health and fitness provision space, at Sheppey Sports Complex and Swallows Leisure Centre	Sheerness and Sittingbourne
	Look at opportunities to expand this level of provision on site as part of any future redevelopment (21 stations)	Faversham Pools, Sheppey Leisure Complex
Squash	Retain existing levels of provision within the borough.	Boroughwide
Indoor Bowls	Retain provision of existing indoor bowling rinks at Milton Recreation Ground	Sittingbourne
	Explore increasing indoor bowls provision potentially through use of developers' contributions i.e.s106 (Swale BC is not using CIL)	
Gymnastics and Trampoline	Potential for club-led development of additional dedicated gymnastics facilities	Boroughwide
Boxing	Potential for club-led development of dedicated boxing facilities. There is potential to look at s106 contributions to investment.	
Activity Halls	Develop use of community centres for informal sport and physical activity.	Boroughwide
General Provision	Overall, and specifically through the housing growth agenda, provision of more active environments, reflecting active travel, safe cycle routes to school, the need to link existing and new communities with walking/cycling/jogging routes	Boroughwide

- 1.10. Other future facility provision, linked particularly to long term population growth and housing development, is the development of new and improved walking, jogging and cycling routes/connectivity, to encourage active travel, and provide an environment in which physical activity can be easily integrated into daily life.

Other Priorities and Needs

Capital Investment

- 1.11. It is clear from the strategy analysis that there is a need for some capital investment in Swale to address future needs. Whilst some of this investment relates to additional facility provision (more water space by 2038), there is also a need to start planning now for the refurbishment of Swallows Leisure Centre, Sheppey Pool (the sports hall and fitness provision at Sheppey Leisure Complex is being refurbished as part of a Levelling Up Funded project) and Faversham Pools. Investment is also required in some of the voluntary sector and education facilities.
- 1.12. It is also clear that delivery of the levels of investment required will only result from a local partnership approach, that provides facilities that the inactive will use. The development of improved sports facilities, and physical activity environments, will facilitate increased participation, which in turn will benefit individual and community health. The challenge is that the greatest health benefit will be gained by encouraging the inactive, to become active.

Continued Local Partnership Working with Education Sites

- 1.13. In order to deliver the identified Strategy needs, and the key outcome of increased participation to address health inequalities, plus meet demands from increased population, there is an opportunity for some changes in approach to delivery. The development of new/replacement facilities, increasing and optimising the available capacity in existing education facilities, provides a mechanism to deliver these outcomes.
- 1.14. The key issue to address initially is that of future partnership with education sites, to retain community access for clubs and groups as a minimum, and where possible agree Community Use Agreements (CUAs) which provide balanced access for the community on a pay and play basis. Increasing capacity to offer and deliver increased participative opportunities, particularly for those who are currently inactive, could contribute significantly to a reduction in health inequalities in the Borough. It should also be recognised that there are some challenges with a reliance on education facilities providing community access; it is not always possible to obtain daytime access which would benefit those working from home, and older people who may not want to go out in the evenings when it's dark.

Tackling Inactivity

- 1.15. Clearly investing in good quality and accessible leisure facilities provides an infrastructure where people can be physically active. It is important that facilities are both accessible in physical terms and available for people to use; this includes those with a disability or life-limiting condition. Across Swale there are improvements that could be made to facilities to address this.

- 1.16. Of equal importance is the need to enable those who are inactive to be physically active. They may not be comfortable in a leisure facility, so it is crucial to provide the appropriate activities, programmes and opportunities either outside or in more informal settings e.g. community/church halls to facilitate increased levels of activity. Focussing on getting more people active is important in Swale where nearly a third of the adult population is inactive. Swale Borough Council's leisure services have a vital role to play in engaging with those who are active and supporting them into activity. This is where most impact will be delivered in terms of health and well-being.

Recommendations

Sports Halls, Swimming Pools and Fitness Facilities

Recommendation 1 (R1)

The existing levels of community accessible (including pay and play) sports hall, swimming pool and fitness provision in the Borough are retained as a minimum, but these need not necessarily be the same facilities as at present.

(PROTECT)

Recommendation 2 (R2)

Discuss the options for all leisure facilities i.e., new build or refurbishment and explore the options for location of future community accessible (including pay and play) sports hall, swimming pool and fitness provision.

(PROVIDE)

Recommendation 3 (R3)

Accessibility to be considered and factored in to ensure all facilities are as inclusive as possible.

(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Recommendation 4 (R4)

Explore the potential for integrated operational leisure management across both Sheppey Leisure Complex and Swallows Leisure Centre and Faversham Pools to identify economies of scale.

(PROVIDE)

Sports Halls

Recommendation 5 (R5)

Re-furbish the Sheppey sports hall and remodel to include activities more conducive to getting more of this specific community more active throughout their lives.

(PROVIDE)

Recommendation 6 (R6)

Swale Borough Council (through Planning policy) seek to develop appropriate formal access arrangements i.e. Community Use Arrangements (CUA) with any new education sports halls to align with the new Kent and Medway Sports Strategy. Any planning applications for new sports halls on education sites should be considered by SBC Planning Services for formal Community Use Agreements (CUA).

(PROVIDE)

Recommendation 7 (R7)

Open dialogue with all education sites where there is access for clubs/groups but not the wider community on a pay and play basis to try and increase access to physical activity facilities.

(PROTECT AND PROVIDE)

Recommendation 8 (R8)

Work with partners to replace/refurbish ageing sports halls in the borough, particularly those on education sites where there is potential to develop a formal Community Use Arrangement (CUA).

(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Swimming Pools

Recommendation 9 (R9)

Explore the options available to Swale Borough Council to address the supply of water space in the Borough to meet the future need. Swale Borough Council to work with funding and delivery partners to identify medium to longer term investment opportunities for additional swimming pool provision.

(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Recommendation 10 (R10)

Prioritise the replacement of Sheppey Pool and if possible, extend the scale of water provision to reduce the borough's overall future under-supply. Replacement of this facility could be linked to the redevelopment of the Sheppey dryside facilities.

(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Recommendation 11 (R11)

Continue to invest in/refurbish the swimming pool at Swallows Leisure Centre to retain its quality as the facility continues to age.

(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Recommendation 12 (R12)

Continue to invest in/refurbish the facilities at Faversham Pools to retain its quality as the facility continues to age

(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Other Physical Activity and Sports Facilities

Recommendation 13 (R13)

Working in partnership, consider the potential for investment in new fitness facilities at Faversham Pools to broaden the offer for the county.

(PROVIDE)

Recommendation 14 (R14)

Establish dialogue with England Hockey to the work with partners to identify an indoor sports hall space that could be adapted for use by hockey for indoor training.

(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Recommendation 15 (R15)

Dialogue is established with England Gymnastics, Faversham Gymnastics Club and Bourne Gymnastics & Trampoline Club to further explore the potential of facilitating club-led development of additional gymnastics facilities i.e. new additional provision.

(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Recommendation 16 (R16)

Dialogue is established with England Indoor Bowls Association and local clubs to monitor the need for increased provision of indoor bowling rinks in the borough.

(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Recommendation 17 (R17)

Dialogue is established with Schools and England Badminton to review whether the schools want to sub-lease their sports hall facilities directly to the badminton clubs to enhance the provision of badminton courts in the borough.

(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Recommendation 18 (R18)

Continued development of access to a range of watersports/activities as set out in the Swale Visitor Economy Framework

(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Recommendation 19 (R19)

Invest in the development of additional/replacement facilities to address identified gaps in consultation with Active Kent and Medway. Developer contributions/funding as set out in national planning policy guidance (National Infrastructure Levy – NIL), towards the development of new/improved facilities should be collected on an ongoing basis wherever possible, to contribute to capital investment for physical activity and leisure.

(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Recommendation 20 (R20)

Where appropriate, Swale Borough Council and its partners seek to secure developer contributions from strategic developments that could contribute towards the development/refurbishment of strategic facilities, additional and safe walking, running, and cycling routes, and where possible to open up other informal, multipurpose places and spaces where people can be active.

(PROVIDE AND PROTECT)

Recommendation 21 (R21)

Swale Borough Council and all its partners identify the level of capital funding required to address the identified investment needs for sports facilities, and investigate all available sources for capital funding, on a partnership basis. To support this process, it is recommended to involve Active Kent and Medway (Kent Sports Partnership).

(PROVIDE)

Recommendation 22 (R22)

Swale Borough Council and its partners prioritise investment in the development of high-quality community sports facilities/spaces, with local partners. Increasing available capacity and therefore opportunities to take part in regular physical activity, in the local community, will contribute to improved health and wellbeing, increased participation and better community cohesion.

(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Recommendation 23 (R23)

There should be on-going monitoring of this Strategy through its implementation, but as a minimum, progress should be reviewed and refreshed every five years. On-going monitoring should include partnership working with neighbouring local authorities to keep aware of facility changes and developments.

(PROTECT)

2. Stage A - Introduction and Scope

Introduction

- 2.1 This Built Facility Strategy (BFS) provides an assessment of the need for built Sports Facilities in the borough of Swale. The BFS informs and guides future provision of built sports facilities to serve existing and new communities in Swale alongside the 2024 Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) which is being developed at the same time. The BFS focusses on facility provision in the context of health and wellbeing, reflecting locally identified needs.
- 2.2 Swale Borough Council (SBC) is in the process of reviewing the adopted Swale Local Plan 'Bearing Fruits 2017'. At present the Local Plan consultation timetable has been paused whilst the Council awaits detail on the Government intentions towards planning making through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act and accompanying changes to the NPPF. The Local Plan review will set out the planning framework for the period to 2038.
- 2.3 The SBC Corporate Plan and the adopted Local Plan priorities are implemented through a wide range of Council activities across the Council's service areas. The BFS reflects this approach. In addition, the BFS will support the Swale Health and Wellbeing Improvement Plan 2020-2023 Strategy's key priorities of building healthier communities and supporting healthier lifestyles.
- 2.4 SBC's Towards an Active Swale vision is:

"the residents of Swale are encouraged, motivated, informed and have the opportunity to be more active and healthier, enabling them to live life to the full, be happy and well, reaching their full potential". Further, the strategy aims to raise the profile and recognition of sport and physical activity in contributing to wider outcomes.

- 2.5 The BFS will also contribute to delivery of this vision.

Purpose and Objectives in Developing a Built Facilities Study (BFS)

- 2.6 This study has been undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) and Sport England's Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance (ANOG) throughout; it provides an updated evidence base for the Local Plan to 2038 and underpins future priorities for provision. The BFS covers the geographical area over which SBC has planning jurisdiction but also references areas outside the boundaries of Swale as appropriate. It also reflects the diversity of sport and recreational needs across Swale. The BFS will enable the Council to plan in the longer term, by ensuring future provision of sustainable sport and leisure facilities across the borough.

- 2.7 Having up-to-date strategies and strong supporting evidence aligned to planning policy, (the Council’s Local Plan period is from 2020-2038), will help to secure the continued provision of the appropriate level of valuable community assets, to meet increasing population levels.
- 2.8 The purpose of this BFS is to:

- **Review**
 - Review the current supply and demand for indoor sports and recreation facilities in Swale.
- **Demand**
 - Model the demand to assess the current and projected over/under supply of facilities using a recognised modelling technique that satisfies the requirements of Sport England e.g., Facilities Planning Model (FPM).
- **Provide**
 - Provide conclusions and recommendations on policy and proposed developments.

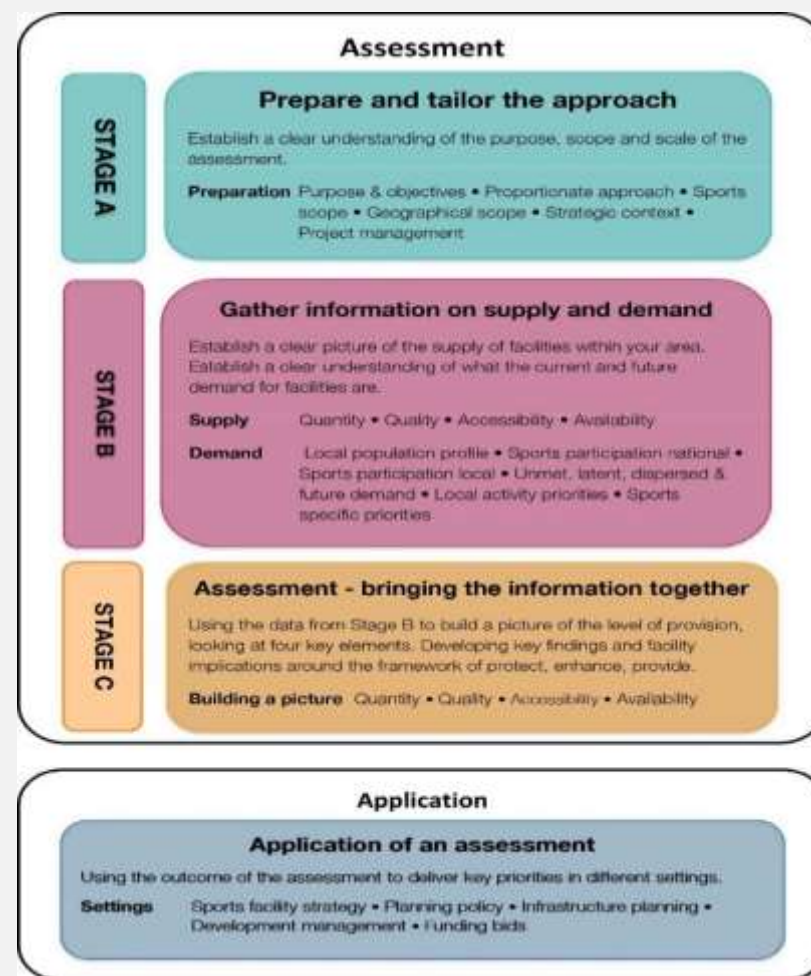
Study Structure

The BFS Study has been developed using the **Sport England Assessing Needs and Opportunities guidance (ANOG), published in 2014.**

The Evidence Base (essentially Stages A-C) – is based on the ANOG approach, as set out in Figure 1.

The subsequent Strategy (Section 6) sets out the proposed response to the issues identified in the Evidence Base (Sections 2 -5).

Figure 1: ANOG Stages



Sports and Geographical Scope

2.24 The scope of the work includes:

- Building on existing material to comprehensively audit all pre-defined sports facilities/facility networks across Swale Borough;
- Assessing the impact of forecast population growth on the future planning for sports facility provision within Swale Borough;
- Assessing the impact that sports facility provision in neighboring Local Authorities has on future provision and planning for sports facility provision within Swale Borough; and
- Assess the requirements to demonstrate the impact of investing in existing and new facility stock across Swale Borough in terms of economic, social and health outcomes.

2.25 The scope of this BFS includes analysis of the following facility types across Swale, in line with the geographical area covered by the Local Plan. Facilities owned by the public (including education), private and third sectors are included:

- **Facilities:** Sports halls, swimming pools, studios, fitness suites, squash courts, indoor tennis, martial arts/boxing facilities, indoor cricket nets, indoor bowls rink, gymnastics facilities
- **Sports:** Badminton, basketball, swimming, netball, tennis, indoor cricket, squash, fitness, group exercise, indoor bowls, gymnastics, volleyball, table tennis, martial arts/boxing.

2.26 The Strategy assesses and identifies the provision of all strategic scale indoor recreation facilities i.e. 3 court sports halls, 20m pools or larger, focussing on key providers such as:

- SBC;
- Education (School and Higher Education Based); and
- Voluntary and Private Sectors.

2.27 This BFS comprises:

- A Strategy and Action Plan, which sets out the full range of findings supported by the evidence, which is fully NPPF compliant.
- Technical evidence which sets out the results of the supply and demand assessment for identified built sports facilities.
- Location plans of all sites using a GIS mapping system.
- Identification of proposals for generic Borough wide issues, sport specific issues and area specific issues.
- A list of priority projects for improvements to sport and leisure facilities over the Local Plan period, with information on indicative costs, phasing and proposed delivery mechanisms, where possible; and
- Recommendations for policy, local standards, and guidelines.

2.28 In addition to purpose-built facilities, consideration is given to the role of education facilities in meeting local needs.

2.29 Outdoor sports facilities and pitches are covered in the updated 2024 Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS).

Proportionate Approach

2.30 The brief developed by SBC identifies the key objectives of the BFS as being to:

- **Provide**
 - Provide a viable and deliverable model of sports facility stock (type/mix) that meets existing and anticipated future demand.
- **Understanding**
 - Provide a clear understanding of the overall surpluses and deficiencies across the Borough and any specific geographical and/or individual facility needs.
- **Establish**
 - Establish the principles to help inform where future resources should be focused and help inform the policy direction of the emerging Local Plan; and
- **Produce**
 - Produce an evidence-based needs assessment for Swale which is compliant with Sport England guidance and complements the Active Swale strategy.

2.31 In addition, the BFS identifies:

1. Objectives and actions to address identified local needs, current and future.
2. Recommendations to help ensure that existing and future sports needs are met across the Borough. It identifies opportunities for improving the quantity, quality, accessibility, availability, maintenance and operational management of existing facilities as relevant, recommends how any under-supply and future need should be addressed and where new facilities should be located;
3. Recommendations for securing developer contributions towards the delivery of sports and physical activity across Swale based on appropriate available evidence; and

2.32 An implementation plan for securing investment and delivering projects, including but not limited to the developer contribution system.

3. Local Level – Swale Borough Strategic Context

Table 2: Swale Strategic Policies and Strategies

Policy/ Strategy/ Other	Relevant Factors
<p>Locality Description</p> <p>Swale is the bridging point between north and east Kent, named after the narrow channel of tidal water between mainland Kent and the Isle of Sheppey. The borough is home to about 151,000 people, who primarily reside in its three main towns: Sittingbourne, Faversham, and Sheerness.</p> <p>Swale boasts strong communication links, as it is situated in proximity to London, mainland Europe, and the national motorway network. The M2 runs east-west across the Borough, providing access to destinations between the Channel Ports and London. The A249 provides alternative access along the M20, while high-speed rail services allow for travel to London in just over an hour. As a coastal borough, the Port of Sheerness offers access to the largest ships in the world, with its imports distributed throughout the UK. Swale is also within easy reach of other major Kent centres, including Canterbury, Ashford, Maidstone, and the Medway towns.</p> <p>Sittingbourne (population 52,900) is the main town, acting as a population, employment and service centre for the Borough.</p> <p>The town's character has its roots in past travellers and pilgrims, as well as the industries that settled there, owing to its location on the London-Dover Road and at the head of an inlet of the Swale, Milton Creek.</p> <p>A unique feature within Kent is the Isle of Sheppey, separated from the mainland by the Swale. Its main town is Sheerness with a population of 12,500.</p> <p>It owes much of its distinctiveness to its role as a traditional seaside town and the past and present industries that were established there. This includes the former naval dockyard and the current port facility. The town centre functions as the main shopping and service centre for the island's residents and visitors.</p>	<p>Key</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal Natural Asset (PNA) (2004-20) Management of Recreational Assets (MRA) Creation of Strategic Green Corridors (SGC) Areas of High Landscape Value (ALV) Protection of water countryside (STC) Strategy area boundaries - High Growth (ST1-ST4, ST5-ST8) Strategy area boundaries - Low Intensity Growth (ST9-ST14, ST15) Main Borough Urban Centre (MBC) (Primary Growth Focus) Other Borough Centres (OBC) (Secondary, constrained growth focus) Other Urban Local Centres (ULC) (Supporting growth focus) The West Sheppey Triangle (ST15) (Main Sheppey growth focus) Rural Local Service Centres (RLSC) (Main focus in rural areas) Other Villages (OV) (Minor focus for development) Coastal Change Management Area (CCMA) Housing locations greater than 100 dwellings (ST6) Main proposed employment locations (ST16) Regeneration Areas (Ragen 1 - 4) Existing Strategic Employment Site (SES) Proposed transport improvement Proposed secondary school <p>Development targets to 2031</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 130,000 sq m of industrial/office 13,192 homes (776 per annum)

Policy/ Strategy/ Other	Relevant Factors
	<p>Faversham, a historic small market town with a population of 20,900 located in the centre of a rich farming hinterland, is known for its history of brewing and food. The town's industrial and maritime heritage, along with its outstanding range of historic buildings, streets, and waterways, give it its present-day character.</p> <p>Swale's extensive rural areas stretch from Hartlip in the west to Dunkirk in the east, Sheldwich in the south to Shellness in the north. These areas encompass an enormous diversity of settlements and landscapes. The larger villages along the main transport routes, such as Newington, Teynham, and Boughton, have a range of local facilities and services. However, smaller, more isolated settlements and hamlets like Conyer, Warden, and Throwley Forstal can be found away from the main routes.</p> <p>Over the last 20 years most of the villages and towns in Swale have experienced growth, with growth in the towns the most rapid. In the past 60 years, Kent has seen a rapid growth in its population. Now, Swale has the third largest district population in Kent and built development has similarly physically grown - in the last 10 years more employment floorspace has been built than anywhere else in the county and Swale has the fourth highest level of dwelling completions over the 10 years to 2014.</p>
<p>Working Together for a Better Borough: Corporate Plan 2020 – 2023</p> <p>N.B. The new Corporate Plan is being developed and is currently in draft form.</p>	<p>The corporate plan is the overarching statement of the council's strategic priorities for the period April 2020 to March 2023. It comprises 20 medium-term objectives categorized into four broad priorities that reflect the political aspirations and community needs of the Borough of Swale.</p> <p>Additionally, the plan takes into account the anticipated changes to the policy and fiscal context within which the council operates.</p> <p>The primary aim of the document is to ensure that the organization's resources are efficiently utilized in support of the agreed-upon priorities.</p> <p>The objectives stated therein will significantly influence the council's focus for the next few years. The plan provides a broad direction of travel rather than a detailed list of actions, with emphasis on areas of change and development instead of continuity.</p> <p>The four broad priorities and their respective objectives are as follows:</p> <p>Priority 1: Building the right homes in the right places and supporting quality jobs for all</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the local plan review to ensure that future housing delivery is more closely aligned to the borough's ability and capacity to provide for genuine sustainable housing needs, in terms of location, type and tenure, and that the impact of housing growth is offset through improved physical, environmental, social and health infrastructure. • Work with registered providers, developers, and community-led housing groups to pursue all viable opportunities for increasing the supply of affordable and social housing across the borough and ensure that standards in the private rented sector are robustly enforced.

Policy/ Strategy/ Other	Relevant Factors
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the development and innovation of high-quality sustainable housing on brownfield old land in urban centres, with an appropriate range of tenure options, improving the appearance, biodiversity, and economic and environmental sustainability of our towns. • Develop a new economic improvement strategy to diversify the borough's economy, expand the range of employment opportunities, and boost wages so that payment of the UK living wage becomes the norm. • Support residents and businesses to improve the borough's vocational skill levels, and vigorously pursue all opportunities to enhance the provision and accessibility of further and higher education for Swale residents at all stages of their careers. • Implement the visitor economy framework to increase investment, address new visitor demands and grow the value of the sector to the Swale economy. <p>Priority 2: Investing in our environment and responding positively to global challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a coherent strategy to address climate and ecological emergencies, aiming for carbon neutrality in the council's own operations by 2025 and in the whole borough by 2030, and pursue all opportunities to enhance biodiversity across the borough. • Encourage active travel and reduced car use, including through the permeability of new developments, and work with partners to address air quality issues. • Establish a special projects fund to provide much-needed investment in the borough's public realm and open spaces. • Recognise and support our local heritage to give people pride in the place they live and boost the local tourism industry. • Work towards a cleaner borough where recycling remains a focus and ensure that the council acts as an exemplar environmental steward, making space for nature wherever possible. <p>Priority 3: Tackling deprivation and creating equal opportunities for everyone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake targeted interventions to identify our most disadvantaged families and communities, improve our understanding of the issues they face, and develop new ways of working to reduce social exclusion and enhance opportunities and quality of life. • Reduce health inequality by developing more productive relationships with local health partners and making health and wellbeing a central consideration in all relevant council decision-making, recognising especially the link between housing and health. • Develop a communitarian approach to partnership working based on shared objectives with like-minded agencies in the voluntary and community sectors. • Ensure that the council plays a proactive role in reducing crime and antisocial behaviour, including through the modernisation of CCTV provision. • Promote wellbeing and enjoyment of life by signposting and encouraging a wide range of sporting, cultural and other leisure activities appropriate and accessible to each age group.

Policy/ Strategy/ Other	Relevant Factors
	<p>Priority 4: Renewing local democracy and making the council fit for the future</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the council's constitution to diffuse decision-making power more widely among elected members and improve the transparency, responsiveness and public accountability of that decision-making. • Ensure that all elected members are appropriately supported to lead and improve the council's engagement with its disparate geographical and demographic communities and encourage especially the participation of underrepresented groups in the democratic process. • Develop a cross-departmental corporate ethos focused on the priorities in this plan and embed the Swale Manager programme to ensure a consistent understanding of the council's expectations of all managers. • Continue to reduce dependence on government-controlled funding sources and support staff to find innovative ways to ensure other objectives can be met in the context of diminished resources.
<p>Bearing Fruits Swale Local Plan – 2031 (adopted July 2017)</p>	<p>The Vision for Swale</p> <p><i>“It is 2031 and Swale is known by the fruits of its endeavours. We have harnessed our assets – a strategic location, diverse communities and an outstanding natural environment – and are a sustainable, flourishing place in which to live and do business, with: Sittingbourne transformed into an attractive, competitive and prosperous town, with a thriving centre that residents across the Borough are proud to use; Sheerness and Queenborough as beacons of coastal rejuvenation leading the way to success for all communities on the Isle of Sheppey; Faversham, a thriving market town and heritage destination that has grown organically; and Successful rural communities across the downs, farming plains and coast as places of innovation; nurturing enterprise, local produce and increased self-reliance.”</i></p> <p>Our core objectives are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adapt to climate change with innovation, reduced use of resources, managed risk to our communities and opportunities for biodiversity to thrive. 2. Use our coastal assets to support a strong economy and a sustainable environment. 3. Support economic success and improve community wellbeing with a network of maintained, protected and improved natural assets in town and country. 4. Conserve and enhance our historic and natural assets as a means to drive regeneration, tourism, and environmental quality and to reverse declines in their condition. 5. Strive for high quality design to bring a better quality of life, opportunities for healthy living and self-confidence to our communities. 6. Be flexible, provide choice and support sectors that can build on our strengths, diversify our economy, promote investment in skills, and develop distinct opportunities. This is in pursuit of greener and pioneering technologies. 7. Bring economic growth, regeneration and community development, especially to our most deprived communities. 8. Support our farming and food sectors so that they are at the forefront of increasing food security, reducing food miles and increasing local food consumption. 9. Build stronger, greener communities by providing the right housing to support demographic change.

Policy/ Strategy/ Other	Relevant Factors
	<p>10. Develop tourism and culture to support regeneration, employment growth, communities and environmental management. 11. Improve prosperity and environmental quality with efficient and sustainable transport networks. 12. Ensure timely delivery of the services and infrastructure to support strong communities.</p> <p>Our place-based objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Re-establish Sittingbourne as the principal town with investment in retail, leisure, culture and community services and further education, within new and improved green spaces and streets. 2. Reinforce Sheppey's uniqueness by ensuring change: support Sheerness as its commercial and service focus; strengthen and integrate communities at Rushenden and Queenborough and Minster and Halfway; manage coastal and heritage assets; modernise leisure and tourism industries; and support isolated communities. 3. Sustain Faversham's role and character as an historic market town serving residents, visitors and a wider area with a range of businesses and services that increase diversity and interest. 4. Address identified needs in our rural communities so that they are sustained in ways that also respect their scale and character.
<p>Swale Green and Blue Infrastructure Draft Strategy August 2020</p>	<p>Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Swale The "Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Swale" aims to identify and recommend measures to promote a greener, healthier, more biodiverse, and prosperous Swale. The strategy also intends to provide guidance for developing policies for local planning, including strategic, site-specific, and development management purposes.</p> <p>The vision of the strategy is to create a multifunctional GBI network that is biodiverse, resilient, and contributes to making Swale an attractive place to live, work, invest, and visit while also responding to the climate emergency.</p> <p>The report highlights the following seven priority themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wildlife and biodiversity 2. Recreation and active travel 3. Water resources 4. Trees and woodlands 5. Landscape character 6. Health and wellbeing 7. Growing the visitor economy
<p>Active Lives Framework 2017 – 2022 Towards an Active Swale</p>	<p>Sport and Physical Activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Lives survey (Jan 2017) classifies 23.9% of adults in Swale as 'Inactive' doing less than 30 minutes in a week; this is above the national average of 22%. • Active Lives survey (Jan 2017) classifies 14.7% of adults in Swale as 'Insufficiently Active' taking part in 30-149 mins of activity compared to 12.6% Nationally; 61.4% are classified as 'Active' taking part in 150+ of activity compared nationally with 65.4%.

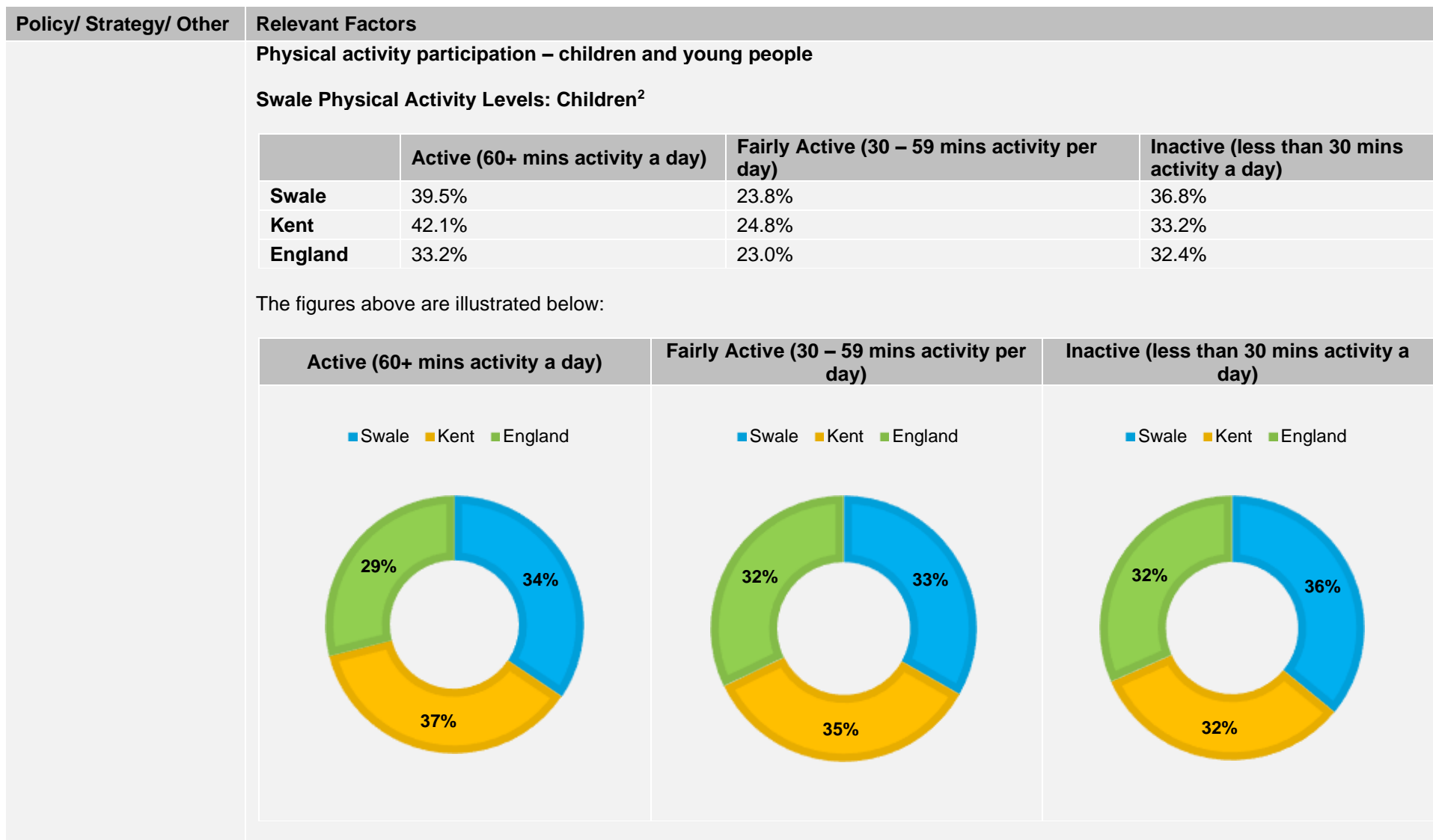
Policy/ Strategy/ Other	Relevant Factors
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low cost, subsidised activities and family-friendly activities are the most popularly cited when asking for views on how to get more people active. <p>Health and well being</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant health inequalities exist, with a 11.7-year difference in life expectancy between the two ends of the deprivation scale. • In 2014 the adult obesity rates in Swale CCG (Sheppey and Sittingbourne) was 30.9% with Canterbury and Coastal Kent CCG (which incorporates Faversham) at 24.1%, with the England figure at 24.1%. The worst figure for a CCG area in England was 30.9% • 69% adults have excess weight, worse than the national average of 64.8%. • 17.1% of children are obese, which is slightly better than the national average of 19.1%. • Barriers to participation include lack of information of what is available, time constraints, cost, access, travel constraints, childcare requirements, ill health, and a lack of motivation. • Local sport profile identifies that associated Health cost of physical inactivity is over £2m.
<p>Move Together May 2023</p> <p>Active Kent and Medway</p>	<p>One in four adults are currently inactive across Kent and Medway, according to Sport England's latest Active Lives Survey, and almost one in three children and young people are not achieving the recommended 60 minutes of activity per day. In response to these stark figures, Active Kent & Medway launches 'Move Together', the new four-year countywide strategy for sport and physical activity.</p> <p>The strategy sets out how we can all work together to support those who are already active, as well as tackling the inequalities that currently prevent some of us from enjoying the benefits that moving more in our everyday lives can bring to our physical and mental wellbeing.</p> <p>As highlighted in the latest Active Lives reports, activity levels for both adults and children have bounced back to pre-pandemic levels. However, there is still more to be done in ensuring the barriers that certain groups face to being active are significantly reduced, if not removed, so that everyone can enjoy the benefits of sport and being active.</p> <p>The Move Together strategy recognises that physical activity is crucial for overall wellbeing, and it aims to make it easier for everyone to lead a more active lifestyle. It seeks to create an environment that encourages and supports sport and physical activity, regardless of a person's age, background, or ability.</p> <p>Though coordinated by Active Kent & Medway, the new four-year strategy has been developed following consultation and collaboration between community members and partners from across the county who have contributed their expertise and experience, including local authorities, public health organisations, sports clubs, leisure providers, schools, and community groups.</p>

Swale Borough Council

Built Facility Assessment and Strategy

Policy/ Strategy/ Other	Relevant Factors																																																																																															
<p>Sport England: Active Lives Local Picture – Kent Sport 2020-2021 October 2021</p>	<p>This study aimed to measure activity levels among individuals aged 16 and above in England. The results revealed that 60% of the population engages in physical activity for at least 2.5 hours per week, while 27.5% of the population does not exercise for more than 30 minutes per week.</p> <p>In Kent and Medway, 61.2% are active while 27.3% are inactive. Further, the Kent Active Partnership reported that the total number of inactive people was 409,700, while the population count of active people was 917,000.</p> <p>To assess changes in behaviour, Sport England has developed the Active Lives Survey, which provides detailed insight into the physical activity habits of Kent residents. The Active Lives Survey measures a broad range of activities, including walking, cycling for travel, dance, and fitness activities over a twelve-month period.</p> <p>The Active Lives Survey data can vary on a year-on-year basis (such as the unprecedented vagaries in participation as noted during the global pandemic) but ideally seeing a direction of travel that shows trends towards increasing the percentage of Active people and reducing the percentage of Inactive people overall is positive. The definition of each is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active: at least 150 minutes a week • Fairly active: 30 – 149 minutes per week • Inactive: less than 30 minutes a week (by percentage) <p>According to the Sport England Active Lives adult survey, 61.2% of the population in Kent and Medway are active, with the highest percentage (70.5%) found in Tunbridge Wells and the lowest percentage (17.9%) found in Swale.</p>																																																																																															
	<p>Sport England's Active Lives Adult survey measures the activity levels of adults aged 16+ in England. Nationally, 60.9% of the population take part in physical activity for at least 150 minutes per week (at a moderate intensity), with 27.5% doing less than 30 minutes activity per week. In Kent and Medway, 61.2% of the population are active (highest 70.5% - Tunbridge Wells, lowest 56.2% - Dartford), while 27.3% are inactive (highest 32.4% - Thanet, lowest 17.9% - Tunbridge Wells).</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2"></th> <th colspan="3">Activity Levels</th> <th colspan="2">Population</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Inactive < 30 mins per week</th> <th>Fairly active 30-149 mins per week</th> <th>Active 150+ mins per week</th> <th>Inactive</th> <th>Active</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Kent</td> <td>27.3% (27.3%)</td> <td>10.9% (12.7%)</td> <td>61.8% (59.9%)</td> <td>348,700 (316,500)</td> <td>790,900 (755,800)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ashford</td> <td>27.2% (27.3%)</td> <td>13.2% (10.1%)</td> <td>59.7% (62.7%)</td> <td>28,300 (26,900)</td> <td>62,100 (61,900)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Canterbury</td> <td>23.2% (22.8%)</td> <td>10.2% (12.7%)</td> <td>66.5% (64.5%)</td> <td>32,600 (34,700)</td> <td>93,300 (83,400)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dartford</td> <td>28.4% (27.3%)</td> <td>15.4% (12.1%)</td> <td>56.2% (61.4%)</td> <td>25,00 (22,900)</td> <td>49,400 (49,600)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dover</td> <td>28.0% (24.3%)</td> <td>8.7% (11.8%)</td> <td>63.3% (63.9%)</td> <td>27,300 (22,700)</td> <td>61,800 (57,700)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grovesham</td> <td>31.1% (29.0%)</td> <td>11.2% (12.2%)</td> <td>57.7% (58.9%)</td> <td>26,100 (21,900)</td> <td>48,400 (50,500)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Maidstone</td> <td>29.8% (29.8%)</td> <td>10.5% (12.6%)</td> <td>59.8% (61.6%)</td> <td>41,200 (34,900)</td> <td>82,700 (81,800)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Medway</td> <td>27.7% (27.8%)</td> <td>15.1% (12.0%)</td> <td>57.3% (57.7%)</td> <td>60,900 (61,200)</td> <td>126,200 (131,600)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sevenoaks</td> <td>27.1% (28.7%)</td> <td>12.0% (18.1%)</td> <td>60.9% (52.2%)</td> <td>26,300 (17,800)</td> <td>58,900 (59,800)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Folkestone & Hythe</td> <td>29.5% (27.8%)</td> <td>12.2% (10.8%)</td> <td>58.3% (59.4%)</td> <td>27,800 (27,200)</td> <td>55,000 (54,200)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Swale</td> <td>29.9% (28.8%)</td> <td>7.9% (12.9%)</td> <td>62.2% (57.3%)</td> <td>35,900 (32,900)</td> <td>74,700 (63,400)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Thanet</td> <td>32.4% (32.7%)</td> <td>9.2% (10.7%)</td> <td>58.4% (56.7%)</td> <td>37,100 (37,100)</td> <td>67,100 (64,700)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tonbridge & Malling</td> <td>22.9% (22.9%)</td> <td>10.6% (12.9%)</td> <td>66.5% (66.3%)</td> <td>24,100 (20,900)</td> <td>70,200 (66,400)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tunbridge Wells</td> <td>17.9% (21.3%)</td> <td>11.7% (13.0%)</td> <td>70.5% (65.7%)</td> <td>17,000 (18,900)</td> <td>66,900 (61,400)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>*Figures in brackets indicate 2015/16 baseline levels</p>		Activity Levels			Population		Inactive < 30 mins per week	Fairly active 30-149 mins per week	Active 150+ mins per week	Inactive	Active	Kent	27.3% (27.3%)	10.9% (12.7%)	61.8% (59.9%)	348,700 (316,500)	790,900 (755,800)	Ashford	27.2% (27.3%)	13.2% (10.1%)	59.7% (62.7%)	28,300 (26,900)	62,100 (61,900)	Canterbury	23.2% (22.8%)	10.2% (12.7%)	66.5% (64.5%)	32,600 (34,700)	93,300 (83,400)	Dartford	28.4% (27.3%)	15.4% (12.1%)	56.2% (61.4%)	25,00 (22,900)	49,400 (49,600)	Dover	28.0% (24.3%)	8.7% (11.8%)	63.3% (63.9%)	27,300 (22,700)	61,800 (57,700)	Grovesham	31.1% (29.0%)	11.2% (12.2%)	57.7% (58.9%)	26,100 (21,900)	48,400 (50,500)	Maidstone	29.8% (29.8%)	10.5% (12.6%)	59.8% (61.6%)	41,200 (34,900)	82,700 (81,800)	Medway	27.7% (27.8%)	15.1% (12.0%)	57.3% (57.7%)	60,900 (61,200)	126,200 (131,600)	Sevenoaks	27.1% (28.7%)	12.0% (18.1%)	60.9% (52.2%)	26,300 (17,800)	58,900 (59,800)	Folkestone & Hythe	29.5% (27.8%)	12.2% (10.8%)	58.3% (59.4%)	27,800 (27,200)	55,000 (54,200)	Swale	29.9% (28.8%)	7.9% (12.9%)	62.2% (57.3%)	35,900 (32,900)	74,700 (63,400)	Thanet	32.4% (32.7%)	9.2% (10.7%)	58.4% (56.7%)	37,100 (37,100)	67,100 (64,700)	Tonbridge & Malling	22.9% (22.9%)	10.6% (12.9%)	66.5% (66.3%)	24,100 (20,900)	70,200 (66,400)	Tunbridge Wells	17.9% (21.3%)	11.7% (13.0%)	70.5% (65.7%)	17,000 (18,900)	66,900 (61,400)
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Tonbridge & Malling	22.9% (22.9%)	10.6% (12.9%)	66.5% (66.3%)	24,100 (20,900)	70,200 (66,400)																																																																																											
Tunbridge Wells	17.9% (21.3%)	11.7% (13.0%)	70.5% (65.7%)	17,000 (18,900)	66,900 (61,400)																																																																																											

Policy/ Strategy/ Other	Relevant Factors																			
	<p>The Active Lives Survey results for 2020-2021 in Kent and districts show that 62.2% (74,700 people) of Swale's residents were active, while 29.9% (35,900) were defined as inactive. Comparing these figures with the baseline data from 2015/16 shows a marginally worsening trend in the number of inactive people (an increase of 1%) but a positive increase in the number of active people by 5%.</p>																			
<p>Sports England Active Lives Data Nov 21 – Nov 22</p>	<p>Swale Physical Activity Levels Adult Data</p>																			
		<p>Active (more than 150 mins per week) %</p>	<p>Fairly Active (30 – 149 Mins per week) %</p>	<p>Inactive (less than 30 mins per week) %</p>																
	<p>Swale</p>	<p>58.1</p>	<p>14.1</p>	<p>27.8</p>																
	<p>Kent</p>	<p>63.8</p>	<p>12.0</p>	<p>24.2</p>																
	<p>England</p>	<p>63.1</p>	<p>11.1</p>	<p>25.8</p>																
	<p>Adult inactivity levels in Swale are higher than both the region and England average. There are also fewer adults in Swale who participate in more than 150 minutes of physical activity per week, compared to both the region and England average. The figures above are illustrated below:</p>																			
	<p>Active (more than 150 mins per week) %</p>	<p>Fairly Active (30 – 149 Mins per week) %</p>	<p>Inactive (less than 30 mins per week) %</p>																	
	<table border="1" data-bbox="539 917 2112 1466"> <caption>Physical Activity Levels Comparison</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Swale (%)</th> <th>Kent (%)</th> <th>England (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Active (more than 150 mins per week)</td> <td>31%</td> <td>35%</td> <td>34%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fairly Active (30 – 149 Mins per week)</td> <td>38%</td> <td>32%</td> <td>30%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Inactive (less than 30 mins per week)</td> <td>36%</td> <td>31%</td> <td>33%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Category	Swale (%)	Kent (%)	England (%)	Active (more than 150 mins per week)	31%	35%	34%	Fairly Active (30 – 149 Mins per week)	38%	32%	30%	Inactive (less than 30 mins per week)	36%	31%	33%
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² Source: Sport England Active Lives Data2020 - 2021

Policy/ Strategy/ Other	Relevant Factors
	<p>Indoors participation rates for children and young people in Swale are higher when compared regionally and nationally according to the Active Lives data Academic Year 2021. Inactivity levels are 1.9% lower than the national average. It should be noted that no data for Swale was available for the academic year 2021 – 2022. No child data available for Swale.</p>
<p>Swale Health and Wellbeing Improvement Plan 2020 – 2023</p>	<p>Our goal is to offer efficient and effective member services that provide value for money. Additionally, we aim to enhance the quality of life in Kent by supporting our member councils in planning, transport, health and wellbeing, and partnership working. These efforts contribute to sustainability and promote the vital role local councils play in their communities.</p> <p>The focus remains on Place, Prosperity, People, and Performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place – Continued focus on our vision to help enable all our member councils to deliver quality services to Kent's communities and contribute to a high quality of life. • Prosperity – To promote the growing and important role that local councils provide to their communities across Kent. • People – To provide the best support, legal advice, guidance and training to help our member councils develop their knowledge to deliver quality services to their communities. • Performance – To continue to deliver effective and efficient services to our member councils. <p>Community health and wellbeing grant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote community health and wellbeing, Swale Borough Council has established a grant fund of £20,000, with a maximum individual grant of £1,000. This fund aims to support community projects and organizations and contribute to the overall achievement of our objectives. <p>Kent partners compact</p> <p>The Kent Partners Compact is an agreement that outlines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A set of values, principles and commitments that helps to work together to achieve the most effective results. • Aims to improve relations, planning and services, by drawing on the expertise of local groups and commissioning them to deliver public services. This is based on trust and mutual goodwill.
<p>Kent Joint Strategic Needs Assessment – 2022</p>	<p>This report outlines some of the key health and wellbeing issues in Kent, with a focus on three different groups:</p>

Policy/ Strategy/ Other	Relevant Factors
	<p>Starting well – children & families</p> <p>This section highlights the critical issues affecting the health and wellbeing of children and families in Kent. These include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population • Children in care • Attainment • Child poverty • Teenage pregnancy • Overweight & obesity • Smoking in pregnancy <p>Living well – working age</p> <p>The next section of the report focuses on the working-age population and identifies some key concerns that affect their health and wellbeing. These include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population (20-64) • Physical activity • Sexual Health • Mental health • Smoking • Long-term conditions • Overweight & obesity • Alcohol <p>Ageing Well – Older People</p> <p>The report covers health and wellbeing issues related to the ageing population. These include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population (65+) • Excess winter deaths • Falls and fractures • Multi-morbidity • Heart disease/stroke • Dementia

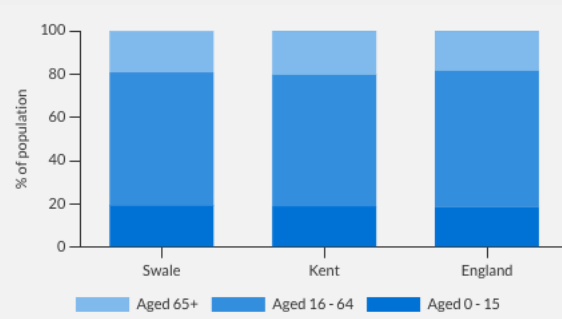
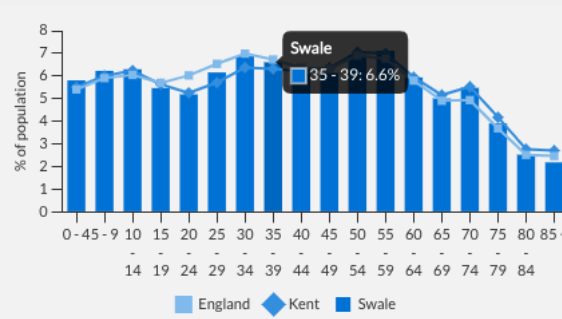
Policy/ Strategy/ Other	Relevant Factors
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of life care • Carers
Kent Joint Health and Well-Being Strategy 2021	<p>Our Vision</p> <p>To improve health and wellbeing outcomes, deliver better coordinated quality care improve the public's experience of integrated health and social care services and ensure that the individual is involved and at the heart of everything we do.</p> <p>Outcomes</p> <p>Informed by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, we aim to achieve several outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every child has the best start in life • Effective prevention of ill health by people taking greater responsibility for their health and wellbeing • The quality of life for people with long term conditions is enhanced and they have access to good quality care and support • People with mental health issues are supported to 'live well' • People with dementia are assessed and treated earlier, and are supported to 'live well' <p>The information below shows how we will apply our approaches and priorities to each of these outcome areas.</p> <p>To achieve these outcomes, we will focus on our priorities within each area while adhering to our three approaches, including person-centred care, joined-up care, and joint commissioning where appropriate. The strategy uses tri approach delivery:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated Commissioning • Integrated Provision • Person Centred <p>The key priorities enlisted in this strategy are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tackle key health issues where Kent is performing worse than the England average • Tackle health inequalities • Tackle the gaps in provision • Transform services to improve outcomes, patient experience and value for money
Swale Cycling and Walking Action Plan 2018 - 2022	<p>The aim of the associated action plan is to allow the council to support Kent County Council, Local Town and Parish Councils to respond to funding opportunities. The council will also go over improvements to the cycling and walking network.</p>

Policy/ Strategy/ Other	Relevant Factors
	<p>Other Council strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality action plan • Climate and Ecological - Emergency Action Plan • Draft Swale Transportation strategy • Swale green and blue infrastructure strategy • The adopted local plan and work undertaken during the current local plan review • Faversham Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan: <p>In Feb 2021 funding will be available of up to £30,000 from the special projects fund to commission.</p>
<p>Swale Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan Draft Published 20 August 2020</p>	<p>The council aims to achieve to be carbon neutral by 2025 and extend it to the borough by 2030, focusing on various aspects such as transportation, air quality, buildings, ecology and biodiversity, resource consumption, and waste management. The approval of this comprehensive plan will provide the council with a definite framework to persuade the government to grant them the necessary powers and funding.</p>

Demographic Profile

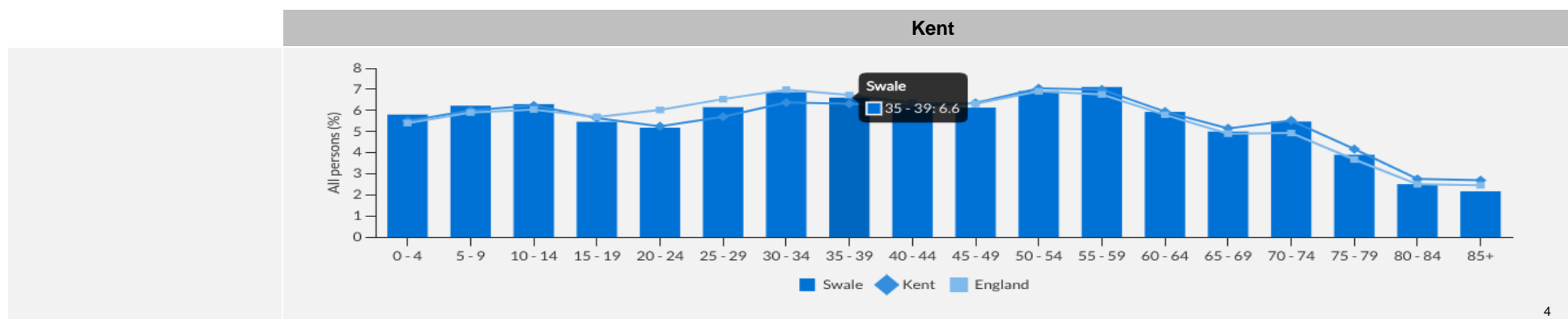
- 3.9 Swale is the bridging point between north and east Kent, named after the narrow channel of tidal water between mainland Kent and the Isle of Sheppey. It is a local government district with borough status in Kent, England and is bounded by Medway to the west, Canterbury to the east, Ashford to the south and Maidstone to the southwest. Swale is predominantly a rural district.
- 3.10 The current and future population profile of Swale and the locations of growth are important to understand in relation to planning for the future provision of sport and physical activity.
- 3.11 According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) mid-year estimates for 2021, the estimated population of Swale is around 151,965 people.
- 3.12 Swale is the 26th least densely populated of the South East's local authority areas with around 3 people living on each football pitch-sized area of land. This compares with Tower Hamlets in London, which has the most densely populated area with the equivalent of 112 people per pitch. At the other end of the scale, the amount of land in Eden, Cumbria works out at around 5 pitches per person.
- 3.13 49.7% of the population in Swale is male and 50.3% is female. Table 4 shows the population estimates for all persons in Kent by 5-year age groups for 2021 and 2040.

Table 3: Population estimates for all persons for 2021 and 2040 for Kent

	Kent			
	2021	2040	Increase no.	Increase %
Population Total	1,609,182	1,788,261	179,079	10%
Population Profile	<p>Population estimates are produced using a variety of data sources and statistical models, including some statistical disclosure control methods. These estimates do not refer to specific individuals, and precautions are taken to ensure privacy.</p> <p>The estimated resident population of an area includes all those people who usually live there, regardless of nationality. International migrants who stay in the UK for at least a year are included in the usually resident population, while emigrants who stay outside the UK for at least a year are excluded. Armed forces deployed outside the UK are not counted, whereas students are considered to be usually resident at their term-time address.</p> <p>152,223 Total population estimate (2021)</p> <p>75,552 (49.6%) Male population estimate (2021)</p> <p>76,670 (50.4%) Female population estimate (2021)</p> <p>Estimates by broad age group, all persons</p>			
Sport England Area				
Report Swale				
	<p>Estimates by broad age group, all persons</p> 		<p>Estimates by 5-year age group, all persons</p> 	

3

³ Date 2021 Source ONS Population estimates for all persons by 5-year age group 2021



3.14 In terms of age distribution, Swale has a relatively balanced demographic profile. According to the ONS, the age breakdown of Swale is as follows:

- 0-17 years: 20.9%
- 18-64 years: 61.3%
- 65+ years: 17.8%

3.15 Between the last two censuses (held in 2011 and 2021), the population of Swale increased by 11.7%, from around 135,800 in 2011 to approximately 151,965 in 2021. Nearby areas like Maidstone and Ashford have seen their populations increase by around 13.3% and 12.5%, respectively, while others such as Medway saw an increase of 6.0% and Canterbury saw smaller growth (4.1%).

3.16 Over the last 20 years most of the villages and towns in Swale have experienced growth, with growth in the towns the most rapid. Over the last 60 years population growth has been amongst the most rapid in Kent. Now, Swale has the third largest district population in Kent and built development has similarly physically grown - in the last 10 years more employment floorspace has been built than anywhere else in the county.

3.17 The Swale Local Plan includes housing allocations and estimated population growth of 44,629 from 151,965 in 2021 to a projected 196,594 in 2038.

3.18 The population in Swale is expected to increase overall by 12.1% between 2021 and 2040 with significant increases in over 65 years age and age band 45-49 years.

⁴ Date: 2020 Source: ONS

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Table 4: Comparison of the Swale population make up from 2021 census estimates to 2040 census estimates⁵

Age Group	2021 census numbers	2040 predicted numbers	Difference in Number	Difference in Percentage
00-04	8,955	9,678	723	7.5%
05-09	10,053	9,799	-254	-2.5%
10-14	10,130	9,977	-153	-1.5%
15-19	8,441	9,708	1,267	13.1%
20-24	7,968	8,908	940	10.6%
25-29	9,280	10,238	958	9.4%
30-34	9,635	10,316	681	6.6%
35-39	9,667	9,693	26	0.3%
40-44	9,245	10,638	1,393	13.1%
45-49	9,304	11,458	2,154	18.8%
50-54	10,767	11,654	887	7.6%
55-59	11,015	11,299	284	2.5%
60-64	9,255	10,218	963	9.4%
65-69	7,914	10,011	2,097	21%
70-74	8,457	10,142	1,685	16.6%
75-79	6,147	8,737	2,590	29.6%
80-84	3,934	6,103	2,169	35.5%
85-89	2,217	3,697	1,480	40.0%
90+	1,212	2,505	1,293	51.6%
Total	153,596	174,778	21,182	12.1%

⁵ONS census 2021

3.19 The figure below illustrates the impact of the increase in those aged 60+

Figure 2: Impact of the population increase in those aged 60+

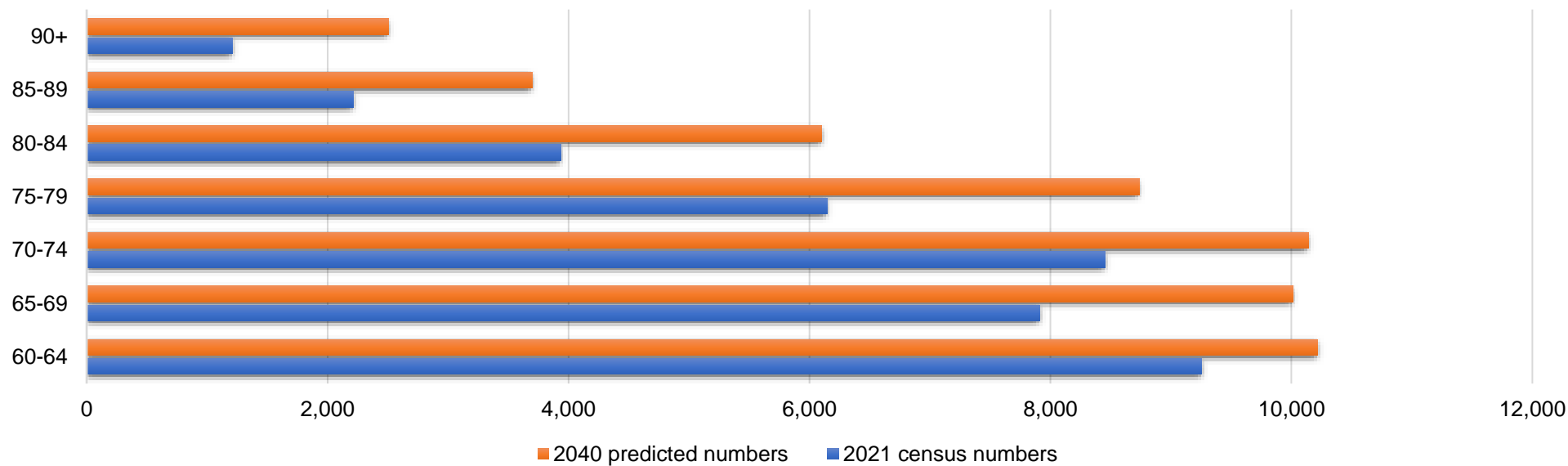


Table 5: Swale Population Projections⁶

Year	Swale
2021	151,965
2026	160,551
2031	166,075
2036	170,964
2040	174,777

⁶ Source: ONS Census 2021 nomisweb.co.uk

Table 6: Projected population to 2040 for calculation of future leisure facility provision in Swale

Modelled scenarios	Population ONS 2021	Predicted population 2040 (ONS)	Total increase
Population	151,965	174,777	23,177

Ethnicity

3.20 Table 7 shows the ethnicity make up of Swale based on the 2021 Census

Table 7: Swale Ethnic Profile

Ethnicity:

The ethnicity of the population is also reported, with 96.6% UK nationals and 4.1% non-UK nationals in the area. In comparison to the percentages for Kent (93.5% UK nationals and 6.5% non-UK nationals) and England (90.3% UK nationals and 9.7% non-UK nationals), Swale has a relatively lower percentage of non-UK nationals.

Population by nationality – UK and non-UK



Table 8: Ethnicity Data Comparison

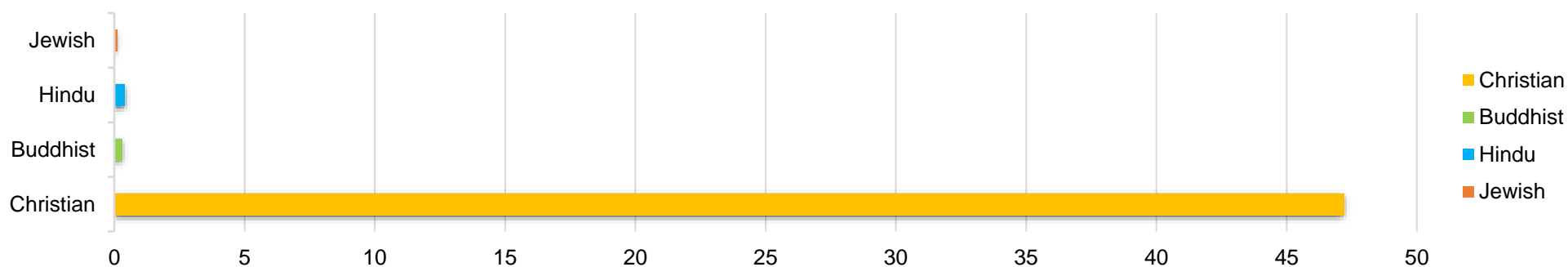
Population	Swale		Kent		England
	Count	%	Count	%	Count
UK Nationals	143,000	96.6%	1,463,000	93.5%	50,450,000
Non-UK Nationals	6,000	4.1%	101,000	6.5%	5,422,000

Table 9: Swale Ethnicity ⁷

	Swale %
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	1.5%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	2.3%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	1.8%
Other ethnic group	0.5%
White British	93.8%

3.21 No issues have been identified nor raised about the range of different religious beliefs in the borough impacting on access to facilities.

Figure 3: Religious beliefs in Swale



⁷ Source: ONS 2021

Swale Health and Economic Profile

- 3.22 The health of people living in Swale Borough is influenced by various factors, including lifestyle, socio-economic status, access to healthcare, and environmental factors.
- 3.23 The health of people in Swale is varied compared with the England average. About 21% (5,700) of children live in low-income families. Life expectancy for both men and women are lower than the England average.
- 3.24 Life expectancy is 9.4 years lower for men and 4.4 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Swale than in the least deprived areas.
- 3.25 According to ONS 2021 – Census, the data showed 5.7% people’s health to be bad (4.4%) or very bad (1.3%).
- 3.26 The same data also indicated 8.4% residents to be disabled under the Equality Act with day-to-day activities limited to a lot while 11.2% residents to be disabled yet day-to-day activities limited a little and 7.3% residents having long-term physical or mental health condition, but day-to-day activities not limited.

Child health

- 3.27 In Year 6, 19.8% (305) of children are classified as obese. The rate of alcohol-specific hospital stays among those under 18 is 39*. This represents 13 stays per year. Levels of teenage pregnancy, GCSE attainment, breastfeeding initiation and smoking at time of delivery are worse than the England average.

Adult health

- 3.28 The rate of alcohol-related harm hospital stays is 492*, better than the average for England. This represents 692 stays per year. The rate of self-harm hospital stays is 134*, better than the average for England. This represents 188 stays per year. Estimated levels of adult excess weight are worse than the England average. The rate of hip fractures is worse than average. Rates of sexually transmitted infections and TB are better than average. Rates of statutory homelessness and violent crime are worse than average.
- 3.29 According to Public Health England's (PHE) 2021 Health Profile for Swale, some of the key health indicators for the area include:
- **Life expectancy:** The life expectancy for both males and females in Swale is slightly lower than the national average, with males having a life expectancy of 79 years and females having a life expectancy of 83 years.
 - **Mortality rates:** The mortality rate in Swale is higher than the national average, with a higher-than-average rate of deaths from circulatory diseases, respiratory diseases, and cancer.

- **Obesity:** The prevalence of obesity among adults in Swale is higher than the national average, with approximately 66% of adults classified as overweight or obese.
- **Smoking:** The rate of smoking in Swale is higher than the national average, with approximately 18% of adults smoking.
- **Alcohol:** The rate of alcohol-related hospital admissions in Swale is higher than the national average, with approximately 430 alcohol-related admissions per 100,000 population.

3.30 It is important to note that these health indicators are influenced by a variety of factors, including lifestyle, socio-economic status, and access to healthcare, and are not representative of the entire population of Swale. The local council and health organizations are working to address these health issues through various public health initiatives, including smoking cessation programs, healthy eating campaigns, and physical activity programs.

Socio-Economic Profile: Employment

3.31 The socio-economic profile of SBC is diverse, with a range of different socio-economic groups living in the district. According to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019, which measures the level of deprivation across various domains in England, Swale is ranked 94th out of 317 districts in England in terms of deprivation, with a score of 24.19 out of 100 (where a higher score indicates a higher level of deprivation).

3.32 The IMD 2019 report shows that SBC has pockets of deprivation in certain areas, particularly in parts of Sheerness and Sittingbourne. In terms of income deprivation, Swale is ranked 82nd out of 317 districts in England, with a score of 23.27 out of 100. The IMD also shows that Swale has a higher-than-average percentage of people who are unemployed, with 4.9% of the population claiming Jobseeker's Allowance in 2020.

3.33 In terms of education, the IMD 2019 report shows that Swale has a slightly lower than average percentage of people with higher education qualifications (NVQ level 4 and above), with 24.6% of the population holding these qualifications, compared to the national average of 27.8%.

3.34 The ONS – 2021 Census indicates that in Swale, 58.5% of the residents aged 16 years or older are economically active as against the national average of 78.4%. Of the 40.1% economically inactive, 22.5% are retired, 3.5% are students, 5.5% are looking after home or family, 4.5% are long-term sick or disabled while 4% belongs to others.⁸

3.35 There has been an increase in home working in the borough as a consequence of the pandemic. More jobs now offer a hybrid approach to working between the place of work and home.

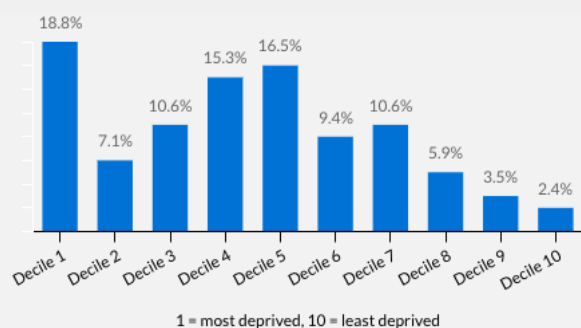
⁸ [2021 Census Profile for areas in England and Wales - Nomis \(nomisweb.co.uk\)](https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2021)

Table 10: Deprivation in Swale

Index of Multiple Deprivation – Swale 2019

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas (or neighbourhoods) in England. The IMD ranks every small area (Lower Super Output Area) in England from 1 (most deprived) to 32,844 (least deprived). When assessing larger areas, we can determine the proportion of LSOAs within each decile, where decile 1 corresponds to the most deprived 10% of LSOAs and decile 10 represents the least deprived 10% of LSOAs.

Index of Multiple Deprivation



9

There are 901 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Kent. A total of 555 remained within the same decile for IMD 2019 as they were in IMD 2015. This accounts for 62% of all Kent LSOAs.

Swale has the second highest number of LSOAs to remain within the 10% most deprived LSOAs for the IMD 2019 with 14. This accounts for 16% of all LSOAs in Swale.

Swale is ranked as the second most deprived local authority in Kent across all summary measures. The area along the coast near Beach Road, Sheerness is the most deprived area of Kent. It is also the 48th most deprived area in England.

The key issues for Swale outlined in the indices of multiple deprivation (2019) show:

Swale is ranked as the second most deprived local authority in Kent across all summary measures with 31% within the top 10% most deprived.

Swale has the second highest number of LSOAs to remain within the 10% most deprived LSOAs for the IMD 2015 and the IMD 2019 with 14. This accounts for 16% of all LSOAs in Swale.

The majority of these areas are on the Isle of Sheppey, though there is a different pattern of deprivation in the Eastern part of the island compared to the West (Sheerness, Queenborough, Rushenden). There is also some deprivation in the town of Sittingbourne.

⁹Source: 2019 Sport England

Index of Multiple Deprivation – Swale 2019

Of the 41 Kent LSOAs that remained in the 10% most deprived LSOAs for the IMD 2015 and the IMD 2019 the majority are in Thanet and Swale. Four local authorities have experienced an increase in the number of LSOAs within the most deprived decile including Swale with 2.

Swale is ranked as the second most deprived local authority in Kent across all summary measures. Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells rank as the two least deprived local authorities.

The most deprived LSOAs by IMD 2019 in Kent:

- **Swale 001A - Sheerness ranks number 1 out of 902 LSOAs in Kent and ranks 48 nationally out of 32,844 LSOAs.**
- **Swale 006A – Sheppey East ranks number 6 out of 902 LSOAs in Kent and ranks 322 nationally out of 32,844 LSOAs.**
- **Swale 010C – Murston ranks number 7 out of 902 LSOAs in Kent and ranks 337 nationally out of 32,844 LSOAs.**

Investing in physical activity in these most deprived areas will have most impact on both reducing inactivity and health inequalities.

Future Development in the Borough

- 3.36 Future development within the borough will depend on what and where housing developments are built. The provision of leisure facilities will need to meet the demands of any increase in population.

Growth and Development in Swale

- 3.37 As per the Office for National Statistics Census 2021 data, the future population growth in Swale is as follows:

- 2011-21 15,900 persons (135,800 to 151,700, 11.7% increase in total higher than the national average of 6.6%, 1,590 people per annum) ¹⁰

- 3.38 SNPP 2018 shows Swale's future population growth as follows:

- 2023-40 18,151 persons (156,626 to 174,777, 10.3% increase in total, 1067 persons p.a.)
- 2019-40 24,492 persons (150,285 to 174,777, 14% increase in total, 1166 persons p.a.)

¹⁰ [Swale population change, Census 2021 – ONS](#)

3.39 The SBC Emerging Local Plan estimates a housing need of dwellings per annum for the period 2021 through to 2038. This equates to a population growth of 44,629, based on there being 2.3 occupants per dwelling.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charge

3.40 CIL was introduced by the Planning Act 2008 as a tool which local authorities can choose to charge on new development within its area, when it is viable to do so. The money raised by the levy helps to provide funds to assist in the delivery of a wide range of infrastructure and support development through financial contributions from certain viable types of development. Although CIL can make a contribution to bridging the infrastructure funding gap, other funding sources are still necessary.

3.41 The CIL charge is based on a calculation related to £'s per m² of net additional floorspace and is payable on 'buildings that people normally go into'. The charge applies to development of 100 m² or more, or the creation of a single dwelling, even if under 100 m². There are a number of exemptions to this; including affordable housing, self-build housing and Starter Homes.

3.42 Councils wanting to use CIL will have to prepare a charging schedule which is then examined by the Government prior to its adoption by the Council. Developers will continue to make payments called Section 106 agreements, but councils won't be able to pool the contributions of more than five agreements to fund a single project.

3.43 Policy CP 1: Building a strong, competitive economy supports the use of development funding through the use of CIL. SBC supports the use of development funding through the use of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or S106. SBC will seek to plug significant gaps in transport infrastructure funding through the use of the Community Infrastructure Levy or S106. At present the Council has not implemented CIL and it is not being considered as part of the Local Plan Review at this time.

3.44 Across significant areas of the Borough, the current viability situation indicates financial limits to the amount of CIL (and Section 106 Agreements) that can be charged, and this means some prioritising of infrastructure provision. For CIL, such priorities can be reflected in what is called a Regulation 123 list. This can help ensure provision in a timely manner and assist in leveraging in other sources of funding.

3.45 In cases where Bearing Fruits 2031: The Swale Borough Local Plan 2017 Section S103 Core planning policies five abnormal costs or other issues significantly challenge the ability of development to contribute to these matters via Section 106 Agreements, the implementation and delivery plan in Chapter 8 indicates the priorities for developer contributions for the first five years of the Local Plan.

3.46 They include:

- Transport - given those matters needed to unlock growth for the remaining period of the Local Plan.
- Education - given the forecast need for Sittingbourne, Queenborough-Rushenden and Faversham.

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- Social care - given the forecast rising proportion of older persons and demands arising from forecast increases in those with specialist needs. These issues have additional concerns for Swale given that parts of the Borough are among the most deprived in England; and
- Primary health care - given the forecast need for increased capacity in the Borough.

4. National Strategic Policy and Context

Introduction

- 4.1 There are a number of key National and Local strategies and policies which inform and influence the development of this BFS. The majority of the national documents are summarised in Appendix 1, Sport, and Physical Activity National Context, but the main ones are highlighted below. These national policies inform the approach to current and future provision of sports facilities, linked to health improvement, increased participation, and the appropriate levels of provision of facilities to meet Local needs. From a planning perspective, the national agenda makes the link between national planning policy, a Local Plan and population growth at local level, and the need to plan for increased demands for infrastructure and provision, linked to Sport England's priorities of Protect, Enhance and Provide.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 4.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England. An updated version was published on 19 December 2023 (replacing the previous September 2023 version) The NPPF states that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. The NPPF sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It sets out the government's vision for achieving healthy, inclusive and safe places.
- 4.3 Paragraph 23 of the NPPF states that strategic policies should provide a clear strategy for bringing sufficient land forward, at a sufficient rate, to address objectively assessed needs over the plan period. This should include planning for and allocating sufficient sites to deliver strategic priorities of the area.
- 4.4 The NPPF requires that Local Planning Authorities (LPA) ensure that their Local Plans are based on up-to-date and relevant evidence. This should be adequate and proportionate, focused tightly on supporting and justifying the policies concerned, and take into account relevant market signals (NPPF, Para. 31).
- 4.5 Paragraph 96(a) seeks policies which:

'...promote social interaction, including providing opportunities for meeting between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other...'

- 4.6 The revised NPPF has increased emphasis in relation to health and wellbeing. For example, the increased importance of planning policies and decisions aiming to achieve healthy, inclusive, and safe places (para. 96a-c). These provide guidance on planning positively for provision and use of community facilities (including sports venues) and the development of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all sections of the community.
- 4.7 Paragraph 102 of the NPPF emphasises the need for Local Plans to deliver the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services a community needs. In doing so, policies should:
- plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;
 - take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community;
 - guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community’s ability to meet its day-to-day needs;
 - ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, and economic development
- 4.8 Paragraph 102 outlines the planning policies for the provision and protection of sport and recreation facilities:

“Access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate”.

- 4.9 Paragraph 103 of the NPPF specifies that:

Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

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

- 4.10 Sport England is a statutory consultee on all planning applications affecting playing fields used in the last 5 years, and a consultee on other applications: it looks to improve the quality, access and management of sports facilities as well as investing in new facilities to meet unsatisfied demand. Sport England requires local authorities to have an up-to date assessment of sports facility needs and an associated strategy including a recommendation that the evidence base is regularly reviewed to keep it up to date and renewed at least every five years.
- 4.11 The key drivers for the production of the strategy as advocated by Sport England are to protect, enhance and provide sports facilities, as follows:
- **Protect**
 - To provide evidence to inform policy and specifically to support Site Allocations and Development Management Policies which will protect sports facilities and their use by the community, irrespective of ownership;
 - **Enhance**
 - To ensure that sports facilities are effectively managed and maintained and that best uses are made of existing resources - whether facilities, expertise and/or personnel to improve and enhance existing provision – particularly in the light of pressure on Local authority budgets; and
 - **Provide**
 - To provide evidence to help secure external funding for new facilities and enhancements (if on the Infrastructure List) and Section 106 agreements. Sport England and the Local authority can then use the strategies developed and the guidance provided in making key planning decisions regarding facility developments in the area.

Department for Culture, Media and Sport Get Active: A strategy for the future of sport and physical activity August 2023

- 4.12 Our vision is to make sport, play and physical activity accessible, resilient, fun, and fair, for now and the years to come – for the benefit of individuals and the country. The government wants to help build a healthier nation by tackling high levels of inactivity, and by making sure that the sport and physical activity sector thrives for future generations.
- 4.13 This strategy sets out how the government will work with the sector to achieve these aims by ensuring that everyone can be active. Central to this will be a focus on establishing a lifetime habit of being physically active amongst children and young people, including playing sport, supporting the sector to be welcoming to all, and ensuring the sector is prepared for both future challenges and opportunities.
- 4.14 The government wants to help build a healthier nation by tackling high levels of inactivity, and by making sure that the sport and physical activity sector thrives for future generations. Whoever you are, or wherever you live there should be good facilities, a strong network of sports clubs that are open to you, great sport and physical activity opportunities in schools, and confidence in sport and the sector. This strategy sets out a blueprint to make that a reality.

- 4.15 The government cannot deliver the changes needed alone, so we will work alongside the sector to deliver this vision. This doesn't just include traditional sports clubs, schools, and other public sector organisations but also private sector businesses, the outdoor activity sector, and organisations with a core objective of getting the nation more active.
- 4.16 The importance of sport and physical activity on health is recognised by the strategy throughout, noting the potential savings of £7.1 billion to the NHS through prevention because of exercise. There is recognition there needs to be further joining up of physical activity provision and community health.
- 4.17 The 3 core priorities of this strategy, and what it means for the country, are:
1. **Being unapologetically ambitious in making the nation more active, whether in government or in the sport sector:**
 - Ensuring everyone is focused on increasing physical activity, meaning fewer inactive children, and narrowing the gap on inactivity where groups are not being reached, with visible progress across the country by 2030.
 - Focusing on evidence, data, and metrics
 - Setting the future direction for facilities and spaces where people can be active.
 2. **Making sport and physical activity more inclusive and welcoming for all so that everyone can have confidence that there is a place for them in sport.**
 - Helping the sector to be welcoming to all.
 - Improving how issues and concerns are dealt with in the sector.
 3. **Moving towards a more sustainable sector that is more financially resilient and robust.**
 - Supporting the sector to access additional, alternative forms of investment.
 - Working towards a more environmentally sustainable sector.
- 4.18 Delivering against these priorities will help create a more active nation and a more sustainable sport sector. These aims are complementary; greater participation, stronger governance and confidence in the sector will help to drive investment, which in turn helps to attract new audiences.
- 4.19 The Government has committed to the following targets to achieve by 2030:
- **Population wide:**
 - Over 2.5 million more active adults as defined through the Chief Medical Officers' guidelines on physical activity.
 - Over 1 million more children meeting the Chief Medical Officers' guidelines on physical activity targets to reduce disparities in participation rates.

- **Targets to reduce disparities in participation rates:**
 - 1.4 million more active adults from those in NS-SEC 6-8
 - 0.7 million more active people who identify as having 1 or more disabilities.
 - 1.5 million more active adults aged 55+.
 - 1.25 million more active women
 - 0.19 million more active Asian adults, particularly people from Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi ethnic groups.
 - 0.09 million more active black adults

- **To achieve this, the Government has committed to the following measures:**
 - A new cross-government approach for activity for all, with clear metrics and targets for the sector, held to account by a joint government and sector National Physical Activity Taskforce.
 - More investment in the sector is targeted at inactive groups, and a more strategic approach to facilities to ensure communities have access to the facilities they need.
 - A focus on all children to meet the activity levels recommended by the UK’s Chief Medical Officers, supported by a new campaign aimed at children and young people.

4.20 To accurately measure the impact of the Strategy, the Government has identified the importance of data and metrics from across the sector, as well as delivering investment where it is most needed. It has committed £300 million in investment by 2025, although this is inclusive of previously announced funding.

Table 11: Summary of Key Actions:

Participation	Tackling disparities in activity	Introduce a cross-government ambition for all children to meet the Chief Medical Officers’ guidelines on physical activity.
		Create a new cross-government National Physical Activity Taskforce to ensure that physical activity is prioritised across government.
		Sport England to set an evidence-based measure of success in Uniting the Movement around tackling disparities in sport and activity.
		Support Sport England to introduce a new partner evaluation framework which tracks the impact of sector partners and provides six-monthly reports evidencing spend and impact.
		Undertake discrete monitoring and evaluation of government funded facilities programmes, including the multi-sport grassroots facilities investment programme.
	Work with the sector to build the evidence base on potential mechanisms that could be introduced to enable the further growth of the private sector	
	Children and young people	Introduce a cross-government ambition for all children to meet the Chief Medical Officers’ guidelines on physical activity.

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		Work with arm's length bodies and commercial partners to explore what marketing interventions, including a potential new campaign, could be deployed to encourage children and young people to get children active.
		Introduce a new kitemark that measures schools' parity of provision.
		Launch a review of the sport offer in schools outside of curriculum PE.
		Continue to support active travel to and from school and Bikeability delivery in the school day.
	Active Spaces and Facilities	Deliver the investment in multi-use grassroots facilities, with over £300 million to be invested UK-wide by 2025.
		Deliver £21.9 million investment in park tennis courts by 2024.
		Develop a national vision for facilities before the end of 2023.
		Sport England to work with priority places to deliver an enhanced place-based working process.
Integrity	Elite	Continue our support of Olympic and Paralympic sport through funding of UK Sport.
	Diversity	Support efforts to tackle discrimination across the sector and holding organisations to account for failings in this area.
		Use opportunities presented through our support of hosting major sporting events, encouraging the sector to focus on the diversity of talent pathways.
	Governance	Alongside UK Sport and Sport England, we will continue to monitor the impact of the revised Governance Code on the sector, particularly in terms of the effectiveness of Diversity and Inclusion Action Plans in increasing accessibility and equality of opportunity across the sector and at all levels of sport.
	Doping and corruption	Ensure UK Anti-Doping continues to have the appropriate framework to carry out effective investigations, in line with evolving challenges.
		The UK will ratify the Macolin Convention on the Manipulation of Sports Competitions.
Complaint Handling and Dispute Resolution	Launch a call for evidence to understand current experiences, and work with the sector to decide how the prevention and handling of integrity issues could be strengthened	
Sustainability	Economic Sustainability	Support organisations to develop long-term financial sustainability by signposting to resources for building stronger governance models and sharing best practice across the sector.
		Work with the Department for Business and Trade to highlight best practice and opportunities for inward investment into the domestic sport sector, including in women's sport.
		Deliver a new economic snapshot that articulates the economic value and growth opportunities that exist within sport in the UK.

		Continue to bid and successfully host major sporting events that deliver significant socio-economic benefit across the UK – to maintain our world-leading track record in this area – and commission additional analysis of the economic value of these events.
	Technology, data and Innovation	Work with both the technology and the sport sectors to help identify innovative, inclusive digital solutions which help increase participation and activity. Support organisations to make use of existing technology and data to drive investment to the sector.
	Environmental Sustainability	Champion the importance of environmental sustainability within sport, including at major events, and encourage all levels of the sector to prioritise development of their own sustainability initiatives. Convene a forum of government departments, experts, and organisations across the sports and physical activity sector to share expertise, guidance, and support, which will help the sector to implement and deliver on its ambition to become more environmentally sustainable. Work with UK Sport, Sport England and wider stakeholders to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the current provision of sustainability initiatives across the sector, from elite to community sport. • Identify the support needed to help the sector adapt in the long-term. • Support NGBs with their sustainability ambitions. • Ensure resources, information, and best practice is freely available within the sector, to enable all organisations to know how best to start and continue their sustainability journey. • Work towards embedding environmental sustainability as a pillar of funding agreements.

Health Strategies

- 4.21 In July 2011 (updated January 2020) the four UK Chief Medical Officers (CMOs) published physical activity guidelines in a joint CMO report ‘StartActive, Stay Active’ ([UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/431422/UK_Chief_Medical_Officers_Physical_Activity_Guidelines.pdf)) covering early years, children and young people, adults and older adults. These guidelines emphasise that physical activity does not refer in its entirety just to sport; it is wholly inclusive of all forms of activity for example play, gardening, and walking. Early experiences often shape feelings, which can discourage activity, resulting in little or no interest to participate at any stage in life.
- 4.22 They draw on global evidence for the health benefits people can achieve by taking regular physical activity throughout their lives. Physical activity has an important role to play in promoting mental health and well-being by helping to address mental health problems and improving the quality of life of those experiencing mental health problems and illnesses. The benefits of physical activity can deliver cost savings for health and social care services. However, the benefits of physical activity extend further to improved productivity in the workplace, reduced congestion and pollution through active travel, and healthy development of children and young people.

- 4.23 This presents a huge challenge to educate and promote the benefits of leading an active lifestyle which can improve our mental and physical wellbeing, confidence, interpersonal skills and sense of achievement. In Swale, it is important that we promote and educate individuals and communities about this message, creating awareness of these benefits.
- 4.24 Public Health England's Everybody Active Every Day (EAED 2014) (and the review of the implementation of this strategy, March 2018 Everybody active, every day: framework for physical activity - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)) sets out the context in which long term health conditions associated with inactivity such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease contribute not only to NHS costs, but cause a greater dependency on homes, residential and nursing care.
- 4.25 The EAED campaign was launched by Public Health England to encourage people to be more physically active as a means of improving their health and well-being. The campaign aimed to make physical activity a normal part of daily life for everyone, regardless of age, ability, or background. The framework centres around 3 agendas:
- Making physical activity the social norm;
 - Making environments accessible for all; and
 - Making physical activity inclusive for everyone
- 4.26 The EAED campaign focused on four key themes: awareness, motivation, capability, and the environment. It encouraged individuals to be more aware of the benefits of physical activity, motivated to be more active, capable of incorporating physical activity into their daily routine, and provided with environments that support physical activity.
- 4.27 It recommends action in 4 areas:
1. **Creating a social movement towards an active society**, this message is that being active should not be a choice, needs to be a linking thread that unites the public sector with the voice of charities, local residents and community leaders. It is a message that should be woven into the policies, commissioning and planning decisions made every day across the country.
 2. **Activating a network of moving professionals**, this is about encouraging and supporting the hundreds of thousands of professionals and volunteers who work directly with the public every day to do what's best to make physical activity the social norm.
 3. **Creating the right spaces in active environments**, shaping the built and natural environment so that being active becomes the preferred choice.
 4. **Scaling up working interventions that make us active**, understanding what works using evidence-based approaches and such interventions to achieve large impact.

Benefits of regular physical activity ¹¹

Figure 4: Benefits of regular physical activity



4.28 The 2018 review of the Public Health Strategy recognised these specific challenges:

1. Tacking inequalities
2. Creating and active society
3. Creating active environment

¹¹ Public Health England's Everybody Active Every Day (EAED 2014)

Sport England Strategy – ‘Uniting the Movement’ 2021

4.29 Sport England have three key objectives in the new 10-year strategy. They are as follows:

1. Advocating for Movement, Sport and Physical Activity
2. Joining Forces on Five Big Issues
3. Creating the Catalysts for Change

4.30 Sport England’s vision is that everyone in England feels able to take part in sport or physical activity, regardless of age, background or ability; key priorities of the 2021 Sport England Strategy are:

1. Recover and reinvent
2. An active and healthier life
3. Fairer access to physical activity
4. Strengthen communities
5. Active environments

A Decade of Decline: The Future of Swimming Pools in England Report 2021 – Swim England

4.31 This report highlights the value of swimming in supporting physical and mental wellbeing, individual, social and community development and volunteering. However, for everyone to enjoy the benefits of swimming, it is vital that there are sufficient number and type of facilities in the right locations. There was a huge growth in pools being built from the 1960’s onwards. As the average lifespan of a pool is 38 years, many of these pools are now reaching the end of their life or have closed, and it is clear that the number of pools in England is in decline. This, coupled with an increasing population means that there is an urgent need to invest in new facilities or refurbish existing.

4.32 Based on current pool build trends, the report estimates that the number of available pools could decrease by more than 40% by the end of the decade; this equates to 2,000 pools. This would mean that 3.86 million people would be unable to participate in the swim activities they enjoy.

4.33 The Covid pandemic has exacerbated this issue. Since the Covid pandemic began, 206 pools have closed, either permanently or temporarily, including 68 public pools. Local authorities are one of the biggest investors in leisure facilities in England and they have faced huge budget pressures in recent years, which has only increased as a result of the pandemic.

4.34 Currently, the nation’s pools are not evenly distributed with some regions facing a much greater shortage of available pools.

4.35 The report recommends the following solutions:

- £1 billion of Government investment and support into public leisure facilities to develop the next generation of pools. This should include funding to build/refurbish pool and funding to support local authorities to undertake a strategic needs assessment.
- Local authorities that are short of water space as identified through a strategic needs assessment, should include new pool(s) in any Levelling Up Funding application they make.

Securing the Future of Public Sport and Leisure Services September 2021 – APSE, the LGA and CLOA

4.36 The report highlights that Councils have supported their leisure providers throughout the Covid pandemic, whilst providers have had to make full use of their financial reserves. However, because many providers operate on low profit margins or are constituted as trusts or charities, they have been unable to secure Government support beyond the Job Retention Scheme (JRS) and the National Leisure Recovery Fund (NLRF), resulting in a projected revenue loss of £411 million for district councils alone, rising to £600 million when unitary and metropolitan councils are included. These acute challenges have led to a renewed recognition of the vital contribution that public sport and leisure services make to communities, bringing communities together, promoting healthy lifestyles, addressing inequalities, and contributing towards a wealth of social value e.g. reducing crime, improving educational attainment.

4.37 The world is also facing a climate emergency and since leisure facilities produce between 10 – 40 per cent of district and unitary councils' direct carbon emissions it is vital that the leisure estate be upgraded to achieve net zero targets.

4.38 Nearly two thirds of the leisure estate is ageing and in need of replacement and there is therefore an opportunity to rethink about what our communities will need from our facilities and services in the future and design new, more efficient solutions to help communities be active and stay healthier longer. In addition, the public provision of swimming facilities is essential for ensuring that primary school children, particularly in more deprived areas, can achieve the necessary levels of swimming attainment in the national curriculum.

4.39 The report highlights the opportunity to transform the way leisure services and facilities are designed, provided and delivered. It talks about better integration with the health system (e.g. Integrated Care Systems (ICS) and public health teams), connecting them to active travel routes and '20 - minute communities', and creating community hubs by co-locating with wider wellbeing services such as GP surgeries.

4.40 Key recommendations from the report include:

- The new Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) should take responsibility for embedding the strategic role of public sport and leisure services within health systems and pathways, coordinating with DCMS, MHCLG and local government within England. All nations should consider how best to coordinate public sport and leisure provision across differing departments of Government.

- A £1 billion capital investment into the leisure estate based on established design plans would help to create hundreds of construction jobs, improve efficiency, reduce climate emissions and boost usage. Longer term, it would create new job opportunities and apprenticeships in areas of the sport and leisure industry typically taken by young people.
- The DfE should work with Government departments and councils to map the provision of swimming facilities, and levels of curriculum attainment, investing to address gaps or future gaps in the system and making targeted support available to enable schools to invest in learn to swim and swim safety where the system is currently failing.
- Councils should consider what social value outcomes they want to achieve through public sport and leisure services and design provision, accordingly, including activities such as outreach work to support those who are most vulnerable. These objectives must also be fully embedded into procurement activity and contract management processes.

A Decade of Change for Public Sector Leisure Report (July 2001) – UKactive

- 4.41 This paper sets out a vision for the future of Public Sector Leisure (PSL). It is based on a comprehensive consultation with PSL members and provides a roadmap for progress that will enable the survival, recovery, and redevelopment of this part of the sector.
- 4.42 The report highlights the importance of PSL and its role in delivering community based physical activity, but also emphasises the fragility of its infrastructure and how the Covid pandemic has accentuated this. Due to the severe financial pressures on Local Authorities and its non-statutory status, PSL delivery has become increasingly focused on driving commercial income, often to the detriment of services that put customers, communities, and outcomes at the heart of their approach.
- 4.43 The consultation highlighted a number of opportunities including, developing a national strategy for PSL, defining PSL role in a whole systems approach to physical activity, reviewing current contract arrangements and approaches, introducing a National Infrastructure Strategy, adopting a more co-ordinated approach to demonstrating social value, collaborating, and developing a long-term workforce plan.
- 4.44 Key areas of focus include:
- **Data and Insight** – the need to have strong evidence to support what the industry does e.g. Moving Communities
 - **Standards and Improvement** – setting high unified standards. Sport England and UKactive are developing a set of standards and a new framework for improvement that all parts of the sector can adopt, called The Active Standard.

- **Procurement:** Public Leisure generates £3.3 billion in social value on account of improved health, life satisfaction, educational attainment, and engaging vulnerable groups. The ability of public leisure providers to support health and wellbeing is however, hampered by procurement processes driven by procedure rather than needs. Given the impact on local government finances, there is the danger that the emphasis on commercially driven procurement will increase, to the detriment of targeted community services. Sport England's Leisure Services Delivery Guidance (LSDG) together with the Strategic Outcomes Planning Guidance (SOPG) will help ensure that social value is at the heart of what public sport and leisure does.
- **Tackling Health Inequalities** – need to take a whole systems approach to support particular groups ensuring the services offered meet their social, physical, and emotional needs. Integrate the PLS with national and local health systems.

4.45 The reports calls for further financial aid to support PLS as part of a process of long-term transformation. The report outlines a roadmap for transformation.

Future of Public Sector Leisure Report (December 2021) – UKactive

4.46 This report has been developed as the result of insight gathered from leisure providers on the challenges and opportunities in the delivery of public sector leisure. The purpose of Public Sector Leisure Report is identified as:

'The delivery of social, economic and health outcomes on both a local and national level whilst also providing affordable, accessible leisure services and facilities to local communities.'

4.47 The report highlights the need to transform PLS and the following opportunities were raised:

- Lobby for PSL to be an essential service
- Develop a National Strategy for PLS
- Define PSL role in a Whole Systems approach to physical activity
- Review current contracting arrangements and approaches – moving away from a transactional contractual approach to a more formal relational contract.
- Build Back Better – a National Public Leisure Infrastructure strategy supporting investment, rationalisation and consolidation of leisure stock.
- More co-ordinated approach to demonstrating Social Value
- Enhance the image and profile of the sector
- Long Term workforce Planning
- Together we are stronger – collaboration and removal of silo working.

Physical Activity and Participation

The Intrinsic Value of Participation

- 4.48 The value of participation in sport and physical activity is significant, and its contribution to individual and community quality of life should not be underestimated. This is true for both younger and older people; participation in sport and physical activity delivers:
- Opportunities for physical activity, and therefore more ‘active living’;
 - Health benefits – cardiovascular, stronger bones, mobility;
 - Health improvement;
 - Mental health benefits; and
 - Social benefits – socialisation, communication, inter-action, regular contact, stimulation.
- 4.49 In addition, participation in sport and physical activity can facilitate the learning of new skills, development of individual and team ability / performance, and provide a ‘disciplined’ environment in which participants can ‘grow’ and develop.
- 4.50 The benefits of regular and active participation in sport and physical activity will be important to promote in relation to future sport, leisure and physical activity in Swale.
- 4.51 There is an existing audience in the borough, which already recognises the advantages of participation, and a latent community who are ready to take part. The sport, physical activity and leisure offer in the district can support the delivery of the desired outcomes across a number of Swale Strategic priorities and objectives.

The Contribution of Sport and Physical Activity

- 4.52 There is now a national focus on physical activity and health and wellbeing, particularly through the Health Promotion Office (announced in March 2021); this focus will need be a national drive to achieve pre Covid 19 physical activity participation rates and to build on this to ensure those who are inactive are provided with opportunities to become active. Chair of UKactive, Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson said in January 2021: “the sport and physical activity sector must be able to survive, recover, and develop to play its fullest role in society”.
- 4.53 Developing a strategic framework to support and promote collaboration in terms of physical activity provision will strengthen the Swale offer and support the targeting of those communities who will most benefit by being more active.

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- 4.54 Nationally a more active population is not only healthier, but also impacts positively on the current costs of social care, mental health, dementia and it is estimated reduces GP visits nationally by 30 million a year. The 2019 study by Sheffield Hallam University for Sport England showed that for every £1 invested in sport, £4 of value is returned. Community sport and physical activity is worth £85.5 billion annually; £42 billion of this figure is social value, including improved work productivity, reduced crime, stronger communities, educational attainment, and of course healthier people.
- 4.55 Swale recognises the value and importance of physical activity. Swale has well-established and respected independent leisure providers in Swale including Swale Community Leisure (SCL), Faversham Pools Trust, and Serco. It also has a supportive and proactive Active Partnership in Active Kent and Medway, private sector provision, high quality outside environments, and a network of sports clubs.
- 4.56 There is a growing acknowledgment within government, national organisations, and services about the benefits of becoming and staying active and there is a willingness to work collaboratively. Physical activity also contributes significant social and economic benefits.
- 4.57 There is a real understanding of the need to focus on increasing activity in those least likely to participate and embedding active living (i.e. embedding activity into everyday lives), into communities in an inclusive way.

Physical inactivity is one of the leading risk factors for global mortality. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), physical inactivity is the fourth leading risk factor for global mortality, accounting for approximately 6% of deaths worldwide.

Physical inactivity is associated with an increased risk of many chronic diseases, including heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and certain cancers. Regular physical activity can help to prevent or manage these diseases, as well as improve overall health and well-being.

The WHO recommends that adults engage in at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity or at least 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity per week, or an equivalent combination of both. Additionally, muscle-strengthening activities should be done at least twice per week. By meeting these recommendations, individuals can reduce their risk of chronic diseases and mortality associated with physical inactivity.

People who have a physically active lifestyle have a 20% to 35% lower risk of cardiovascular disease, coronary heart disease and stroke compared to those who have a sedentary lifestyle. Regular physical activity is also associated with a reduced risk of diabetes, obesity, osteoporosis and colon and breast cancer and with improved mental health. In older adults, physical activity is associated with increased functional capacities. The estimated cost of physical inactivity to the National Health Service (NHS) in the UK is substantial. According to a report by the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, the cost of physical inactivity to the NHS in England alone is estimated to be around £1.2 billion per year.¹²

¹² Source: Public Health England

Additional barriers and issues for participation in physical activity

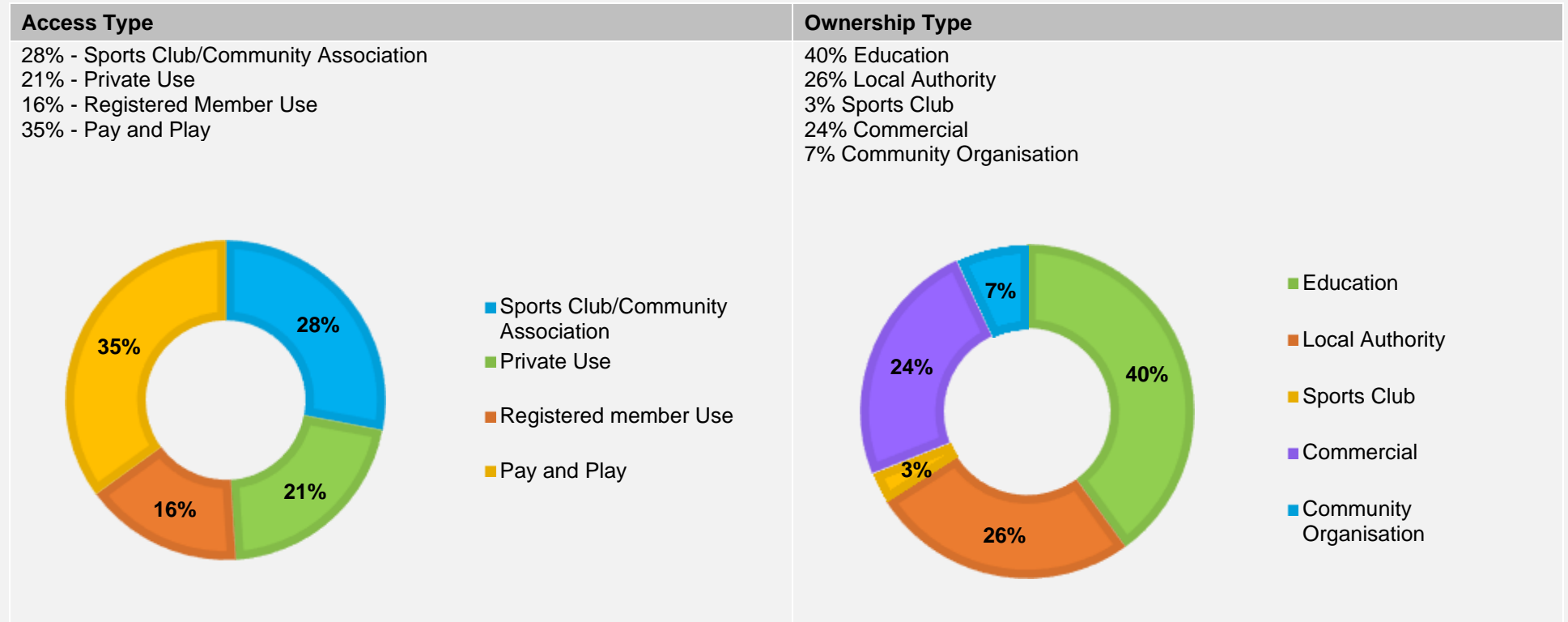
- 4.58 There are several barriers and issues for participation in physical activity in Swale, which may vary depending on individual circumstances and personal preferences. Here are some common barriers that may prevent people from engaging in physical activity in Swale:
- Lack of access to facilities: Some individuals may not have access to appropriate facilities or equipment, such as gyms or sports fields, which can make it difficult to engage in physical activity.
 - Financial barriers: The cost of gym memberships, sports equipment, or classes may be a barrier for some individuals, particularly those on low incomes.
 - Time constraints: Many people have busy schedules, making it difficult to find time to engage in physical activity. This can be especially challenging for those with caring responsibilities or demanding work schedules.
 - Social support: Lack of social support, such as not having a workout partner or a group to exercise with, may make it difficult for some individuals to start and maintain an exercise routine.
 - Fear of judgment or self-consciousness: Some individuals may feel self-conscious about their fitness levels, body shape, or ability to exercise in public, which can prevent them from participating in physical activity.
 - Health conditions or injuries: Certain health conditions or injuries may limit the types of physical activity that individuals can participate in or may require modifications to their exercise routines.
- 4.59 Addressing these barriers requires a multifaceted approach, including improving access to facilities and equipment, providing financial support for those who need it, offering flexible scheduling options, providing social support through group exercise classes and peer support programs, and promoting body positivity and acceptance. By addressing these barriers, more individuals in Swale can engage in physical activity, leading to better health outcomes and overall well-being.
- 4.60 Given the diverse nature of Swale and its main towns location, there is a mix of travel modes to and from the leisure facilities. Generally, good transport links are available and affordable which are a key influence on whether people can access facilities. There is a notable difference in travel patterns of those people living on the Isle of Sheppey compared to those living in the more rural areas surrounding Faversham and Sittingbourne. Over 70% of visits to indoor sports facilities in Swale are by car (FPM info), and the percentage of the population without access to a car is higher than the regional average but lower than the national average. In order to encourage those who are currently inactive, improved transport links would be important.
- 4.61 During the Covid-19 pandemic many people who were previously users at leisure centres and facilities have accessed online classes. It will be useful to consider future usage patterns for current users of the facilities when planning for future provision. The network of village halls and physical activity in community settings can be invaluable for those lacking confidence or feeling uncomfortable using larger bespoke facilities.

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Sports Facilities: Swale has a number of sports facilities, but membership of a sports club or commercial provider is required in order to access the majority of these.

78 sports facilities in Swale at 34 sites



5. Stage B - Existing Facility Provision

Introduction

- 5.1. This section sets out the Stage B information required by the ANOG process. It provides a detailed picture of existing facilities in Swale:
- Quantity: how many of each type there are?
 - Quality: their age and condition
 - Accessibility: who owns and operates the facilities, facility location and catchment areas?
 - Availability: whether the facilities are available to all residents, and whether there is pay and play access
- 5.2. Given the inter-related nature of these four key areas, Section 5 covers each facility type in turn, and assesses it in terms of the above, then pulls together all the data collected to provide an overall summary of each facility type, current and future provision i.e. supply and demand analysis.
- 5.3. The operational management of existing facilities is also referenced, as is the overall consultation undertaken to inform the supply and demand analysis (set out in detail in appendices 7,8, 9, 10 and 11).
- 5.4. Analysis of the provision to understand and identify gaps in, and need for, built leisure provision in Swale is then summarised. The recommendations to be implemented through the Action Plan, to address these identified needs and gaps is set out in Section 6.

Demand for Built sports facilities

- 5.5. There are two main tools used to inform the assessment of supply and demand, as well as the facility audit (Appendix 13) taken directly from Active Places and used as the baseline data to be checked and challenged through the site visits), quality site visits (Appendix 3 (3a – 3p)), and the demand information gathered through the consultation. These tools are:

5.6. The Sport England Facility Planning Model (FPM) – this is only used for sports halls of 3 court size and above and swimming pools larger than 160 m².

The Facilities Planning Model (FPM) is a computer-based supply/demand model, which has been developed by Edinburgh University in conjunction with sportscotland and Sport England since the 1980's.

The model is a tool to help to assess the strategic provision of community sports facilities in an area. It is currently applicable for use in assessing the provision of sports halls, swimming pools, indoor bowls centres and artificial grass pitches.

Use of FPM

Sport England uses the FPM as one of its principal tools in helping to assess the strategic need for certain community sports facilities. The FPM has been developed as a means of:

- 1. assessing requirements for different types of community sports facilities on a local, regional or national scale;**
- 2. helping local authorities to determine an adequate level of sports facility provision to meet their local needs;**
- 3. helping to identify strategic gaps in the provision of sports facilities; and**
- 4. comparing alternative options for planned provision, taking account of changes in demand and supply. This includes testing the impact of opening, relocating and closing facilities, and the likely impact of population changes on the needs for sports facilities.**

Its current use is limited to those sports' facility types for which Sport England holds substantial demand data, i.e. swimming pools, sports halls, indoor bowls and artificial grass pitches.

The report sets out the findings under seven headings and includes data tables and maps. The headings are defined at the start and include total supply; total demand; supply and demand balance; satisfied/met demand; unmet demand; used capacity (how full the pools are); and local share of pools. Each heading is followed by a commentary on the findings.

The purpose of the report is to provide SBC with an updated evidence base for sports halls and swimming pools, which the Council can use to inform its strategic planning for the future provision of these facility types. The full FPM reports and appendices are set out in Appendix 6.

The Sports Facility Calculator (SFC)

The Sports Facility Calculator (SFC) provides a quantitative estimate of future need, but unlike the FPM the SFC model analysis does not identify specific locations for future provision. That needs to be informed by the nature and location of future housing development (where locations are known), local geography and accessibility, and, critically, the location of existing facilities.

This is because future demand may have the potential to be addressed through facility extension, or refurbishment, as well as new locations. However, in the absence of any other future demand calculator, the SFC provides an indicator of the level of future provision needed. The SFC can be applied to the same facilities as those modelled in the FPM.

- 5.7. The demand (current and future) for facilities other than sports halls and swimming pools is assessed using National Governing Body (NGB) standards if they are available, plus a combination of local factors e.g., how many existing facilities there are, what is the identified demand from schools, clubs, the community etc, what is available immediately outside the authority boundaries to which people may find it easier to travel.

Consultation

- 5.8. The ANOG methodology requires consultation with schools, clubs, parish/town councils, neighbouring boroughs, National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and key stakeholders. Schools, clubs and parish councils were consulted via separate online surveys. Clubs' needs are also identified via consultation with NGBs. NGBs were all contacted by email and asked a series of questions to identify the information required. The consultation responses are set out in detail in Appendices 7,8, 9, 10 and 11.

Schools

- 5.9. Responses from 11 different schools responded to the invitation to complete the online survey – see Appendix 8.

Parish Councils

- 5.10. Four Parish Councils responded to the survey - see Appendix 9. All 4 cited playing pitches or sports facilities as their main priorities – Dunkirk, Bredgar, Borden and Hartlip. Halls and other community facilities are important locally as a place to deliver a whole range of activities. For example, Bredgar Cricket Club are planning a new pavilion at Bredgar Recreation Ground. All outdoor facilities are covered in the 2024 Swale PPS.

Clubs

- 5.11. A total of 15 different clubs responded to the invitation to complete the online survey – see Appendix 10. The Swale Combined Athletics Club would like its own venue for athletes to practice high jump, pole vault, hurdles etc. Additional training has to be accessed at Ashford with athletes often leaving Swale as a consequence.
- 5.12. Table tennis was represented by a spokesperson for the Invicta league who expressed concern about the closure of New House Sports and Youth Club which was home to 11 table tennis teams.

- 5.13. A new venue was needed to support the introduction and development of juniors to the sport. Beachfield Swim Squad needs Sheerness Pool for scheduled training sessions and galas.
- 5.14. All clubs were adversely affected during covid and there has been mixed success with members returning to many of the clubs since the restrictions have been lifted.

Neighbouring Local Authorities

- 5.15. In determining the nature, level and location of sports facility provision required for the future in Swale, it is also important to be aware of how neighbouring local authorities are planning for the future. Given that communities use sports facilities in areas other than where they live, the development of new or improved provision can impact significantly on both participation levels and capacity cross-boundary. Consultation with neighbouring local authorities is summarised in Appendix 11.
- 5.16. Information was obtained from neighbouring authorities including Maidstone Borough Council, Ashford Borough Council, Canterbury City Council and Medway Council, as well as using SLL's own knowledge from recent work in these areas.

Map 1: Swale Neighbouring Authorities



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Table 12: Feedback from neighbouring Local Authorities

Neighbouring Local Authority	Comments
Maidstone Borough Council	Will continue its planning and feasibility options work for the future of Maidstone Leisure Centre.
Ashford Borough Council	Has refurbished the Stour Centre and Tenterden Leisure Centre over the past 2 years and will continue to invest as new housing demands. Chilmington Green is the major housing development with 5,200 units.
Canterbury City Council	Is working with its partners Active Life (Fusion is part of this set up) and is looking to refurbish Kingsmead, Whitstable Swimming Pool and Herons in Herne Bay. Canterbury College has a new sports centre as part of a wider £9m Capital spend and it is thought Canterbury Christchurch University has a new sports centre, all dryside, as part of its new capital development outside the city walls.
Medway Council	New Splashes Leisure Pools currently being built. Any housing development in the Gillingham area contributions will be put into investing in Medway Park Sports Centre (previously known as Black Lion LC). Any developments on Hoo Peninsula that would mean investment in Hoo Swimming Pool probably a new facility and Strood Sports Centre neither would impact on Swale (too far away but would probably have more impact on Gravesend).

Catchment Areas

- 5.17. Catchment areas for different types of facilities provide a means of identifying areas currently not served by existing indoor sports facilities. It is however, recognised that catchment areas vary from person to person, day to day, hour to hour, and are also very different in rural and urban areas. This problem is overcome by accepting the concept of 'effective catchment', defined as the distance travelled by around 75-80% of users. The maps in Section 5 demonstrate catchment areas for facility provision in Swale based on this approach, which uses a 20-minute drive time as a catchment area for sports facilities (the industry guidance from Sport England is a 20 min drive time (car), or a 10-minute walk time).
- 5.18. Active travel i.e. walking and cycling is encouraged in Swale but in reality, many people do not cycle between the different areas of the borough due to perceptions of safety, and distances involved. The two routes over the Swale estuary provide limited access on and off the island from the rest of the borough.
- 5.19. Given the diverse nature of Swale and its main towns' location, there is a mix of travel modes to and from the leisure facilities. Cycling is encouraged. Generally, good transport links are available and affordable which are both key as to whether people can access facilities. There is a notable difference in travel patterns of those people living on the Isle of Sheppey compared to those living in the more rural areas surrounding Faversham and Sittingbourne. Over 70% of visits to indoor sports facilities in Swale are by car (FPM info), and the percentage of the population without access to a car is higher than the regional average but lower than the national average. In order to encourage those who are currently inactive, improved transport

links would be important.

- 5.20. During the Covid-19 pandemic many people who were previously users at leisure centres and facilities have accessed online classes. It will be useful to consider future usage patterns for current users of the facilities when planning for future provision. The network of village halls and physical activity in community settings can be invaluable for those lacking confidence or feeling uncomfortable using larger bespoke facilities.

Supply of Built Sport Facilities in Swale

- 5.21. The following table summarises the existing indoor sports facilities across Swale.

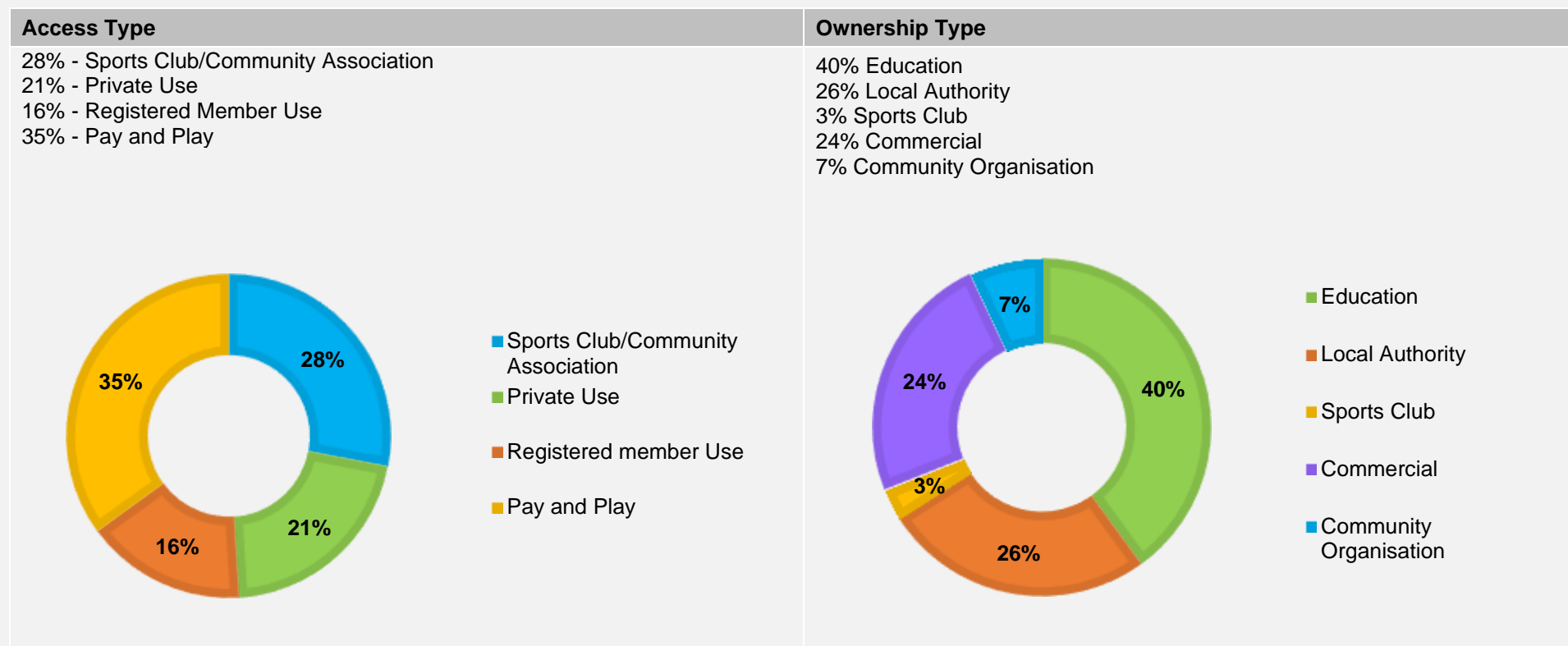
Table 13: Existing Indoor sports facilities – Swale

Facilities	Swale
Sports Hall (3+ Courts)	11
Activity Halls	18
Swimming Pools (Main, Learner & Leisure)	12
Health and Fitness Suites	13
Studios	12
Squash Courts	8
Indoor Bowls Hall	1

Table 14: Sports Facilities in Swale

Sports Facilities: Swale has a number of sports facilities, but membership of a sports club or commercial provider is required in order to access the majority of these.

78 sports facilities in Swale at 34 sites



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- 5.22. It is important to highlight from the outset that this strategy is not just about formal sports facility provision, but also looks at opportunities for increased use of informal places and spaces. Community halls can be used for sport and physical activity even if they are not purpose designed nor marked for such use and can often provide an introductory experience of sport and physical activity, or a more accessible option for those who are older, have no access to private transport, or who have commitments which make it hard for them to travel to formal facilities.
- 5.23. Increased use of the outdoors, open spaces, parks, recreation grounds, and community halls also has significant potential to contribute to increasing levels of participation in physical activity at a very local level, and to addressing rising levels of obesity and other health inequalities.
- 5.24. Based on the Active Places database, the Sport England Facility Planning Model (FPM), the local sports profile data (Sport England), and the audit undertaken to inform this strategy, the maps used in the following facility assessments show the extent of existing built sport and leisure facility provision in Swale.
- 5.25. Users of sport and recreation facilities do not recognise administrative boundaries and will use facilities that are convenient and/or provide a quality/value for money experience. Ownership and management are, in this context, a minor consideration for most users.
- 5.26. The availability of facilities in neighbouring districts can and does influence sports facility usage patterns, as does access to private transport and availability of public transport. Good public transport means that accessing facilities is easier than in other boroughs.

Operational Management of Swale Borough Council Leisure Facilities

- 5.27. Swallows Leisure Centre opened in 1989 and Sheppey Leisure Complex opened 1980. Both facilities are managed on a contract which started in 2004 with revisions made in 2009 and 2015. The current contract was due to expire in 2019 but has now been extended to 31 March 2025.
- 5.28. Swallows Leisure Centre, Sittingbourne and Sheppey Leisure Complex are managed by Swale Community Leisure Trust (SCLT); the Trust has commissioned Serco Leisure Ltd to deliver the operational management requirements of the leisure contract.
- 5.29. Faversham Pools were opened in 1993 and are managed by an independent charitable trust incorporated as a company limited by guarantee.
- 5.30. Faversham Pools Trust is keen to foster a strong working relationship with SBC recognising that that both parties have limited resources available for investment. Collaborative working is recognised and required as the way forward to sustain the future of the pools. The Trust is keen to enter strategic engagement with SBC to find innovative solutions around funding the future needs of the pools.
- 5.31. Warden Bay Community Centre on the Isle of Sheppey is owned by SBC and operated inhouse.

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5.32. Newhouse Sports and Youth Centre in Sittingbourne is owned by Kent County Council. Newhouse closed during the first covid lockdown in March 2020 and has not reopened. It is unclear what KCC plans to do with the latter, and the facility still remains closed at the time that this report was written.

Assessment of Individual Facility Types

5.33. The built facility types assessed include:

- Sports Halls (including schools and community buildings), and covering indoor sports hall sports such as, badminton, martial arts, indoor cricket basketball, indoor hockey, netball, table tennis and volleyball
- Health & Fitness facilities (including dance/aerobic studios)
- Squash Courts
- Swimming Pools
- Indoor Bowls Halls

5.34. In addition to the above, reference is also made to the various community halls in the area (although these halls did not form part of the brief for the Built Facility Strategy), which provide informal space for a wide range of physical activity and recreational activities. It is important to highlight that community use, and specifically pay and play access is the focus of the facility assessment. Community use applies to clubs, the public and community associations / groups; pay and play community access refers to the public.

5.35. The latter is really important because those who are inactive are highly unlikely to join a club to use a facility; therefore, it is only by ensuring there is sufficient pay and play community access to formal and informal facilities, that participation is likely to increase, and particularly amongst those who are currently inactive. Community use provided for clubs is also very important, given that club members are also part of the overall community, but these individuals are more likely to be active already.

5.36. Given the range of facilities in Swale, each type is summarised below and assessed separately, to provide a more detailed picture of the current supply and demand, and critically future need.

Quality Audits

5.37. The quality audits comprise an independent visual assessment of the quality and condition of the facilities; results are recorded on the ANOG assessment sheet, developed by Sport England, and scored, based on the Sport England system set out in Table 15. Details of the individual audits undertaken are included in Appendix 3 (3a – 3p).

5.38. The audit scores are based on a numerical value, detailed on each assessment sheet, as follows:

Table 15: Quality Audit Scoring System

Key	Rating
>80%	Excellent
60% - 80%	Good
40% - 59%	Average
20%-39%	Poor
<20%	Very Poor

5.39. A facility scoring highly in terms of visual quality and condition (good – excellent) is likely to require less investment than one which in a poorer visual condition (average – very poor). The combination of the scores, results in the facility rating, and identification of investment need (significant, moderate etc.).

5.40. It is important to highlight that in undertaking the quality assessments, each element of the facility e.g., sports hall, pool etc is given a qualitative assessment, and the overall facility is also given an overall qualitative mark. Therefore, a sports hall can be of poor quality, but the overall facility score could be good.

Sports Halls and Activity Halls

Summary - Supply and Demand Analysis (excluding Newhouse Sports & Youth Centre which is currently closed)

5.41. Table 16 summarises the overall supply and demand analysis for sports halls and activity halls in Swale.

Table 16: Overall supply and demand analysis for sports hall and activity halls in Swale

Facility Type	Assessment Findings
Sports Halls	
Quantity	<p>There are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A total of 11 (all strategic size i.e., 3+ courts) sports halls across nine sites • A total of 46 badminton courts across 11 sports halls • Four pay and play sports halls (1 on an education site – Abbey School, providing a total of 17 badminton courts • Five sports halls on education sites available for sports club/community association use • Two sports halls (1 on an education site – Abbey School) which provide for sports club/community association use, and some pay and play use • One sports hall (Newhouse) that is closed • Two private sports halls – Sittingbourne School and Westlands School • There are 18 activity halls across 13 sites • There are nine community accessible activity halls available for sports club/community association use • There are seven activity halls available for private use only. • There are two pay and play access activity halls (Abbey School) <p>N.B Some activity halls do not have a marked badminton court so are counted as 0 courts, hence the numbers in Table</p> <p>Future Demand</p> <p>Housing development and population growth in Swale will increase demand for sports hall provision. Using the SFC it is possible to estimate overall future demand for provision of sports halls, based on different population growth scenarios.</p>

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Facility Type	Assessment Findings					
Sports Halls						
	Population 2020 (estimate ONS Subnational Population Projections)	Local Plan 2013 – 2038 Housing still due to be completed	Total number of additional new dwellings for period 2020 – 2038	New Local Plan 2020 – 2038 Revised number of new dwellings	Additional dwellings x 2.3 (national average population per dwelling)	Total Population by 2038
	151,965	13	19,404	18,864 (1,078 (number of dwellings per annum) x 18 years	44,629	196,594
<i>Local Plan 2020 - 2038 totals 19,404 new dwellings within Swale administrative boundaries and a population growth of 44,629 to an overall total of 196,594</i>						
	(A) Current over-supply of Badminton Courts	(B) Unmet demand for Badminton Courts	(C) Future Demand for Additional Badminton Courts by 2038	(D) Total under-supply (-) of Badminton Courts by 2038		
	+2	3.5 (FPM*)	12 (SFC)	9.5*		
*Unmet demand will be higher if Newhouse Y&CC remains closed						
N.B. Calculation uses 2020 population of 151,965 for Swale as used by Sport England in their Facility Planning Model for sports halls. This ensures that future demand/supply calculations directly correlate to the baseline calculations for current supply/demand and population figure used for these.						
The calculation shows that there will be need for an additional +9.5 badminton courts by 2038. In the FPM (which <u>includes</u> Newhouse Y&CC as part of the available supply), unmet demand as a percentage of total demand is 8.3% (equivalent of 3.5 badminton courts) with 435 weekly visits in the peak period not being met across the Swale district. 85.4% of this unmet demand is due to people living outside the catchment of a facility as opposed to there being a lack of capacity at existing sports halls.						
11.4% of this is forecast as being from people who do not have a car. However, approximately 14.6% is forecast to be as a result of lack of capacity at current facilities which is relatively high compared to neighbouring authorities and the SE/Kent regional figure.						
Swallows Leisure Centre sports halls is operating at 100% capacity peak time and Sheppey Leisure Centre 87% capacity. There are much lower used capacity figures across the other sports hall sites.						
On the basis that there is existing sports club and community association use in place across those sites operating at peak time capacity, it is important that as a minimum, these community access arrangements are maintained. SBC should seek to engage with those organisations currently operating with much smaller used capacity figures to encourage greater access to their sports halls during peak hours, securing this use where possible, through a Community Use Agreement (CUA) e.g. Fulston Manor School, Oasis Academy, Queen Elizabeth's Academy and The Abbey School.						

¹³ There has been a delay any formal consultation on the Local Plan Review until the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill obtains Royal Assent and revisions made to the NPPF that will provide clarity on the Government's intentions towards Local Plan making.

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Facility Type	Assessment Findings
Sports Halls	<p>Any new sports halls developed on education sites should provide community access via a planning condition, allowing for access to both individuals and clubs/groups. The three most recent planning permissions given for new sports halls in the borough (total of 12 badminton courts) do not have a CUA as part of planning conditions.</p> <p>NGBs and local sports clubs highlight:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Badminton England – need for more peak time hours available for badminton use. There are a below average number of sites and courts and not surprisingly very low participation rates despite two clubs i.e., lack of pay and play badminton. • Boxing – sustainable premises required for two of the clubs on Isle of Sheppey • Gymnastics – support clubs moving into dedicated facilities to increase membership and diversify range of activities available including working with the community to increase physical activity opportunities. • Netball – there are three clubs in Swale (one with a junior section – Comets). The current priority is to rebuild netball participation including back to netball, walking netball, netball now and bee netball. Also, to support local leagues and clubs and grow the base of volunteers and coaches. Finally, it has been highlighted that introductions to new partners within Swale were needed to 'grow the movement' and create aligned plans to reach common goals. • Table Tennis – would like to play table tennis at Newhouse Youth & Sports Centre
Quality	<p>There are a high proportion of sports halls in schools and colleges in Swale. The average age of the sports halls is 27 years. The quality of the current provision is varied with both Council-owned sports halls in need of refurbishment/investment over the next 5 years. There is an ageing stock of sports halls across the borough.</p>
Accessibility	<p>There are areas to the east of the borough, around the Swale estuary, which are outside of a 20-minute drive catchment of a community accessible sports hall. There are large areas of the Isle of Sheppey that are outside a 20-minute drive catchment of an accessible activity hall.</p> <p>In the FPM (which <u>includes</u> Newhouse Y&CC as part of the available supply), unmet demand is 8.3% (3.5 badminton courts) and is in line with regional and national figures. 85.4% of this unmet demand is caused by people living outside the catchment area of a facility with 11.4% of this forecast as being from people who do not have access to a car. However, approximately 14.6% of unmet demand is as a result of a lack of capacity at current facilities which is comparatively high when compared to neighbouring authorities and the SE/Kent regional figure.</p>
Availability	<p>There is a high level of sports hall and activity hall provision in Swale. However, the majority of sports halls are on education sites, providing for sports club/association use (usually outside school hours). Sheppey Leisure Centre and Swallows Leisure Centre have strategic size sports halls offering pay and play access. Of the 11 strategic size sports halls, only three sports halls are available for weekday daytime use. Swallows Leisure Centre is operating at 100% used capacity during the weekly peak periods (weekday evenings and weekend days). 100% is where the facility is theoretically totally full at all peak times. Sheppey Leisure Centre (87%) is also busy. This reflects the number of sports halls on education sites and the limited hours available for community use. Other sports hall sites included in the analysis have much smaller used capacity figures and there may be an opportunity to re-distribute some usage and unmet demand to these facilities.</p>

Sports Halls

Quantity

- 5.42. Sports halls are identified as three court badminton halls and above and provide facilities for team sports such as netball, volleyball, basketball etc. Activity halls are smaller, normally of one badminton court size but may not be marked out for badminton but cater for some sports and physical activity. The supply analysis identifies that Swale has a total of 11 sports halls (strategic size 3+ courts) (refer to Map 1). The sports halls are provided across nine sites. Table 17 details the supply of sports halls in Swale taken from Active Places database (Sport England 2022). Newhouse Sports and Youth Centre is highlighted in red in Table 17 and the analysis; this facility remains closed. It was closed at the start of the first Covid lockdown in March 2020 in England and has not re-opened since. This facility was managed by Kent County Council.

Map 2: Sports Halls and Activity Halls in Swale



Sports Halls by type in Swale



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Table 17: Supply of Sports Halls in Swale

Site Name	Post Code	Facility Type	Facility Sub Type	Number Badminton Courts	Access Type	Ownership Type	Management Type	Pay and Play Access	Year Built	Year Refurbished
Fulston Manor School	ME10 4EG	Sports Hall	Main	4	Sports Club/Community Association	Academies	School/college/university		1977	N/A
Fulston Manor School	ME10 4EG	Sports Hall	Main	3	Sports Club/Community Association	Academies	School/college/university		1999	N/A
* Newhouse Sports & Youth Centre	ME10 2LP	Sports Hall	Main	4	Sports Club / Community Association	Local Authority (KCC)	Commercial Management		1988	2011
Oasis Academy Isle of Sheppey (East)	ME12 3JQ	Sports Hall	Main	6	Sports Club/community association	Academies	School/college/university		2013	N/A
Oasis Academy Isle of Sheppey (West)	ME12 2BE	Sports Hall	Main	4	Sports Club/Community Association	Academies	School/college/university		2013	N/A
Queen Elizabeth Grammar School	ME13 7BQ	Sports Hall	Main	4	Sports Club/Community Association	Foundation School	School/college/university		1978	N/A
Sheppey Leisure complex	ME12 1HH	Sports Hall	Main	4	Pay and Play	Local Authority	Commercial Management	√	1980	2002

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Site Name	Post Code	Facility Type	Facility Sub Type	Number Badminton Courts	Access Type	Ownership Type	Management Type	Pay and Play Access	Year Built	Year Refurbished
Sittingbourne School	ME10 4NL	Sports Hall	Main	4	Private	Community School	School/college/university		1974	2015
Swallows Leisure Centre	ME10 4NT	Sports Hall	Main	6	Pay and Play	Local Authority	Commercial Management	√	1989	2005
The Abbey School	ME13 8RZ	Sports Hall	Main	4	Sports Club/Community Association/ Pay and Play also available	Academy Convertors	School/college/university	√	2006	2010
Warden Bay Community Centre	ME12 4NB	Sports Hall	Main	3	Sports Club/Community Association/Pay and Play also available	Local Authority	Local Authority (in house)	√	2003	N/A
Westlands School	ME10 1PF	Sports Hall	Main	4	Private	Academy Convertors	School/college/university		2008	N/A
Total (minus closed courts)				46						

Key: * Closed March 2020 and not reopened since

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5.44. There are:

- A total of 11 (all strategic size i.e., 3+ courts) sports halls across nine sites
- A total of 46 badminton courts across 11 sports halls
- Four pay and play sports halls (1 on an education site – Abbey School, providing a total of 17 badminton courts)
- Five sports halls on education sites available for sports club/community association use
- Two sports halls (1 on an education site – Abbey School) which provide for sports club/community association use, and some pay and play use
- One sports hall (Newhouse) that is closed
- Two private sports halls – Sittingbourne School and Westlands School
- There are 18 activity halls across 13 sites
- There are nine community accessible activity halls available for sports club/community association use
- There are seven activity halls available for private use only.
- There are two pay and play access activity halls (Abbey School)

N.B Some activity halls do not have a marked badminton court so are counted as 0 courts, hence the numbers in Table 18

5.45. In terms of badminton court availability this means:

Table 18: Badminton court availability

Facility Type	Pay and Play	Sports clubs/community associations	Total Community Use (Pay and Play and Sports clubs/community associations)	Private	Closed	Total number of courts (excluding 4 that are closed (Newhouse))
Sports hall -badminton courts	17	21	38	8	4	46
Activity Hall Badminton courts	1 (plus 1 hall with no badminton courts marked)	4 (plus 5 halls with no badminton courts marked)	5	7 (includes 3 halls with no badminton courts marked)	N/A	5
TOTAL						51

N.B. Two sports halls – Abbey School and Warden Bay Community Centre provide for both pay and play and sports club/community association use)

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- 5.46. The existing sports halls are operated and managed by a mix of schools, academies, commercial management, and SBC. Eight of the strategic sports halls are on education sites and offer community bookings for sports clubs and community associations; one of these (Abbey School) offers sports club/community association and pay and play use. Three of the sports halls are available for pay and play community use; two are managed by Swale Community Leisure on behalf of Swale Borough Council. The remaining strategic size sports hall is at Warden Bay Community Centre (also known as Warden Bay Village Hall) and is available for community sports club/association use and pay and play. The oldest sports hall facility is at Fulston Manor School and was built in 1977. Strategic size sports halls are listed in Table 15. There is an ageing stock of sports halls across the borough.
- 5.47. Sports halls on education sites will have different hours of access for community use, outside of education use. Some schools and colleges proactively manage venues for wider community use, predominantly by sports clubs and community groups. Other schools and colleges let their sports halls on a responsive basis to sports clubs or community groups, for a term or even shorter lettings.

Activity Halls

- 5.48. Table 19 and Map 1 identify those activity halls included in the Sport England Active Places database, accessed 2022. There are two pay and play community accessible activity halls in Swale. Those providing community sports club/association use are also shown in Table 19.
- 5.49. There are 18 activity halls in Swale located across 13 sites with Westlands School, The Abbey School and Meadowfield School all having two activity halls and Sittingbourne School having three activity halls. Westlands School, Meadowfield School and Sittingbourne School are all private facilities. 14 of the activity halls are located on education sites with the remaining four activity halls situated in standalone village/community halls. These are available for community use sessions, usually for groups, associations, and privately run classes, but provide more than sport and physical activity. Typically, community and village halls will also be hired for dance classes, arts/crafts, events and programmes, meetings, and social gatherings.

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Table 19: Supply of Activity Halls in Swale

Site Name	Post Code	Facility Type	Facility Sub Type	Number Badminton Courts	Access Type	Ownership Type	Management Type	Pay and Play Access	Year Built	Year Refurbished
Bapchild and Tone Village Hall	ME9 9NL	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	0	Sports Club/Community Association	Community Organisation	Community Organisation		1988	2016
Borden Grammar School	ME10 4DB	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	0	Sports Club/Community Association	Academies	School/College/University		1980	2007
Borden Parish Hall	ME9 8JS	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	1	Sports Club/Community Association	Local Authority	Community Organisation		1980	N/A
Dunkirk village Hall	ME13 9LF	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	0	Sports Club/Community Association	Local Authority	Community Organisation		2011	N/A
Fulston Manor School	ME10 4EG	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	1	Sports Club/Community Association	Academies	School/College/University	√	1977	N/A
Highsted Grammar School	ME10 4PT	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	1	Private	Academies	School/College/University		1904	N/A
Meadowfield School	ME10 4NL	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	0	Private	Community Special School	School/College/University		1999	N/A
Meadowfield School	ME10 4NL	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	0	Private	Community Special School	School/College/University		2020	N/A
Murston Recreation Ground	ME10 3RT	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	0	Sports Club/Community Association	Local Authority	Sports Club		1970	N/A

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Site Name	Post Code	Facility Type	Facility Sub Type	Number Badminton Courts	Access Type	Ownership Type	Management Type	Pay and Play Access	Year Built	Year Refurbished
Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School	ME13 7BQ	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	1	Sports Club/Community Association	Foundation School	School/College/University		1978	N/A
Sittingbourne School	ME10 4NL	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	1	Private	Community School	School/College/University		1974	N/A
Sittingbourne School	ME10 4NL	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	1	Private	Community School	School/College/University		1974	N/A
Sittingbourne School	ME10 4NL	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	1	Private	Community School	School/College/University		1974	N/A
At George's C of E Primary School	ME12 3QU	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	0	Private	Voluntary Aided School	School/College/University		1990	2010
The Abbey School	ME13 8RZ	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	1	Sports Club/Community Association	Academy Convertors	School/College/University	√	1954	2004
The Abbey School	ME13 8RZ	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	0	Sports Club/Community Association	Academy Convertors	School/College/University	√	1954	N/A
Westlands School	ME10 1PF	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	2	Private	Academy Convertors	School/College/University		1960	2006
Westlands School	ME10 1PF	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	1	Private	Academy Convertors	School/College/University		1960	N/A
Total badminton courts				11						

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- 5.50. Three of the activity halls are located on a site where there is also a sports hall offering community access; these are all education sites. Sittingbourne School and Westlands school have both sports halls and activity halls. However, these facilities, which are governed by the Swale Academies Trust, are not available for community use. However, the outdoor pitches and courts at Sittingbourne School are available for community use.
- 5.51. Map 2 shows the distribution of activity halls across the borough and shows that there are no community accessible activity halls in the north of the borough, on the Isle of Sheppey. St George’s Church of England Primary School offers the only activity hall in the north of the borough and this facility is for private use only.
- 5.52. The overall range of provision within the borough means that activities/sports can be separated. Big space sports such as badminton and basketball can be accommodated in the main halls. The smaller activity halls can accommodate small space activities such as Pilates, yoga and martial arts.

Quality

- 5.53. Detailed quality assessments were undertaken of the following indoor sports facilities within Swale borough (March 2022) by way of site visits and/or visual assessments of the facilities. These are provided in Appendix 3 and are summarised in Table 20.

Table 20: Summary of the Quality Assessment of Swale Sports Halls and Activity Halls

Facility Name	Quality Score	Commentary
Bapchild and Tonge Village Hall	Good	20 x 10m main hall suitable for functions (no markings for badminton and ceiling too low). Good parking with ancillary facilities set in pleasant grounds. Prefer block bookings or special event hire especially for local people.
Borden Grammar School	Good	There is no community use available. There are plans to build a 3-court sports hall adjacent to the school buildings, with lots of development potential. Planning approved 14/9/21. There is some levels of car parking and full disability access and served by public transport.
Borden Parish Hall	Good	Main hall suitable for functions (floor markings for single badminton although ceiling was quite low). Good parking with ancillary facilities set in pleasant grounds. Prefer block bookings or special event hire especially for local people.
Dunkirk Village Hall Does not meet APP criteria	Good	Small activity hall. Village hall shared with Bees Knees Playgroup Toilets inc disabled toilet. Very modern/new building. Limited scope for activities possibly martial arts, yoga, etc

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Facility Name	Quality Score	Commentary
Fulston Manor School	Good	Two multi-purpose sports halls and separate single badminton court size halls for community hire evenings and weekends.
Highsted Grammar School	Unable to access	Private Use only no community hire of the activity hall. Planning application approved 30/10/20 for new 4 court sports hall with changing rooms with a link to existing PE Hall.
Meadowfield School	Unable to access	Private use. No community hire of the minimal facilities onsite. Special needs school, specialising in autism.
Murston Recreation Ground	Average	Built in 1970s. A function hall was located at Murston Recreation Ground and used for table tennis, dancing, and fitness classes. Some block bookings and hire.
* Newhouse Sports & Youth Centre	See earlier note re: closure	Built in 1988 and has had problems with flood damage, structural failure and expensive rook repairs. Since Covid-19 has not reopened despite popular venue especially for table tennis.
Oasis Academy (East and West sites)	Excellent	The college has one 6 court sports hall and another (east site) 4-court sports hall (west site) which it hires out to local sports clubs and community organisations. The sports halls are in excellent condition and benefits from full disability access and good public transport links. There is some car parking available. There is no development potential for the site due to current layout/design. All facilities are let out for community use – clubs and groups. Facilities on east campus have good access; those on the west campus have to be accessed through the school which appeared a gated community.
Queen Elizabeth Grammar School	Very Poor	Community bookings available but realistically only used by very recreational badminton players. School site – very tired looking changing rooms. Some outdoor facilities including a MUGA. Other facilities: small 4 x station gym in a store cupboard (with roller shutter door) Sports hall was built in the 1970s and was an old cowshed (terrible condition). There may be some opportunities for development. Planning application approved 19/7/22 for demolition of existing and build a new 4 court sports hall.
Sheppey Leisure Complex	Average (Sports hall – Poor)	Built by Swale Borough Council in 1980s. Facilities include a 4-court sports hall, 45 station gym, studios and tired external facilities. A 25m x 5 lane swimming pool and changing facility is in a standalone building on the opposite side of the car park. There are also 2 outdoor courts. The sports hall is used by several clubs. The building is shared with Sheppey Healthy Living Centre who operate a public health service from the upper floor. The facilities are in poor condition and in need of refurbishment. There are good transport links train and bus routes close-by. There is lots of potential for development.
Sittingbourne School	Good	Used to be a dual-use site, operated by Swale Borough Council. The community use agreement changed when the school became an Academy. Only let out outdoor facilities now - pitches, 3G, Astro and courts Private Use

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Facility Name	Quality Score	Commentary
St George's CofE Primary School	Unable to gain access. Information taken from website (accessed 17.8.22)	Well-equipped hall with climbing apparatus. Private use
Total	Good (Sports hall – average)	Swallows LC was opened in 1989 and is in town centre location. Facilities include a 100+ station gym, 6 court sports hall, clip and climb, soft play, and studios. Capital investment including a £1m refurbishment to the plant was expended in 2019/20. The facilities are in good overall condition for the age of the building, although the changing village is tired. (Health suite area is decommissioned and now utilised).
The Abbey School	Average	Community bookings available after 5/30pm - 9. /30pm weekdays, Saturday afternoons 1pm - 9pm and Sundays 9am - 7pm. Sports hall: recently refurbished semi-sprung beech floor. Activity hall: wood floor, painted brick walls - basic but functional There was a gym however that closed in March 2020 (covid and has not reopened) Although dated the centre was well maintained Evidence of disability sessions were pre-programmed. There is a small amount of parking on site and some signposting. There is development potential onsite.
Warden Bay Community Centre	Average	Large function area (no badminton markings). Low ceiling with upstairs used for boxing. Community bookings available No badminton court markings Other facilities include C/R and toilets inc disabled Built 2003 Buses do not operate in the evenings Managed by Village Hall Committee Site prone to flooding (flood defence and sluice gates installed) Originally planning was to locate site away from flood plain Centre should have been built on stilts but did not happen Nursery and playgroup high the hall during weekday daytime
Westlands School	Good	Same academy as Sittingbourne School. Good 4-badminton court sports hall and 2 gyms with wall bars. Private use The condition was good and moderately maintained. There is no community use. The school is served by public transport. There is some parking. Well maintained. Full disability access throughout with some signposting to the facility. Possibly some development potential.

Key: * closed March 2020 and not reopened

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- 5.54. The majority of sports halls and activity halls were assessed as either good or average. The public pay and play sports halls at both the Sheppey Leisure Complex and Swallows Leisure Centre were assessed as poor and average respectively and are in need of investment.
- 5.55. The two pay and play sports halls at Sheppey Leisure Centre and Swallows were built in 1980 and 1989 respectively (42 and 33 years old). Whilst there has been investment in these facilities over the years, both sports halls look tired. The average life span of a public sports hall is normally 35 – 40 years.
- 5.56. The activity halls across the borough also vary in age. The oldest activity hall is located at Highsted Grammar School which was built in 1904! The most recent activity hall was built in 2020 and is located at Meadowfield School. Apart from just two, the rest of the activity halls were built in the last century. This again reflects an ageing stock of facilities. Furthermore, it is worth noting that 14 out of the 18 activity halls are not marked out for badminton. However, this overall range of provision in the borough means that the activities/sports can be separated. Big space sports such as badminton, basketball, and trampolining can be accommodated in the main halls. The smaller activity halls can accommodate small space sports and activities such as pilates, yoga and martial arts.

Accessibility

- 5.57. Map 2 shows the geographic distribution of the strategic size pay and play community access sports halls in Swale, with a catchment area for each of 20 minutes' drive time. (20-minute drivetime (private car)). The catchment areas of the existing pay and play community accessible sports halls cover the Swale area and beyond into neighbouring local authority areas. The catchment areas overlap in some places as they are within the same 20 minute or 30-minute drive time. The geographical spread of sports hall sites within Swale and neighbouring areas also highlights that there are potentially parts of the local authority, that have limited access to a sports hall at the current time. The 20-minute drive time catchment area of the existing pay and play community sports halls does not cover the whole Swale Borough area and therefore areas of Swale are not serviced by an accessible sports hall.
- 5.58. Map 2 shows that there is a fairly even geographical distribution of community accessible sports halls in Swale, when factoring in the Swale estuary which separates the Isle of Sheppey from the rest of the borough. The real issue is that overall, there are very few community accessible sports and activity halls, and particularly those offering pay and play access because so many are on education sites.

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Map 3: Sports Halls in Swale by access type

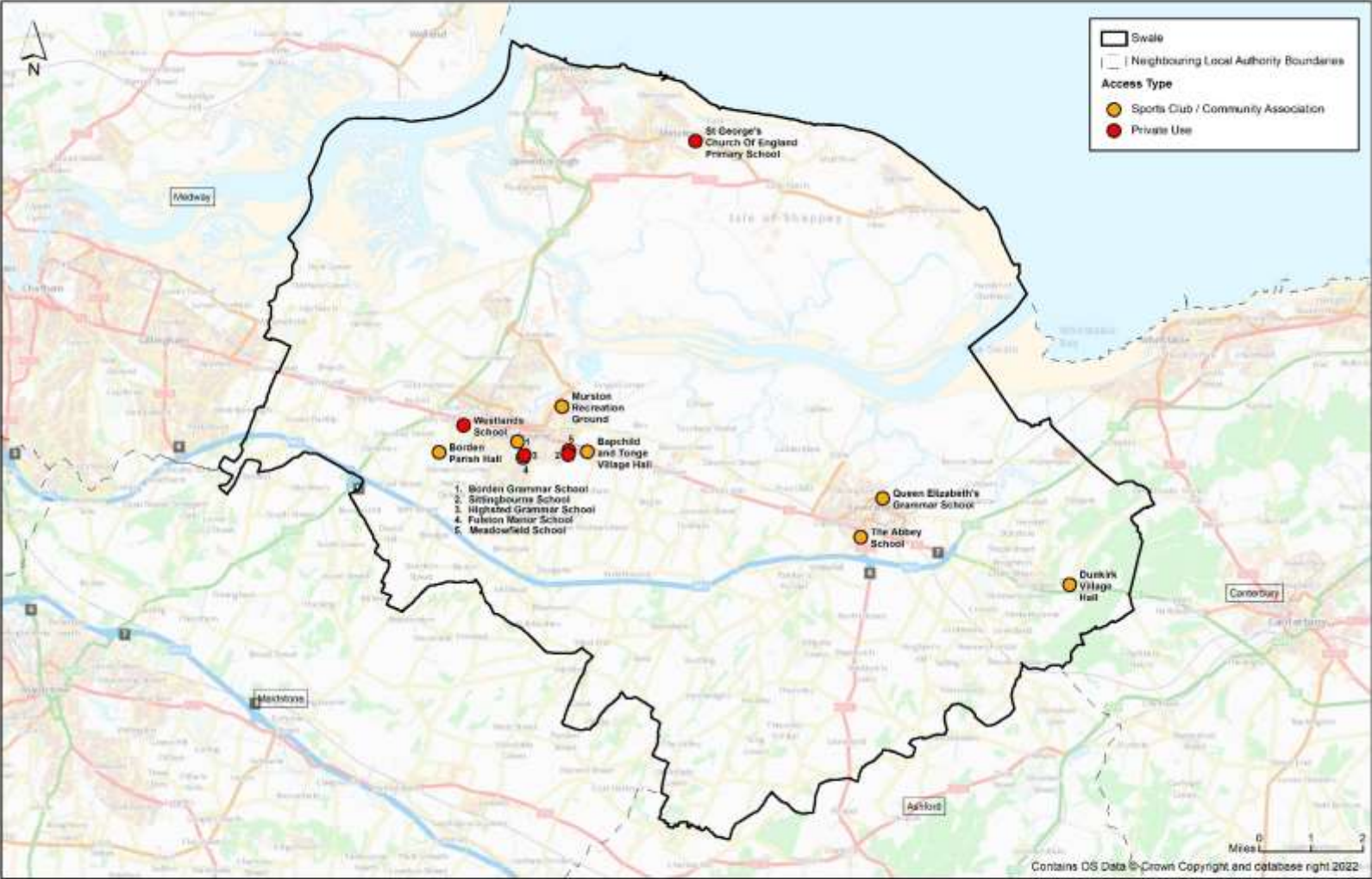


Sports Halls by access type in Swale



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Map 4: Activity Halls in Swale by access type



Activity Halls by access type in Swale



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- 5.59. Existing transport links within the borough are variable. The M2 motorway, A2 and the A249 trunk roads are busy routes within Swale. The only arterial road to the Isle of Sheppey is the A249 over the Sheppey Crossing Bridge. The island is also served by the railway from Sittingbourne (via Queenborough) to Sheerness. Access to the east of the island towards Minster, Eastchurch and Leysdown-on-sea is limited although it is on a bus route.
- 5.60. The two routes over the Swale estuary provide limited access on and off the island from the rest of the borough.
- 5.61. Bus services through Swale are quite limited and can be quite lengthy due to the nature (business) of the roads in the area. The traffic around Sittingbourne can get very congested.
- 5.62. There are a significant number of cycle routes in the borough which provide good links to towns and villages and offer a sustainable mode of travel for both residents and tourists.
- 5.63. In Swale, 19.4% of the population does not have access to a car which is higher than the regional (17.6%) figures. The percentage of the population without access to a car is important because it influences travel patterns to sports halls and other leisure facilities. If there is a higher percentage of the population without a car, then a network of local accessible sports halls for residents who either walk or use public transport to travel to a sports hall becomes much more important.
- 5.64. Accessibility to sports halls for the population living in the more deprived areas to the east of the Isle of Sheppey is more limited than those living in and around Faversham and Sittingbourne.
- 5.65. The town centre location of Swallows Leisure Centre in Sittingbourne and Sheppey Sports Centre in Sheerness provide pay and display car parks owned by the council.
- 5.66. The findings for Swale from Sport England's Facility Planning Model are that 82% of visits to sports halls are by car which is higher than the national figures (74%) and marginally higher than the regional figure (80%). This means that only 18% are travelling by foot or using public transport, both of which are below national and regional levels. Map 6 above shows the geographical distribution of the pay and play community accessible activity halls in Swale with a 20 minute and 30-minute drive catchment.
- 5.67. It is therefore important to ensure that access is available to sports halls by foot and public transport. As so few sports halls provide community use in the daytime, it is important that those that do provide good access are open for long hours and are affordable to optimise opportunities for participation in sport and physical activity.

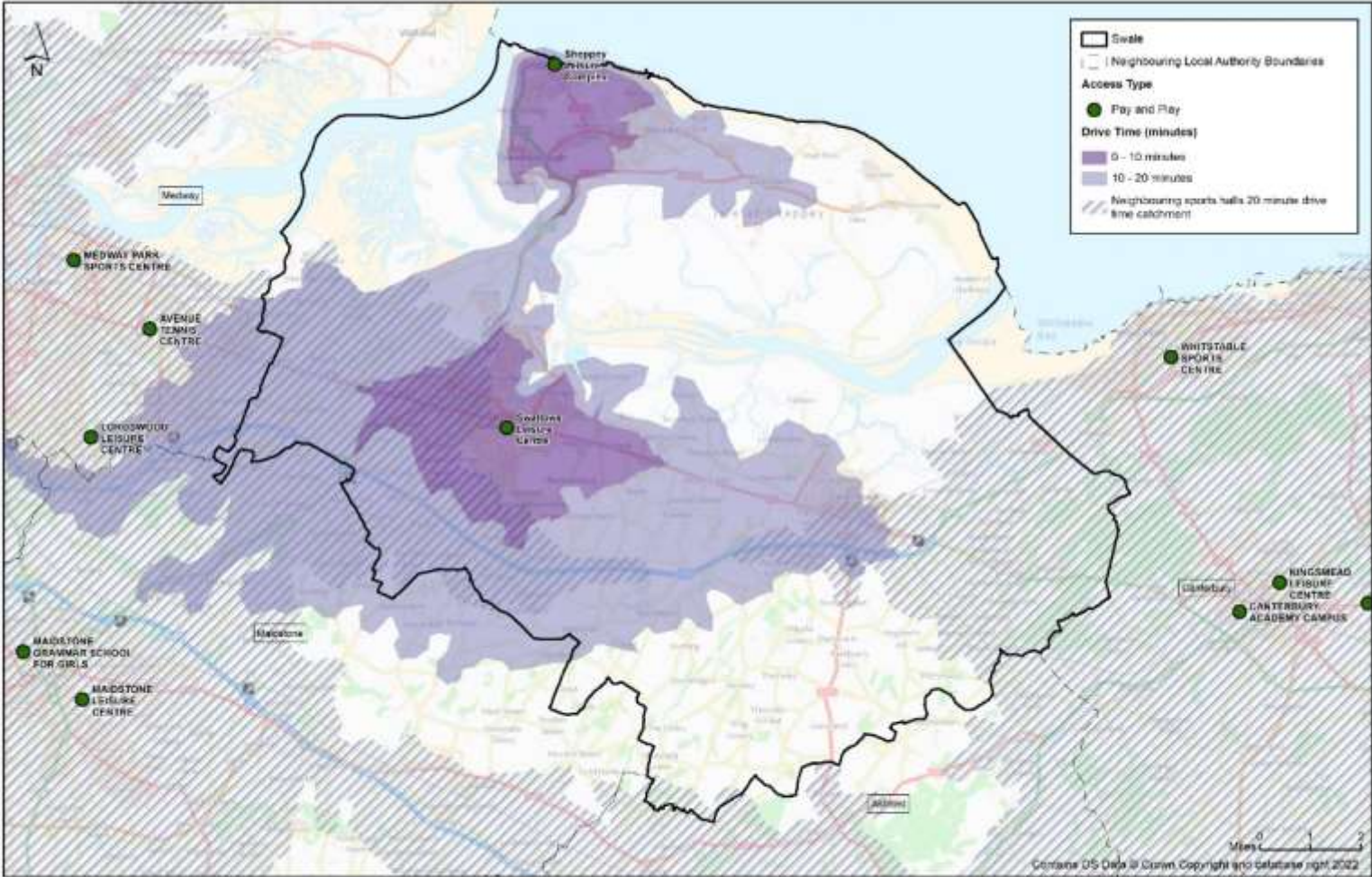
- 5.68. Accessibility to activity halls varies across Swale, given their locations. Activity halls attract far more local use, given that many of them are used for a wide range of activities, including sport and physical activity, arts, community, meetings, lunches, playgroups, events. Many are not marked out as badminton courts so provide informal multi-purpose space which can be used for a wide range of community activities.

Availability

- 5.69. Tables 17 and 19, together with Maps 3 and 4 highlight that there is not a high level of accessible sports hall and activity hall provision in Swale. The majority of strategic size sports halls are on education sites and only provide for sports club/association use. Whilst a community accessible sports hall would typically be open from 7am – 10pm weekdays and 9am – 6pm weekends, a facility on an education site, if open to community use will be open from 5pm – 9pm weekdays and 9am – 5pm weekends.
- 5.70. Opening hours for village/community halls vary significantly depending on how they are operated but they would typically not be open for as many hours as a community accessible sports hall.

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Map 5: Sports Halls with pay and play community access catchments in Swale (20 min drivetime)



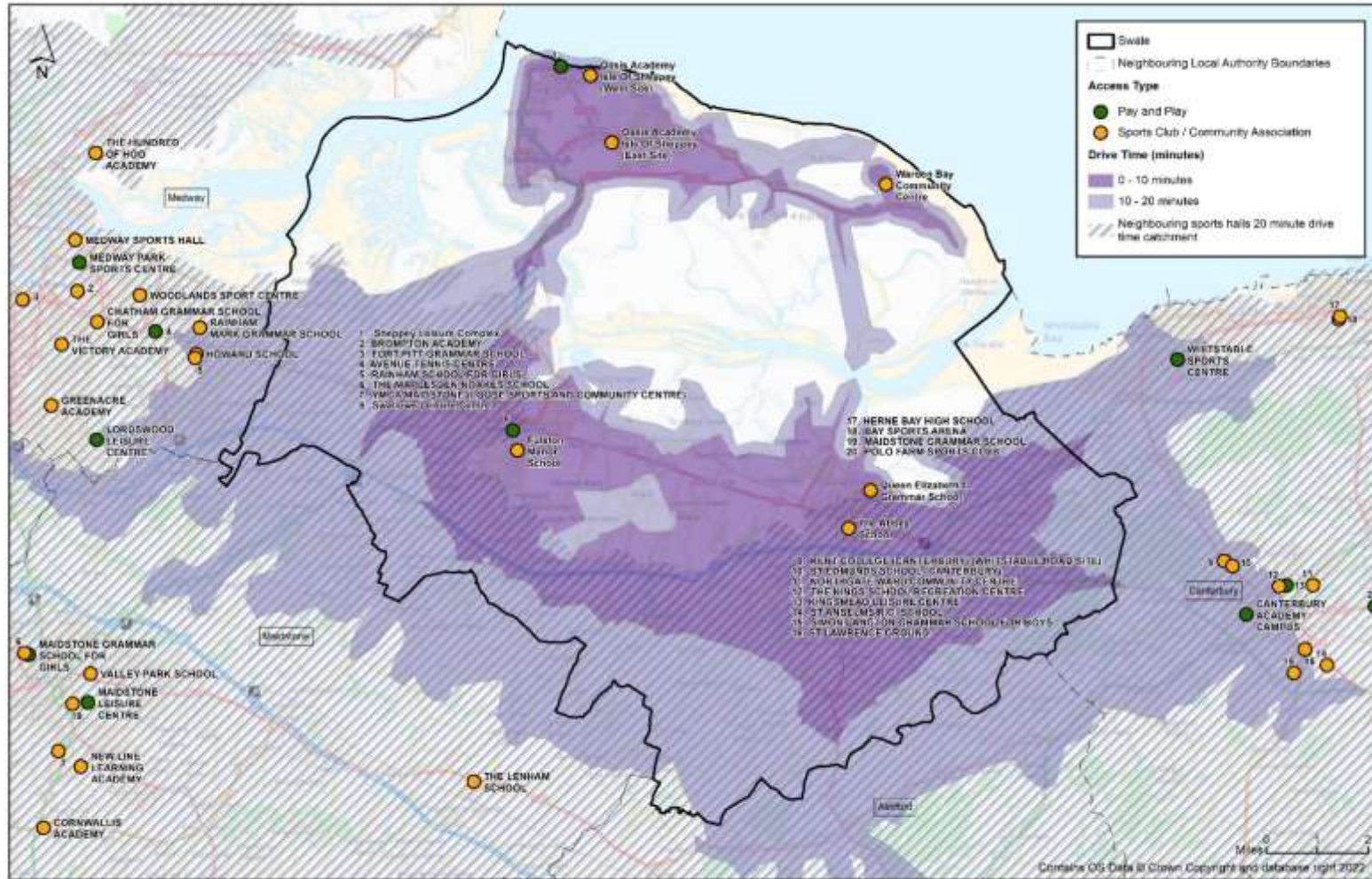
Pay and Play Sports Halls catchment areas in Swale (up to 20 minute drive time)



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Map 6: Catchment areas (20-minute drivetime) for Sports Halls in Swale with pay and play access and those only providing for sports club/community group access catchments



Pay and Play and Sports Club access Sports Halls catchment areas in Swale (up to 20 minute drive time)



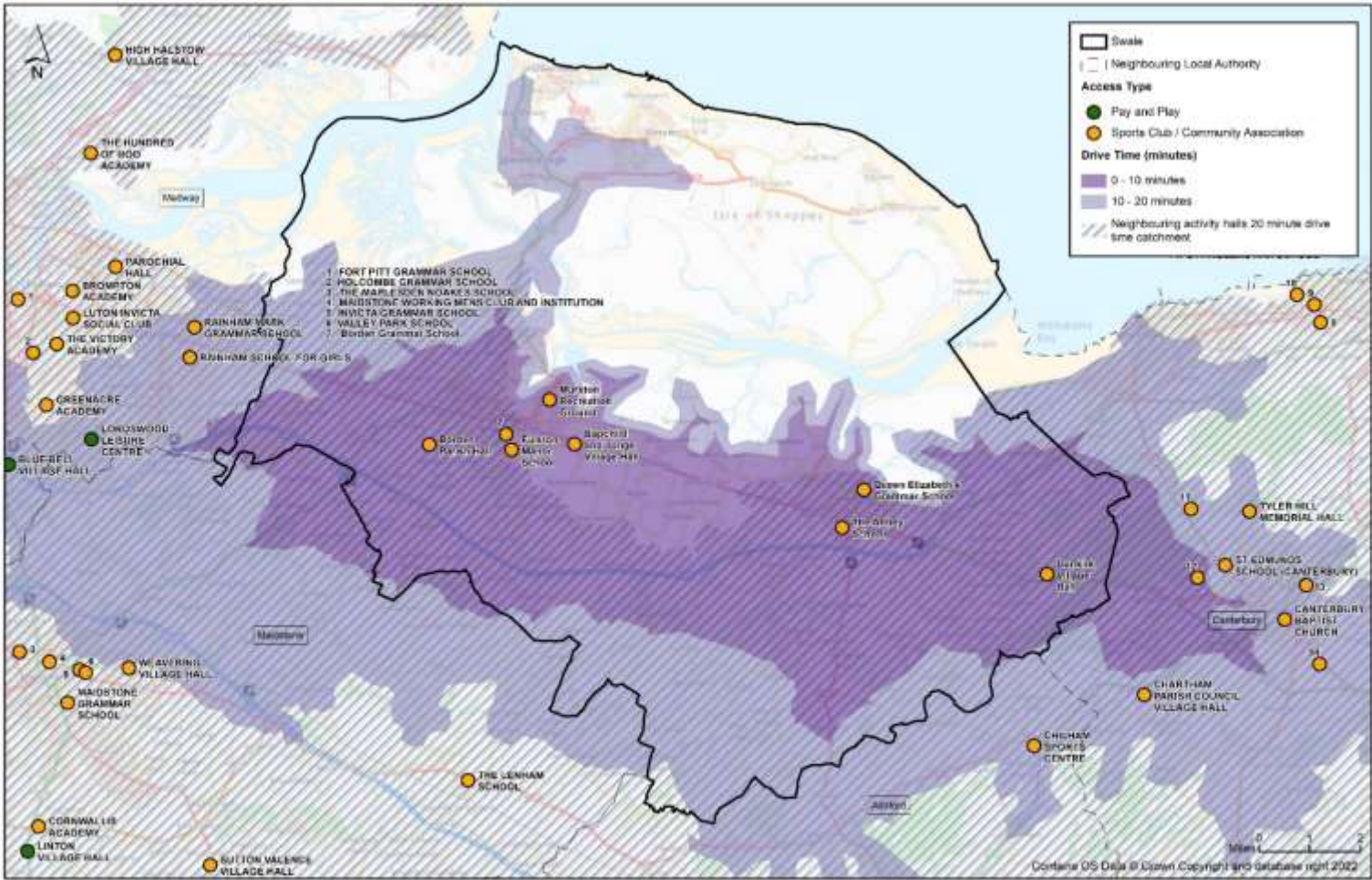
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- 5.71. Of the 11 strategic size sports halls only three provide all day pay and play accessible daytime use. The rest of the centres do not offer access during the day, because these sports halls are on education sites. Maps 4 and 5 illustrate the catchment areas for those sports halls (Map 4) and activity halls (Map 6) that offer pay and play access. Map 5 illustrates those sports halls and activity halls that offer pay and play access, and those that offer sports clubs/community association access, with a 20 -minute drivetime catchment area.
- 5.72. Overall, although there are several sports halls in Swale, access is limited because most sports halls are on education sites without formal community use arrangements. Most of the sports halls in Swale are located on school sites, or sites not wholly owned by SBC. Unlocking community use agreements would provide a good supply of sports hall space and badminton court provision especially considering the new proposed builds that have received planning permission within the last three years.
- 5.73. A further aspect of accessibility is programming, opening hours and whether facilities offer community pay and play access. Most of the education sites offer community access on a play and pay basis, the remaining schools allow for sports clubs and associations only.
- 5.74. Not everyone is, can be, or wants to be a member of a sports club, so this type of access does not actually provide for the whole community, and is unlikely to address the needs of the most inactive, or those from the areas of highest deprivation, who are also likely to be those experiencing significant health inequalities.
- 5.75. Access to informal community centre halls is important to ensure access to physical activity opportunities when there are fewer formal facilities available.

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Map 7: Catchment areas (20-minute drivetime) for Activity Halls in Swale with pay and play access and those only providing for sports club/community group access catchments



Pay and Play and Sports Club access Activity Halls catchment areas in Swale (up to 20 minute drive time)



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5.76. There is therefore an important role for the existing community centre informal hall space across Swale, in providing physical activity opportunities for specific communities and those who may choose not to access formal sports facilities. There is also potential to increase capacity for community access pay play usage of existing education-based facilities, which provide for sports clubs and associations.

National Governing Bodies (NGBs)

5.77. Consultation was undertaken with National Governing Bodies (NGBs) to identify their views on the need for sports hall provision in Swale. The views of NGB's (representing sports hall sports) who responded are included in Appendix 3. Unfortunately, there was no response was received from basketball, volleyball, or judo.

5.78. The key issues are:

- **Badminton England** – the ANOG from the Badminton England highlights a below average number of sports halls available and therefore below number of courts. There is an above average percentage of the population with disabilities and Swale is in the top 30% of most deprived areas and Badminton England has a target to tackle inequalities. More badminton courts are needed to service current and latent demand.
- **England Boxing** – there are six affiliated clubs in Swale with four located on Sheppey. There is a need for sustainable, long-term premises for two of the clubs (Minster and Sheerness).
- **British Gymnastics** – there are four gymnastic clubs in Swale (two in Sittingbourne, one in Faversham and one in Sheppey)
- **England Indoor Bowls Association** – there is one indoor bowls centre in Swale located at Sittingbourne. The NGB is committed to grow the popularity of bowls. Short mat bowls could be used as a feeder to attract more people to play bowls.
- **England Netball** – there are three clubs in Swale (one with a junior section – Comets). The current priority is to rebuild netball participation including back to netball, walking netball, netball now and bee netball. Also, to support local leagues and clubs and grow the base of volunteers and coaches. Finally, it has been highlighted that introductions to new partners within Swale were needed to 'grow the movement' and create aligned plans to reach common goals. Opportunities to work in partnership on external funding bids to increase participation was highlighted by England Netball NGB.
- **Boccia England** – encouraging sites to mark boccia courts in sports halls is a focus of Boccia England.
- **England Hockey** – the three hockey clubs in Swale have stated that whilst they would like to play indoor hockey in the winter months, the sports halls are not suitable (the issue is that the sports hall doors are not flush to the rebound walls and lack of provision of hockey goals).

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- **Football Association** – from a County Football Association (CFA) perspective futsal for both girls and boys will be targeted and developed over the next few seasons and the CFA would like a facility, or facilities, in Swale with markings on the sports hall floor for futsal.
- **England and Wales Cricket Board** – the EWCB has identified that any new provision or refurbishment of sports halls must provide facilities for indoor cricket. Indoor cricket facilities must meet the ECB guidance document (ECB TS3) that provides detailed information on the specific requirements on lighting, flooring and netting that are required for indoor cricket. The Council should work in partnership with Kent County Cricket and the ECB to find a sustainable solution to provide indoor cricket facilities in Swale.
- **Table Tennis (Colin Wiles Hon Sec Sittingbourne & District TT Association)** - a brief synopsis of competitive table tennis in Swale is as follows: 120 players from seven clubs, playing at six venues most of which have no capacity to field more teams as they have no more table slots free. Before the pandemic there were 154 players from nine clubs – three of which played at Newhouse Y&CC. An excellent venue for table tennis where the Table Tennis Association for Swale would play up to ten tables. Clubs played league matches on a Friday Night, however on Saturday morning a FREE coaching session of two hours was run for juniors which could attract 25 youngsters, many of whom would go on to join clubs for competitive matches. With the advent of Covid KCC shut Newhouse Y&CC and the Table Tennis Association still hasn't been able to get back to playing table tennis there because of wrangling over terms. It's not just Table Tennis that has lost out; there were other sporting activities including events for disabled. The closure was, and still is, devastating for the Table Tennis Association.

Sports Halls - Sport England Facility Planning Model (FPM) Sport England April 2022 ¹⁴

- 5.79. Strategic Leisure was provided with Sport England's Facilities Planning Model National Run Report (dated March 2022, based on Sport England 2020 National Run data see Appendix 4) for sports hall provision in Swale. The Sport England FPM report sets out an assessment of the current situation regarding sports hall supply, based on 13 sports halls located on eight sites and includes strategic size (3+ badminton courts) and one badminton court sports halls (activity halls) that are on the same site. There are three local authority leisure centre sports halls and five educational sites. The FPM report (April 2022) included one other site - the Kent County Council owned Newhouse Y&CC in Sittingbourne - which has a Main Sports Hall of 690 sq.m. This site experienced flood damage and was closed in 2020.
- 5.80. The FPM analysis excludes halls that are deemed to be for private use, too small, closed or where there is lack of information, particularly relating to hours of use. However, it is important to note that the FPM and the SLL supply and demand analysis differ slightly insofar as the supply and demand analysis excludes Newhouse Y&CC from calculations due to the current closure of Newhouse, whereas it is included in the FPM calculations.

¹⁴ *Please note that no national run data was made available in 2021 due to Covid restrictions

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For the purposes of the FPM, the population of Swale is calculated at 151,965 (2018-based subnational population projections for local authorities and this population generates a sports hall demand of 12,259 visits in the weekly peak period. The peak period is weekday evenings (up to 5 hours per day) and weekend days (up to 7 hours per weekend day). The demand in the weekly peak period including a 'comfort' factor equates to 42.1 badminton courts. This compares to a supply of 36.4 badminton courts which are available for community use in the same weekly peak period. Therefore, based on the FPM, in Swale demand exceeds supply by 5.7 badminton courts. This supply/demand balance is low when compared to neighbouring authorities. The actual total supply in the borough is 49.8 courts (FPM).

Most of the sites with halls excluded from the FPM supply are Activity Halls with no main sports hall on the site (e.g., village halls and primary school halls). A further site with a main hall - Warden Bay Community Centre / Village Hall - does not meet the FPM criteria for inclusion as the ceiling height prohibits the playing of many sports hall sports including badminton, other than at recreational level.

Two school sports halls are excluded on the grounds that they are only available for private use:

- The Westlands School - a main sports hall and two activity halls
- Sittingbourne School - a main sports hall and three activity halls

Both schools are in the main town of Sittingbourne and governed by the Swale Academies Trust. Whilst the outdoor pitches and courts at Sittingbourne School are available for hire to community clubs and groups, neither of the sports hall facilities at both schools are available for hire.

The FPM report (April 2022) includes one other site - the Kent County Council owned Newhouse Y&CC in Sittingbourne - which has a main sports hall of 690 sq.m. This site experienced flood damage and was closed in 2020.

Based on the dimensions of the halls, the FPM calculates this supply is the equivalent of just under 50 badminton courts (scaled to 36 courts based on hours of availability in the peak period) with a total site capacity (visits per week in the peak period- vpwpp) of 13,232 visits.

The total supply estimate of 50 badminton courts (scaled to 36 in the peak period) with an operational capacity figure of 11,824 visits per week excludes a number of other sports halls in the borough. These are listed in the FPM report (Appendix 1) as either for private use, too small, closed or a lack of information, particularly relating to hours of use.

The key findings from the Sport England FPM report is that current demand, based on a resident population of 151,965 (ONS 2018 estimate), the age and gender profile of this population and national research data on the frequency of participation in sports hall activities by each age group and gender, calculates total demand for sports halls in Swale as 12,259 visits per week in the peak period, the equivalent of 42 courts (with an 80% 'comfort factor').

The 2022 FPM states that there is a supply/demand balance for sports halls.

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- 5.81. Based on SLL's 2022 site visits and analysis the current supply and demand analysis is:
- Total 51 badminton courts (reflecting closure of Newhouse Y&CC).
 - This includes 3 badminton courts excluded from the FPM analysis (Warden Bay Community Centre) - these courts are available at all times.
 - Based on current demand being for 42.1 badminton courts at peak time, there is an actual supply of 51 badminton courts at peak times for all types of community use. There are 17 pay and play accessible badminton courts, the majority of which are available at all times. All the rest of the badminton courts are on education sites with access out of school hours i.e., evenings, weekends and holidays. These courts include those in activity halls, also available out of school hours i.e., evenings, weekends and holidays.
- 5.82. Although it would appear that there could be as much as a +9-badminton court supply this is actually unlikely given limited access hours on education sites. In reality it is more likely to be 2-3 badminton courts.
- 5.83. The analysis therefore demonstrates:
- A circa 2 badminton court over-supply
 - A significance reliance on access to badminton courts on education sites
 - Lack of formal community use agreements, and therefore ongoing access to education sports halls, even for limited times is unprotected moving forwards
 - Overall, an ageing stock of sports halls across the borough

Future Demand

- 5.84. The Swale Local Plan 2020 - 2038 includes housing allocations totalling 19,404 new dwellings and a population growth of 44,629 giving a best estimate total population by 2038 of 196,594. Using Sport England's Sports Facilities Calculator (SFC) for sports halls estimates that this level of new population, if delivered, will create an additional demand for approximately 12 courts equivalent to three 4 badminton court sports halls providing a capacity in the peak period of approximately 3,700 visits. (At Q2 2020 build costs, this would entail investment of £8.7million.)
- 5.85. Planning permission has already been given for three new 4 court sports halls on education sites in Swale. The critical element to ensure is negotiation over formal community access to these facilities.
- 5.86. The SFC provides a quantitative estimate of future demand, but unlike the FPM the SFC model analysis does not identify specific locations for future provision. That needs to be informed by the nature and location of future housing development (where locations are known), local geography and accessibility, and, critically, the location of existing facilities.

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- 5.87. This is because future demand may have the potential to be addressed through facility extension, or refurbishment, as well as new locations. However, in the absence of any other future demand calculator, the SFC provides an indicator of the level of future provision needed.
- 5.88. The SFC can be applied to the same facilities as those modelled in the FPM, but it is important to highlight that the SFC does not identify need, which can only be established by applying the information regarding demand from new housing to the findings and recommendations of the evidence in a Built Facility Strategy (BFS).
- 5.89. The full and detailed FPM Sports Hall report is included at Appendix 5.

Swimming Pools

Summary Supply and Demand Analysis

- 5.90. Table 21 summarises the overall supply and demand analysis for swimming pools in Swale.

Table 21: Summary Analysis – Swimming Pool Supply and Demand

Facility Type	Assessment Findings
Swimming Pools	
Quantity	<p>There are 12 swimming pools in Swale over 7 sites. There is one outdoor swimming pool (lido) at Faversham Swimming Pools which are not included in the 2022 Sport England Facility Planning Model (FPM) because of the restricted and/or available hours of use. Similarly, there are two small pools on primary school sites (Davington and Westlands); one learner pool at Reynolds Spa and the main pool at HMP Standford Hill all of which are also not included in the FPM model due to their size (less than 160 sq. metres) or private use on the prison site.</p> <p>The public pools at Sheppey Leisure Complex (Sheerness) Swallows Leisure Centre (Sittingbourne) and Faversham Pools provide pay and play community access to swimming pool provision in Swale 7 days a week.</p> <p>The estimated used capacity of the pools within the borough is 63% of pool capacity used in the weekly peak period which is just below the Sport England benchmark of pools being comfortably full, at 70% of pool capacity used in the weekly peak period.</p> <p>Current Demand</p> <p>Based on a Swale population of 151,965, demand has been calculated at 9,400 visits in the weekly peak period of weekday mornings (1 hour), lunchtimes (1 hour), weekday evenings (up to 5.5 hours per day) and weekend days (up to 7.5 hours per weekend day). This gives a total of 52.5 hours per week. This equates to a total demand for 1,560 sq. metres of water (with a 70% comfort factor). (For context, a 25m x 4 lane pool is between 210 – 250 sqm of water, depending on individual lane width). The supply of water space during the peak period is 1,569 sqm, and therefore supply exceeds demand by 9 sqm.</p>

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Facility Type	Assessment Findings																						
Swimming Pools	<p>Future Demand</p> <p>The following scenario has been developed to identify increased demand for swimming as a result of increased population from new housing developments in Swale borough:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Modelled scenarios</th> <th>Pop ONS 2018</th> <th>Total housing estimates New Local Plan</th> <th>Total population estimate x dwellings by 2.3</th> <th>TOTAL POPN</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Scenario 1</td> <td>151,965</td> <td>19,404</td> <td>44,629</td> <td>196,594</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Housing development and population growth in Swale will increase demand for swimming pool provision. As an indication (using the Sports Facility Calculator (SFC), it is possible to estimate overall future demand for provision of swimming pools, based on this population increase.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Scenario</th> <th>Current Supply of Water Space 2020</th> <th>Over Water Space</th> <th>Unmet Demand for Water Space 2020</th> <th>Future Demand for Additional Water Space by 2038 (SFC) Population Growth</th> <th>Total Under-Supply and unmet demand of Water Space by 2038</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Population increase to 196,594</td> <td>9 sqm</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>-496.49 sqm</td> <td>-488.49 sqm</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Local Plan 2020 - 2038 estimates 19,404 new dwellings within Swale administrative boundaries and a population growth (x 2.3) of 44,629 to an overall total of 196,594</i></p> <p>225 sqm is equivalent to a 4-lane x 25m pool.</p> <p>Scenario 1 –Under supply in 2038 of -488.49 sq.m of water space which is equivalent to 9.2 lanes or 2.3 pools with 2,971 visits per week at peak time (vpwpp) at a cost of £9,594,400</p> <p>The unmet demand identified in the FPM may not be significant if the water space at Faversham lidos is included in the overall pool supply (not included in FPM). In this scenario the undersupply of water space for future demand becomes considerably less i.e., a reduction of 300 sq. m (main 6 lane x 25m Lido at Faversham) so that under-supply becomes 188.49 sq. m.</p>	Modelled scenarios	Pop ONS 2018	Total housing estimates New Local Plan	Total population estimate x dwellings by 2.3	TOTAL POPN	Scenario 1	151,965	19,404	44,629	196,594	Scenario	Current Supply of Water Space 2020	Over Water Space	Unmet Demand for Water Space 2020	Future Demand for Additional Water Space by 2038 (SFC) Population Growth	Total Under-Supply and unmet demand of Water Space by 2038	Population increase to 196,594	9 sqm			-496.49 sqm	-488.49 sqm
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Population increase to 196,594	9 sqm			-496.49 sqm	-488.49 sqm																		
Quality	SBC's swimming pool sites are of reasonable quality. However, Faversham Pools may require significant investment to replace the roof over the main pool and provide improved changing facilities to meet safeguarding requirements. There is also a need to invest in pool plant at both Sheppey Leisure Centre and Swallows Leisure Centre. The borough has an ageing stock of pools; Swallows and Sheppey were last refurbished in 2005.																						
Accessibility	79% of all visits to pools are by car, with 15% of visits by walking and 6% of visits by public transport (all rounded and actuals in the satisfied demand table). Therefore, the majority of visits to pools are by car, but with 21%, or, one in five visits to a swimming pool, by a combination of walking and public transport; given the diversity within the borough these findings on travel patterns to swimming pool sites in Swale by walking and public transport are therefore not surprising.																						

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Facility Type	Assessment Findings
Swimming Pools	
	On the Isle of Sheppey, there is limited public transport to the swimming pool site in Sheerness, hence a greater reliance to travel to the pool site by car.
Availability	The swimming pool sites in Swale provide pay and play community access 7 days a week. All three swimming sites can accommodate the full range of swimming activities of learn to swim, public recreational swimming, lane swimming and fitness swimming activities, and swimming development through clubs.

Quantity

- 5.91. The supply analysis identifies that Swale has an overall total of 12 swimming pools in Swale over seven sites. These pools are shown in Map 7 and Table 22.
- 5.92. There is a total of 8 community pay and play swimming pools in Swale. These are:
- Faversham Swimming Pools (x 4) – 25m x 6 lane main pool, learner pool, 33m x 6 lane lido, and outdoor toddler pool
 - Sheppey Leisure Complex (x 2) – 25m x 6 lane main pool and 20m x 8.5m training pool
 - Swallows Leisure Centre (x 2) – 25m x 6 lane main pool and 13m learner pool
- 5.93. Strategic size pools are those of 160 square metres+. There are six strategic size pools in Swale. Two of these pools are located at Faversham Swimming Pool, one of which is an outdoor lido; one is a private pool at HMP Stanford Hill, and the remaining three pools are pay and play facilities at Sheppey Leisure Complex and Swallows Leisure Centre.
- 5.94. Sheppey Leisure Complex and Swallows Leisure Centre are owned by Swale Borough Council and managed under contract by Swale Community Leisure who subcontract to Serco Leisure. Faversham Swimming Pools is managed by Faversham Pools Trust. The charity owns the greater part of the site including part of the indoor pool building. Swale Borough Council owns the freehold of the remainder of the building which is subject to a lease granted to the charity.
- 5.95. A total of two pools are for private use only. These are located at MHP Stanford Hill and Davington Primary School (lido). There is also one pool located on a health club site for registered membership use only and a small indoor pool located at Westlands Primary School, available for community sports club/association use.

Map 8: Swimming pools by type in Swale



Swimming Pools by type in Swale



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Table 22: Swimming Pools in Swale

Site name	Post Code	Facility Type	Lanes	Length	Access Type	Ownership Type	Management Type	Pay and Play	Year Built	Year Refurbished
Davington Primary School	ME13 7EQ	Lido	0		Private	Community School	School/College/University		1999	N/A
Faversham Swimming Pools	ME13 8PW	Main Pool	6	25m x 13m	Pay and Play	Community Organisation	Trust	✓	1993	N/A
Faversham Swimming Pools	ME13 8PW	Teaching/Learner	0	9m x 9m	Pay and Play	Community Organisation	Trust	✓	1993	N/A
Faversham Swimming Pools	ME13 8PW	Lido	6		Pay and Play	Community Organisation	Trust	✓	1993	1995
HMP Standford Hill	ME12 4AA	Main Pool	0		Private	Other	Commercial Management		1986	N/A
Reynolds Fitness Spa Sittingbourne	ME10 1PA	Teaching/Learner	0		Registered Membership Use	Commercial	Commercial Management		2008	N/A
Sheppey Leisure Complex (Sheerness)	ME12 1HH	Main Pool	6	25m x 13m	Pay and Play	Local Authority	Commercial Management	✓	1980	2005

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Site name	Post Code	Facility Type	Lanes	Length	Access Type	Ownership Type	Management Type	Pay and Play	Year Built	Year Refurbished
Sheppey Leisure Complex (Sheerness)	ME12 1HH	Learner Pool	0	20m x 8.5m	Pay and Play	Local Authority	Commercial Management	✓	1980	2005
Swallows Leisure Centre	ME10 4NT	Leisure Pool	6	25m + fun	Pay and Play	Local Authority	Commercial Management	✓	1989	2005
Swallows Leisure Centre	ME10 4NT	Learner Pool	0	13m x 6m	Pay and Play	Local Authority	Commercial Management	✓	1989	2005
Westlands Primary School	ME10 1XN	Main Pool	0		Sports Club/Community Association	Academies	School/College/University		2010	N/A

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5.96. The analysis of the overall swimming pool supply in Swale is as follows:

Table 23: Analysis of Swimming Pool Supply in Swale

	No of Pools	No of sites
Total Number of Pools	12	7
Community Use Swimming Pools (pay and play and sports clubs/community associations)	9	4
Main Pools	4	4
Learner Pools	4	4
Diving Pools	0	0
Leisure pools ¹⁵	1	1
Education Sector (Sports Clubs and Associations)	1	1
Private Sector/Other	2	2
Lidos	2	1

Quality

5.97. Detailed quality assessments have been undertaken on all pools in the borough; these are summarised in Appendix 3 (3a – 3p) and Table 24.

Table 24: Summary Qualitative Assessments- Swimming Pools

Facility	Overall Quantitative Score for Facility %	Qualitative Score for Swimming Pool	Need for Investment- Overall Facility
Davington Primary School	46%	Average	Moderate
Faversham Swimming Pool	63%	Indoor – Good Outdoor - Average	Significant; there is a need to potentially replace the roof over the pool; there is also a need to invest in improved changing facilities meeting safeguarding requirements.
HMP Standford	Unable to gain access	Unable to gain access	Unable to gain access
Reynolds Spa	91%	Good	Minimal

¹⁵ Swallows is a leisure pool with a 25m lengths incorporated within

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Facility	Overall Quantitative Score for Facility %	Qualitative Score for Swimming Pool	Need for Investment- Overall Facility
Sheppey Leisure Complex	45%	Poor	Significant; this includes the need to invest in/replace pool plant and drainage, the latter which has caused recent facility closures.
Swallows Leisure Centre	71%	Average	Moderate; there is, however, a need to invest in pool plant.
Westlands Primary School	71%	Unable to gain access to swimming pool	Moderate

- 5.98. The average age of the swimming pool sites in 2020 is 33 years. Two sites were modernised in 2005: Sheppey Leisure Complex (which opened in 1980) and Swallows Leisure Centre (which opened in 1989). The newest swimming pool site is at Faversham which opened in 1993. The outdoor pool (lido) opened in 1963. A condition survey may show there is a business case for further modernisation, or possibly replacement of the swimming pool.
- 5.99. Swale Borough's swimming pools are of reasonable quality scoring good or average, although further investment will be required to modernise changing rooms the pool environment and the pool plant at Sheppey Leisure Complex. If Sheppey Leisure Complex was to be replaced, it would make sense to extend the water space available to address future under-supply in provision. It would also make sense to replace the pool as part of wider investment in physical activity in Sheppey – the existing sports hall and fitness facilities are being modernised through a Levelling Up Fund bid.
- 5.100. Faversham Pools also requires further investment to modernise the changing room cubicles and upgrade the ageing pool plant.
- 5.101. In addition to the swimming pool facilities described above, there are some small and outdoor pools located at Holiday Parks, particularly on the Isle of Sheppey. There are 2 indoor pools at Harts Holiday Park, one of which is 25m x 4 lane, but this is only open for between 9-12 months of the year. There are small outdoor pools at Warden Springs, Seaviwe, Golden Lane and Plough Leisure Holiday Parks. In the main these are heated, but they are only available for use by guests staying on the respective parks.
- 5.102. Whilst the pools on the holiday parks are assets to the area, they cannot be fully considered to provide for local residents for three main reasons:
- they are too small to accommodate all forms of aquatic activity
 - they are not open year round
 - they are not all accessible for community use

Accessibility

- 5.103. 19.4% of the population of Swale is without access to a car, higher than the regional average. The percentage of the population without access to a car influences travel patterns.

- 5.104. There are swimming pools in each of the three main settlements (Sheerness, Sittingbourne, and Faversham) which are accessible to those who do not travel out of the main towns. In fact, it was reported that many locals to the Isle of Sheppey tend not to leave the island. In this instance, it may not be so important for people to have access to a car, but it is important to ensure that pools are as accessible as possible to those walking or using public transport. As a guide, Sport England recommend that catchment areas should be 10-minute walk time, and/or a 20-minute drivetime (private car). Clearly it is not possible to provide a swimming pool within 10 minutes' walk time of all residents.

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Map 9: Swimming Pools in Swale by access type



Swimming Pools by access type in Swale



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Map 10: Pay and Play Swimming Pools in Swale

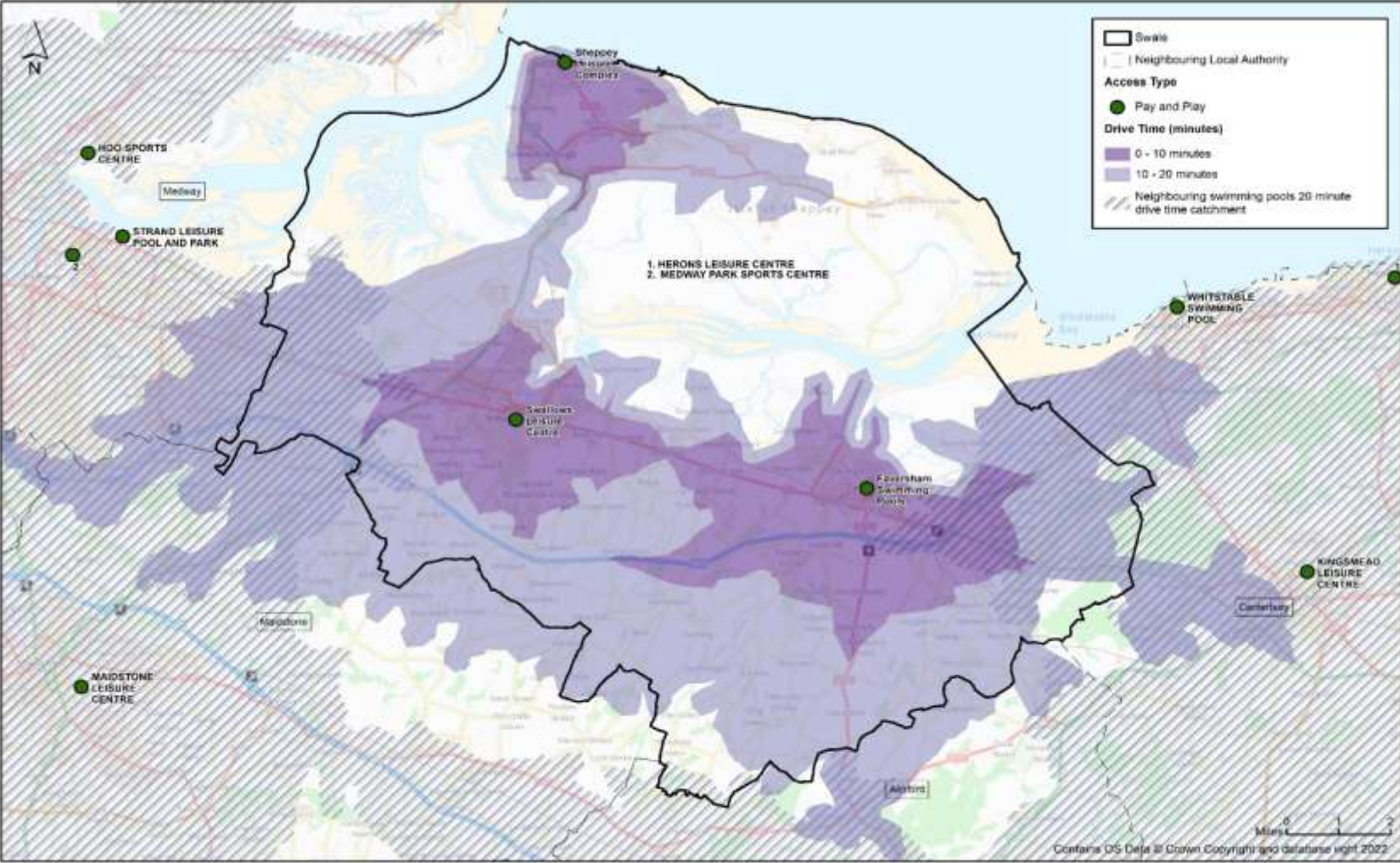


Swimming Pools by access type in Swale



N.B Surrounding pools shown but may not all be open all year e.g. The Strand may only be open in the summer months.

Map 11: Pay and Play access swimming pools in Swale with a 20-minute drivetime catchment area



Pay and Play Swimming Pools catchment areas in Swale (up to 20 minute drive time)



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- 5.105. The findings for Swale are that 79% of all visits to pools are by car, with 15% of visits by walking and 6% of visits by public transport. Therefore, most visits to the pools are by car, with 21%, or, one in five, visits to a swimming pool, by a combination of walking and public transport.
- 5.106. The Borough is separated by the Swale estuary that is very much shaped north-west to south-east; the findings on travel patterns to the Sheerness Pool at the Sheppey Leisure Complex by walking and public transport are therefore not surprising. There is a clear relationship between the pool site location and public transport routes, including the lack of proximity to the railway stations hence a greater reliance on travelling to the pool site by car.
- 5.107. Accessibility to the existing pay and play pools is challenging for those who live on the east side of the Isle of Sheppey, i.e., around the Eastchurch, Leysdown and Warden Bay areas unless one has access to a private car. Public transport is minimal; there is limited bus service to and from the east to Sheerness. There are therefore time, cost, and travel barriers for many living in the more remote parts of the island in terms of access to swimming. Given swimming is a life skill, and areas along the coast such as Minster and Leysdown are surrounded by both coastal and inland water, learning to swim is important.

Availability

- 5.108. In terms of increasing community access to pools in Swale, there is limited scope for improvement. All three swimming complexes provide the full range of swimming activities of learn to swim, public recreational swimming, lane swimming and fitness swimming activities, and swimming development through clubs.
- 5.109. The Faversham Swimming Pools now offers all-year round swimming in its 33m outdoor pool to cater for the increase in popularity of lidos and open-air swimming.

National Governing Body

- 5.110. Consultation was undertaken with Swim England, to identify their views on the need for swimming pool provision in Swale. The views of Swim England (and the other NGBs) are provided in Appendix 3, and summarised below:
- To ensure that the future provision of water space is fit for purpose and able to meet the demand of the community. It is likely that significant investment will be needed in the future to provide sustainable aquatic facilities. Currently the stock of swimming pools meets the overall demand, but they are aged and are approaching the life span of a swimming pool. Condition reports would need completing to assess whether refurbishment works could maintain a sustainable operation, or if a redevelopment would be the best option of investment.
 - The key clubs in Swale using the facilities are Faversham Swimming Club (Swimming, Water Polo, Masters, Artistic), East Invicta excel (Swimming), Sheerness SC & Lifeguard (Swimming and Masters), Beachfield Swim Squad, Sittingbourne and Milton SC. Faversham Water Polo are currently looking for more pool time and might start to use the Swimming pool at Kingsmead in Canterbury.

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- Swim England confirmed that the redevelopment of all three facilities (owing to site reports confirming the current conditions and operational costs), to ensure the future provision is a priority to ensure they are fit for purpose and able to operate to the best standards possible. The NGB also recognises the need to see further water provision in the long term, if large housing developments are introduced and with the natural population growth. Currently the largest unmet demand is placed toward the east of the district, meaning a heavy reliance on Swallows LC to continue to provide a large amount of water space.
- Swim England would support investment in provision of an energy efficient, modern swimming pool to replace the existing Sheppey Pool that would support the development of swimming across the county and in particular encourage more residents to swim. Swim England will work with facility operators and within all sectors of the facility from Learn to Swim to School Swimming creating strong pathways to Club swimming. There is also an opportunity to grow other aquatic disciplines within the sport; Water polo and Artistic swimming (Synchronised Swimming), creating additional opportunities for Swale residents.
- The replacement of Sheppey Pool is the priority for the borough, followed by investment in both Swallows and Faversham. The existing supply of swimming pools meets the demand of Swale residents, but the population is increasing. For this reason, and because there is no need to develop an additional pool, there is a need to replace the existing Sheppey Pool with a minimum 6 lane x 25m pool and teaching pool as opposed to a smaller offer e.g. Leisure Local (4 lane x 20m/15m pool).

Swimming Pools - Sport England Facility Planning Model (FPM)

Strategic Leisure was provided with Sport England's Facilities Planning Model National Run Report (March 2020) for swimming pool provision in Swale. The FPM describes the swimming offer in Swale as extensive as all three public leisure centre sites have a main pool and teaching/learner pool.

The borough has an extensive swim offer, with a swimming pool located in each of the three main settlements – Sheerness on Isle of Sheppey, Sittingbourne, and Faversham. These towns are where most of the population live.

The supply analysis identifies that there are six strategic sized swimming pools in Swale at the three public leisure facilities which have a total of 1,599 sq.m of water. The average age of the three swimming pool sites in 2020 is 33 years old. The pool sites at Sheppey Leisure Complex and at Swallows Leisure Centre were modernised in 2005.

The public swimming offer at all three sites can provide for all the swimming activities of: learn to swim; casual recreational swimming; lane and aqua aerobics fitness swimming activities; and swimming development through clubs; and these activities can take place in dedicated pools. Furthermore, the leisure pool at Swallows Leisure Centre provides for developing confidence in shallow water and fun/family-based activities. The outdoor pools at Faversham now provide an all-year round outdoor swim alternative although the FPM does not include lidos within the FPM run

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Across the five local authorities in the Kent area, which includes Swale Borough, there are 30 swimming pool sites and 49 individual swimming pools. Medway has the highest provision with 9 swimming pool sites and 15 individual swimming pools. Canterbury, Ashford, and Maidstone have a similar supply each averaging 9 pools at 6 sites.

Based on a Swale population of 151,965, demand has been calculated at 9,400 visits in the weekly peak period of weekday mornings (1 hour), lunchtimes (1 hour), weekday evenings (up to 5.5 hours per day) and weekend days (up to 7.5 hours per weekend day). This gives a total of 52.5 hours per week.

This equates to a total demand for 1,560 sq. metres of water (with a 70% comfort factor). (For context, a 25m x 4 lane pool is between 210 – 250 sqm of water, depending on individual lane width). The supply of water space during the peak period is 1,569 sqm, and therefore supply exceeds demand by 9 sqm.

90% of the total demand for swimming from Swale Borough residents is satisfied/met. This is the level of the total demand for swimming, located inside the catchment area of a swimming pool which is accessible to Swale Borough residents, based on where Swale residents live, and the 20-minute drive time catchment area of the pool locations outside the Borough.

In 2020, 10% of the demand from Swale residents is not met. This represents 912 visits in the weekly period and is the equivalent of 151 sq.m of water.

Unmet demand due to lack of facility capacity is less than 1% of unmet demand, 99% is because swimming pools are too far away from where residents live. The location with the highest level of reachable unmet demand is in Danaway, close to Junction 5 on the M2, where unmet demand of 70.5 sq.m of water could be met.

There is insufficient reachable demand in any one location to support provision of a new swimming pool to increase access for residents. For context the minimum amount of water space required to justify a new pool would 160 sq.m, which is a 20m x 8m four-lane pool.

The overall estimated used capacity of the swimming pools in the borough is 63% of pool capacity used in the weekly peak period which is just below the Sport England benchmark of pools being comfortably full, at 70% of pool capacity used in the weekly peak period. The FPM findings are that Faversham Pool is available 45.5 hours (main pool) and 51.5 hours (teaching pool) which is six hours and one hour respectively short of the maximum 52.5 hours given for a weekly peak period.

Health and Fitness Facilities

Supply and Demand Analysis – Health and fitness (facilities & studios)

5.111. A summary of the supply and demand analysis is summarised in Table 25.

Table 25: Summary Analysis – Health and Fitness Supply and Demand

Facility Type	Assessment Findings
Health and Fitness (Fitness Suites and Studios)	
Quantity	<p>There are 12 fitness suites in Swale, with a total of 596 fitness stations. Two facilities are owned by SBC and managed by Serco Leisure on its behalf; these provide 102 of the 596 fitness stations in Swale. There are 12 studios in Swale, five of which have pay and play community access.</p> <p>Supply and Demand Analysis</p> <p>The existing commercial sector fitness suite provision in Swale is used by residents. The commercial fitness suites vary in type, but none are considered high end fitness companies; a lot of membership costs are comparable with community facilities. On this basis, the assessment of the current and future need for fitness facilities reflects the fact that Swale residents are likely to use those facilities which offer provision and a membership rate often comparable to public sector facilities. The assessment of need includes the commercial facilities, as ‘community access’ on the basis of ‘affordability’ and includes all audited fitness facilities.</p> <p>Current and Future Supply and Demand</p> <p>There are currently 12 fitness centres with 11 fitness suites providing 20 or more fitness stations. There are 596 fitness stations in total in the borough and a calculated demand for 527 stations. There is therefore a current over-supply of +54 fitness stations. (See Appendix 12). By 2038, demand increases to 602 fitness stations which results in a small under-supply of -21 fitness stations.</p> <p>There is therefore a need to maintain the current level of provision as a minimum and ideally look to increase the number of fitness stations as part of any future redevelopment of leisure facilities in the borough. Faversham Pools and Sheppey Leisure Complex would be the priority locations for additional fitness stations.</p>
Quality	<p>The quality of the commercial fitness facilities is average in general. All have up to date fitness stations, are well-designed and planned facilities, with good quality changing facilities. None of the facilities that were audited were excellent and the majority are average with moderate/significant investment needed to raise the quality of the facilities to meet public expectations.</p>
Availability	<p>The commercial sector provides 479 of the 596 fitness stations in the borough (80%). However, the existing commercial in Swale is not comprised of high-end fitness companies with higher cost memberships. There is therefore a wide range of affordable provision which provides competition to the Council’s fitness offer.</p>

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Facility Type	Assessment Findings
Accessibility	<p>Most areas of the borough are within a 20-minute drive time catchment of a community accessible fitness suite. 19.4% of the Swale population does not have access to a car¹⁶. It is therefore important to ensure that fitness suites are as accessible as possible to those walking or using public transport.</p> <p>Existing community access fitness facilities are well-located in Swale to the population. Commercial fitness facilities are driven by, and rely on, market demand.</p>

Quantity

- 5.112. A station is a piece of static fitness equipment; health and fitness centres, with over 20 stations, are generally able to make a more attractive offer to both members and pay and play users.
- 5.113. The 2022 state of UK Industry report reveals that the membership penetration rate is 14.6%, so approximately one in every seven people over the age of 16 in the UK is a member of a gym.
- 5.114. There is a reasonable amount of fitness suite provision in Swale borough. The supply analysis identifies that overall, there are 12 health and fitness facilities located at 11 sites in Swale. In total, the fitness suites provide 596 fitness stations. All fitness suite facilities require some form of payment/membership payment before use, and an induction is required.
- 5.115. Two are owned by SBC and managed and operated by Serco (Sheppey Leisure Complex and Swallows Leisure Centre), nine are private gyms (Reynolds Fitness Spa, Rodersham Squash Club, Shurland Hotel Leisure Club, Snap Fitness - Neats Court, Snap Fitness – Sittingbourne, Syndale Park Personal Fitness Club (Appear to be two fitness suites) , The Fitness Centre and Tonics Fitness Centre and one is managed by an independent Trust (Faversham Community Gymnastics & Activity Centre).
- 5.116. In Swale the pay and play facilities are Sheppey Leisure Complex, Swallows Leisure Centre, Rodersham Squash Club, Shurland Hotel and The Fitness Centre in Vicarage Road. These facilities also offer memberships.
- 5.117. All fitness suite facilities in the borough are shown in Table 26 and illustrated in Map 11.

¹⁶ Source: 2011 Census

Map 12: Health and Fitness Facilities in Swale



Health and Fitness facilities type in Swale



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Table 26: Fitness Facilities (Fitness Suites) in Swale

Site Name	Post Code	Facility Type	Number of Stations	Access Type	Ownership Type	Management Type	Pay and Play Community Access facilities	Year Built	Year Refurbished
Faversham Community Gymnastics & Activity Centre	ME13 8BF	Health and Fitness Suite	15	Club Members	Other	Trust		2003	2012
Reynolds Fitness Spa	ME10 1PA	Health and Fitness Suite	35	Club Members	Commercial	Commercial		2008	n/a
Rodersham Squash Club	ME9 0RA	Health and Fitness Suite	28	Pay and Play	Commercial	Commercial		1985	2019
Sheppey Leisure Complex	ME12 1HH	Health and Fitness Suite	32	Pay and Play	Local Authority	Commercial Contractor	✓	1980	2016
Shurland Hotel	ME12 4EH	Health and Fitness Suite	43	Pay and Play	Commercial	Commercial		1994	2012
Snap Fitness (Neats Court)	ME11 5AR	Health and Fitness Suite	100	Club Members	Commercial	Commercial		2019	n/a
Snap Fitness (Sittingbourne)	ME10 4NT	Health and Fitness Suite	60	Club Members	Commercial	Commercial		2012	n/a
Swallows Leisure Centre	ME10 4NT	Health and Fitness Suite	70	Pay and Play	Local Authority	Commercial Contractor	✓	1989	2014

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Site Name	Post Code	Facility Type	Number of Stations	Access Type	Ownership Type	Management Type	Pay and Play Community Access facilities	Year Built	Year Refurbished
Syndale Park Personal Fitness Club	ME13 0RH	Health and Fitness Suite	50	Club Members	Commercial	Commercial		1996	2012
Syndale Park Personal Fitness Club	ME13 0RH	Health and Fitness Suite	20	Club Members	Commercial	Commercial		2018	n/a
The Fitness Centre	ME10 2BJ	Health and Fitness Suite	53	Pay and Play	Commercial	Commercial		1987	2000
Tonics Fitness Centre	ME9 8AQ	Health and Fitness Suite	90	Club Members	Commercial	Commercial		2000	2012

5.118. SBC provides 17% (102) of the overall supply of 596 fitness stations in the Swale borough area. There are six fitness suites with 50 stations or more. Commercially operated fitness suites require registered membership and operate pre-registered, pre-paid/DD membership schemes. The local authority fitness facilities also operate on this basis in Swale.

5.119. Analysis of the overall supply of fitness suites is summarised in Table 27:

Table 27: Analysis of overall Fitness Suite Provision in Swale

Total Fitness Suites	12
Total Fitness Stations	596
Pay and Play Fitness Suites	5
Pay and Play / No. of Fitness Stations	226

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Registered Membership Fitness Suites	5
Registered Membership no. of Fitness Stations	355
Private use Fitness Suites	0
Private use no. of Fitness Stations	n/a
Sports club Fitness Suites	1
Sports Club no. of Fitness Stations	15

Table 28: Summary of Fitness Suite Size

Number of Fitness Stations	No. Fitness Suites
150+	0
100 - 149	1
50 - 99	5
30 - 49	3
29 or less	3

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5.120. Health and fitness facilities by access type are shown on Map 12.

Map 13: Health and Fitness Facilities in Swale by access type



Health and Fitness Suites by access type in Swale



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Quality

- 5.121. Detailed quality assessments have been undertaken at the health and fitness facilities where access was possible. The quality audits are summarised in Appendix 3 (3a – 3p) and Table 29. It was not possible to undertake detailed quality audits on all existing facilities, as commercial operators often do not want these to be undertaken. Therefore, a visual check of these has been undertaken online.
- 5.122. The visual check highlights that overall, the quality of the commercial facilities is average as is generally the case. All have up to date fitness stations, are well-designed and planned facilities, with good quality changing facilities. None of the facilities that were audited were excellent and the majority are average with moderate/significant investment needed to raise the quality of the facilities to meet public expectations.

Table 29: Summary Qualitative Assessments - Health and Fitness Facilities (fitness suites and studios)

	Overall Quantitative Score for Facility %	Qualitative Score for Health and Fitness Suite	Need for Investment- Overall Facility
Faversham Community Gymnastics & Activity Centre	69% Good	Poor	Moderate
Reynolds Fitness Spa	91% Excellent	Excellent	Minimal
Rodmersham Squash Club	71% Good	Good	Moderate
Sheppey Leisure Complex	44% Average	Poor	Significant
Shurland Hotel	54% Average	Average	Moderate
Snap Fitness (Neats Court)	68% Good	Good	Minimal
Snap Fitness (Sittingbourne)	68% Good	Good	Minimal
Swallows Leisure Centre	71% Good	Good	Minimal
Syndale Park Fitness Club	57% Average	Average	Minimal
The Fitness Centre	59% Average	Average	Moderate
Tonics Fitness Centre	75% Good	Good	Moderate

- 5.123. The quality of the community access health and fitness facilities (those offering access over and above membership) ranges from poor to good.

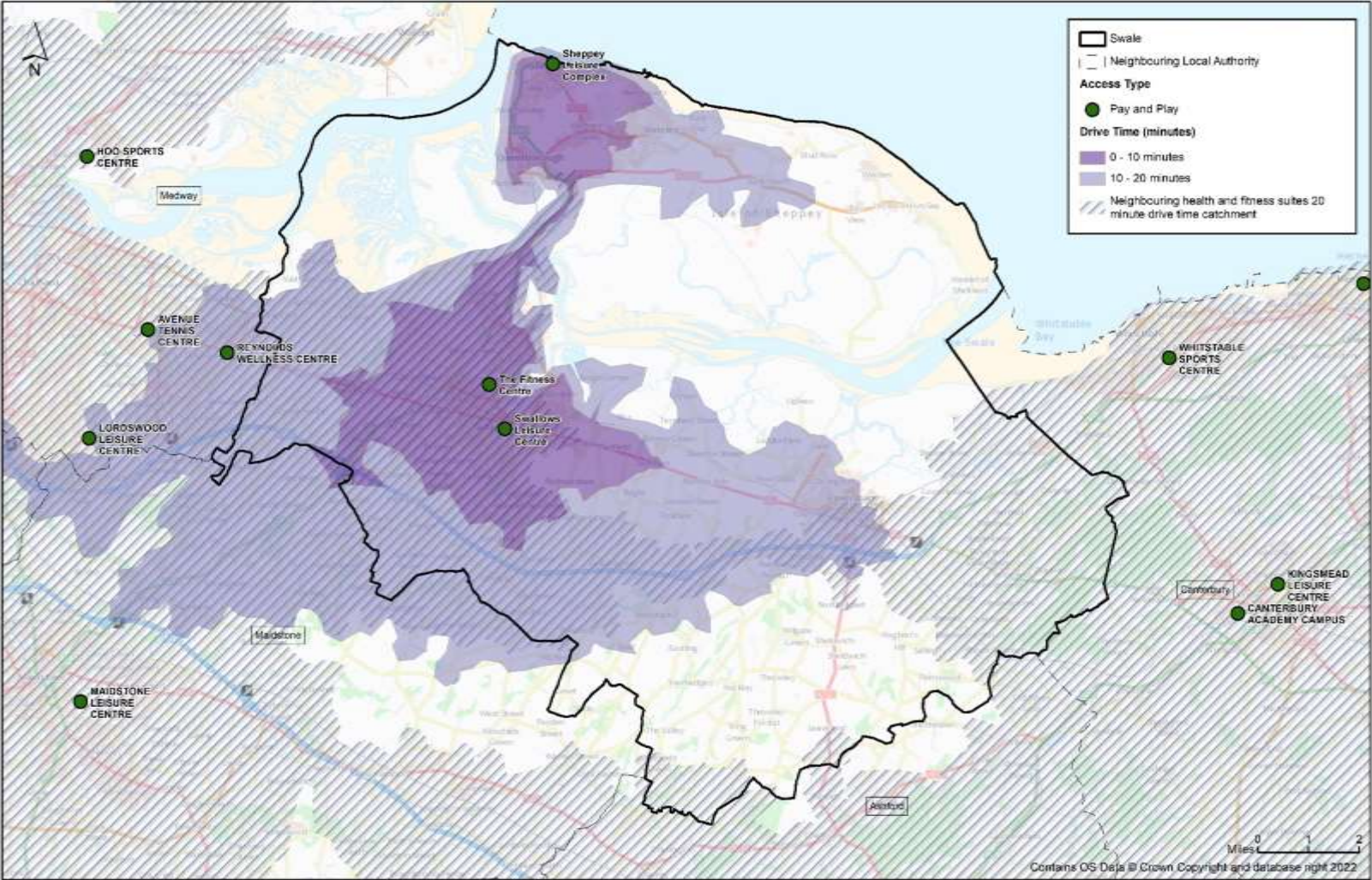
Accessibility

- 5.124. It is clear from Map 13 that most areas of the borough are within a 20-minute drive time catchment of a community accessible fitness suite. 19.4% of the Swale population does not have access to a car¹⁷. It is therefore important to ensure that fitness suites are as accessible as possible to those walking or using public transport.
- 5.125. Existing community access fitness facilities are well-located to the population in Swale. Membership of commercial fitness facilities are driven by, and rely on, market demand.
- 5.126. All SBC facilities provide inclusive fitness facilities. The Shapemaster suite in Sheppey Pool provides opportunities for those with a disability or life limiting conditions to be active.

¹⁷ Source: 2011 Census

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Map 14: Community access Fitness Suites within a 20-minute drive time catchment area



Pay and Play Health and Fitness Suites catchment areas in Swale (up to 20 minute drive time)



Availability

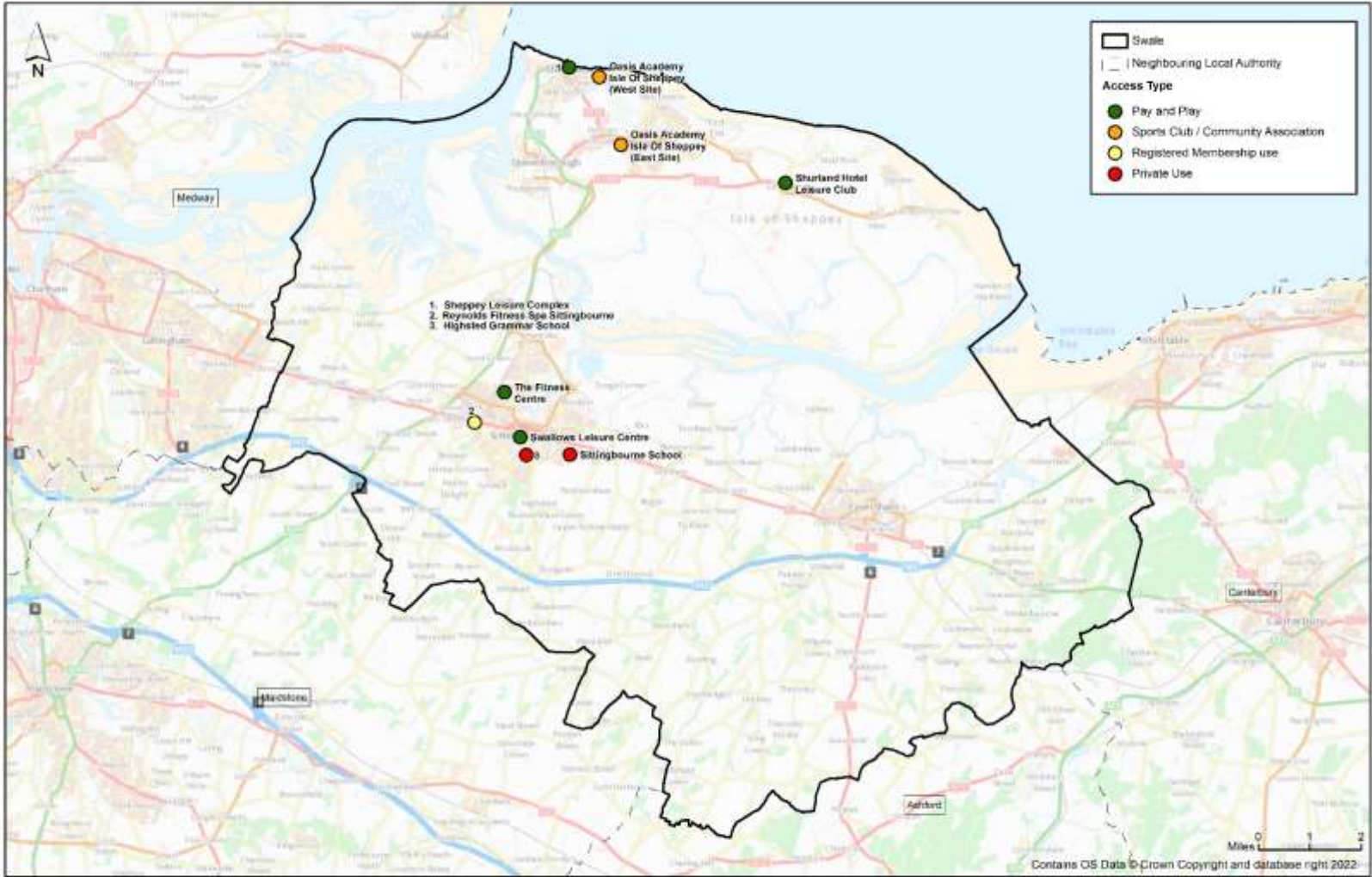
- 5.127. Of the existing fitness provision in Swale the commercial sector (private and registered membership) provides 479 of the 596 stations (80%); only 15 of the stations (3%) are provided by the sports club sector, and 102 (17%) by SBC (managed by Serco).
- 5.128. It is important to highlight that the existing commercial sector fitness suite provision in Swale is not comprised of high-end fitness companies with higher cost memberships and therefore these remain reasonably accessible. The commercial provision, and particularly the lower cost end of the market, therefore, presents a level of competition to the SBC facilities. On this basis, the assessment of the current and future need for fitness facilities reflects the fact that many Swale borough residents are likely to use those facilities which offer provision and a membership rate comparable to public sector facilities, because they are more affordable. The analysis of need for additional fitness stations (Appendix 12) includes all the community accessible fitness suites in Swale offering 20 or more fitness stations.

Fitness Studios

Quantity

- 5.129. There are 12 studios in Swale, as identified through Sport England Active Places. These are provided as part of a health and fitness offer within facilities. Studios provide a space in which a range of aerobic, fitness and dance classes plus activities such as yoga and Pilates, can take place as well as martial arts, and boxing. Although requiring some specialist equipment for martial arts and boxing, it is also possible to do a form of these activities in an informal space such as a community hall. Informal halls can also accommodate a range of fitness and dance classes. Informal halls are discussed in the Sports Hall and Activity Hall section of this assessment. All SBC facilities provide inclusive fitness facilities.
- 5.130. The studios assessed in this report are multi-purpose studios (no specific size), not those with fixed equipment, or only one use e.g.: spinning.
- 5.131. Many community hall facilities are used by dance schools, and the smaller halls often available on education sites have significant potential to be used for fitness classes as do village halls.
- 5.132. The overall provision of studios in Swale is summarised in Table 30.
- 5.133. Map 11 shows studios as part of the overall health and fitness offer in Swale. Map 14 shows the locations of individual community accessible studios.

Map 15: Community access studio facilities in Swale



Studios by access type in Swale



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Table 30: Fitness Studios in Swale

Site Name	Post Code	Facility Type	Number of Studios	Access Type	Ownership Type	Management Type	Pay and Play	Year Built	Year Refurbished
Highsted Grammar	ME10 4PT	Studio	1	Private Use	Academy	School/College		2009	n/a
Oasis Academy (East Site)	ME12 3JQ	Studio	1	Sports Club / Community Association	Academy	School/College		2013	n/a
Oasis Academy (West Site)	ME12 2BE	Studio	1	Sports Club / Community Association	Academy	School/College		2013	n/a
Reynolds Fitness Spa	ME10 1PA	Studio	1	Registered Membership use	Commercial	Commercial Management		2008	2009
Sheppey Leisure Complex	ME12 1HH	Studio	2	Pay and Play	Local Authority	Commercial Management	✓	1980/1991	2019/2003
Shurland Hotel Leisure Club	ME12 4EH	Studio	1	Pay and Play	Commercial	Commercial Management	✓	1994	n/a
Sittingbourne School	ME10 4NL	Studio	1	Private Use	Community School	School/College		2006	n/a
Swallows Leisure Centre	ME10 4NT	Studio	3	Pay and Play	Local Authority	Commercial Management	✓	2005/2002	2019

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Site Name	Post Code	Facility Type	Number of Studios	Access Type	Ownership Type	Management Type	Pay and Play	Year Built	Year Refurbished
The Fitness Centre	ME10 2BJ	Studio	1	Pay and Play	Commercial	Commercial Management	✓	2002	n/a

5.134. There are 12 studios in total; three studios are provided through commercial facilities, four are on education sites, providing access to community sports clubs through the schools' letting policy and five are owned by SBC and managed by Serco. There are other sites at village halls and smaller venues which are not included as part of this study.

5.135. The analysis of the overall studio supply in Swale is as follows:

Table 31: Analysis of overall Studio Supply – Swale

Total Studios	12
Pay and Play Community Access Studios	5
Commercial Sector Studios	3
Education Sector Studios	4

Quality

5.136. Detailed quality assessments have been undertaken on all Swale Borough Council sports facilities, plus those facilities shown in Table 34 which have studios i.e., a total of nine facilities. These are summarised in Appendix 3 (3a – 3p) and Table 32.

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Table 32: Summary of Quality Assessments Studios in Swale

	Overall Quantitative Score for Facility %	Qualitative Score for Health and Fitness Studios	Need for Investment- Overall Facility
Highsted Grammar School	Not accessed	Not Accessed	Not accessed
Oasis Academy (East)	82% Excellent	Excellent	None
Oasis Academy (West)	82% Excellent	Excellent	None
Reynolds Fitness & Spa	91% Excellent	Excellent	Minimal
Sheppey Leisure Complex	44% Average	Average	Moderate
Shurland Hotel Leisure Club	54% Average	Average	Moderate
Sittingbourne School	71% Good	Good	Moderate
Swallows Leisure Centre	71% Good	Good	Minimal
The Fitness Centre	59% Average	Good	Moderate

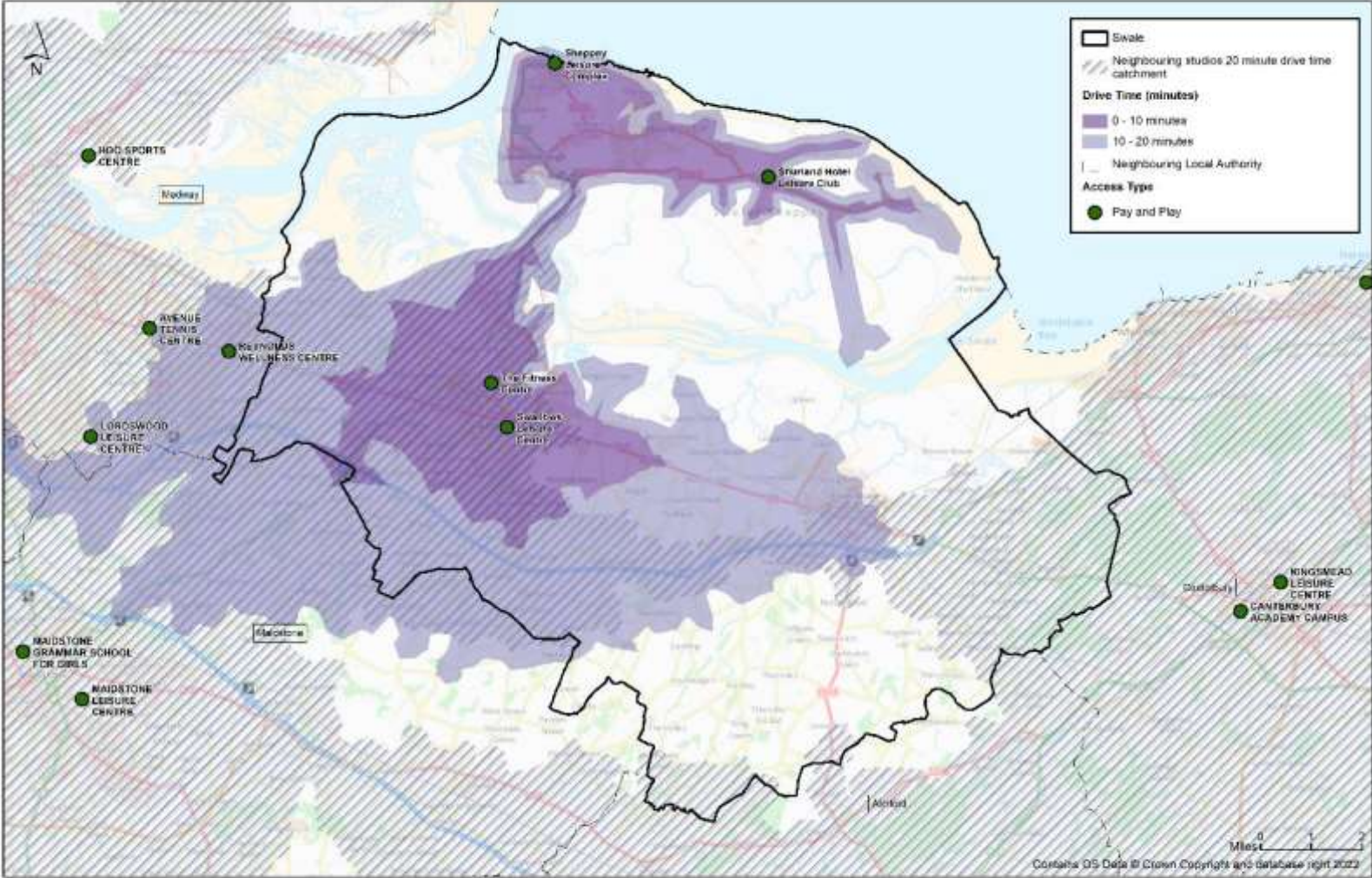
5.137. The quality of studios is generally good with a number of facilities having been refurbished recently.

Accessibility

5.138. Health and fitness facilities are predominantly located in the three main settlements within the borough. Most studios are part of an overall fitness offer, i.e., fitness suite and studio(s) with only the two SBC facilities offering more than one studio.

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Map 16: Pay and Play Community Use Studios with a 20-minute drivetime catchment



Pay and Play Studios catchment areas in Swale (up to 20 minute drive time)



- 5.139. It is clear from Map 15 that all Swale residents currently have access to a studio within a 20-minute drive time catchment.
- 5.140. 19.4% of the Swale population does not have access to a car¹⁸. It is therefore important to ensure that studios are as accessible as possible to those walking or using public transport.
- 5.141. Existing community access fitness facilities are mainly situated in the three main settlements within the borough giving access to these community facilities. In addition to the community access studios, there are other studios (commercial/on education sites) which are also used by residents; overall there is an average stock of provision in Swale, and they are all accessible to most local residents given where they are located.

Availability

- 5.142. A comprehensive programme of fitness classes is available on the nine sites of the studios, and other sporting activities are offered at the community access facilities.
- 5.143. Some commercial operators have membership rates comparable to those at the Swale Borough Council owned leisure centres.
- 5.144. In addition to the purpose-built studio facilities in Swale, there are a number of multi-purpose halls, in community centres/village halls; these are also used for activities which could also take place in a studio e.g. aerobics, dance, pilates, yoga etc. Many personal trainers also use village halls as a venue for exercise.

¹⁸ Source 2011 Census

Squash

Summary of Supply and Demand

5.145. A summary of the supply and demand assessment for squash courts in Swale is set out in Table 33.

Table 33: Summary Analysis – Squash Courts Supply and Demand

Facility Type	Assessment Findings
Squash Courts	
Quantity	<p>There is a total of 8 courts in Swale with 2 of these being glass-backed squash courts. All squash courts are provided through the commercial or third sector, not at SBC facilities. Rodmersham Squash Club has 6 of the 8 courts; membership is strong, and courts are well-used. The squash club courts provide predominantly for club members.</p> <p>Tonics Fitness Club and Syndale Park Personal Fitness Club provide one court each; these have limited pay and play access.</p> <p>England Squash has invested in Kent County Squash Association; the investment and impact of the County Association makes Swale a key area for future delivery and squash participation,</p> <p>Future Demand</p> <p>There is no specific methodology for assessing the current and future need for squash courts. Overall participation in squash is decreasing at national level, and this is now being seen at a local level.</p> <p>Competitive squash across the country is predominantly now played in clubs, within a club facility and this is replicated in Swale; demand for community access squash courts has reduced in recent years. Junior participation is growing but through a club base where juniors can be supported and coached from an early age.</p>
Quality	The quality of existing squash courts is generally of a good standard with the exception of the court at Syndale Park Personal Fitness Club which needed refurbishing – floor sanding and walls repainted.
Accessibility	The existing squash courts are provided at Rodmersham Squash Club, Tonics Fitness Club and Syndale Park Personal Fitness Club (limited pay and play access because both facilities operate on a membership basis).
Availability	6 courts are available for community access at Rodmersham Squash Club where a day membership is charged. The remaining two courts are available for club members at Syndale Park Personal Fitness Club and Tonics Fitness Suite.

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Facility Type	Assessment Findings	
Future Demand	Scenario	Future Demand for Additional Squash Courts By 2038
	Estimate population increase to 196,594 by 2038	Current under supply of 7 courts. By 2038 this increases to 12 courts (using 1:10,000 i.e., one court per 10,000 head of population)

Quantity

5.146. There is a total of 8 courts in Swale with 2 of these being glass-backed squash courts. These are shown on Map 16.

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Map 17: Squash Courts by access type in Swale



Squash Courts by access type in Swale

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5.147. The overall supply of squash courts is summarised in Table 34.

Table 34: Squash Courts in Swale

Site Name	Post Code	Court Type	Courts	Access Type	Ownership Type	Management Type	Pay and Play Community Access facilities	Year Built	Year Refurbished
Rodmersham Squash Club	ME9 0PR	Squash Courts (2 glass backed)	6	Registered members and Pay and Play	Commercial	Commercial Management	✓	1960	2006/2017
Syndale Park	ME13 0RH	Squash Courts	1	Registered members	Commercial	Commercial Management		1996	n/a
Tonics Fitness Centre	ME9 8AQ	Squash Courts	1	Registered members	Commercial	Commercial Management		2000	n/a

Quality

5.148. A quality assessment was undertaken on the following facilities:

Table 35: Summary of Quality Assessments Squash Courts in Swale

	Overall Quantitative Score for Facility %	Qualitative Score for Squash Courts	Need for Investment- Overall Facility
Rodersham Squash Club	71% Good	Good	Minimal
Syndale Park	57% Average	Average	Moderate
Tonics Fitness Centre	75% Good	Good	Minimal

5.149. The quality of existing squash courts is mixed with moderate investment needed in the court at Syndale Park where if it is to be retained for squash, the walls need painting and floor sanding.

Accessibility

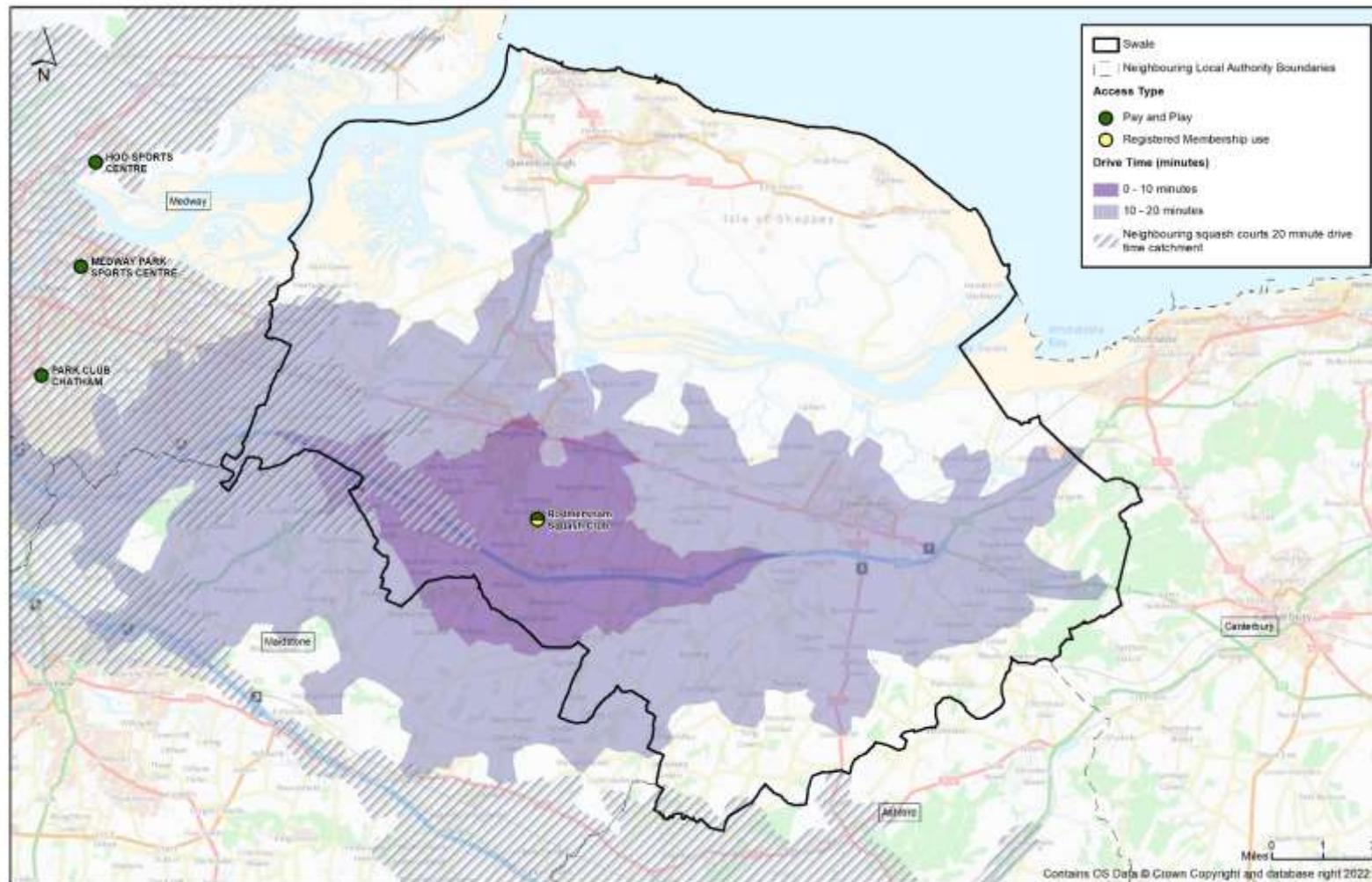
5.150. Squash courts are more specialist facilities, so there are generally fewer of them in any one area. The majority of squash courts nationally are now provided through clubs, as opposed to leisure centres.

5.151. Geographical distribution of squash courts in Swale is illustrated in Map 17.

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Map 18: Pay and Play Community Use Squash courts with a 20-minute drivetime catchment



Pay and Play Squash Courts catchment areas in Swale (up to 20 minute drive time)

Availability

5.152. There are six public pay and play accessible squash courts at Rodersham Squash Club (four normal and two glass back). Rodersham Squash Club offers pay and play access alongside its registered membership. The one court at Syndale Park Personal Fitness Club and the one court at Tonics Fitness Suite are only available to registered members.

NGB Consultation: England Squash

5.153. England Squash was consulted as part of this study. The NGB confirmed it had invested into the local County Association, who in turn works closely with local clubs and leisure centres in the county to deliver bespoke activity based around our participation programmes and campaigns. In comparison to other counties, the investment and impact of the County Association makes Swale a key area for future delivery and squash participation, the sizeable population across the county and specifics of the demographic lend itself to squash participation. Kent is a highly proactive and well-respected county with a pedigree for producing squash players and having a thriving club scene. As such they should be considered as priority in order to develop squash in the area.

5.154. Swale itself has a population of approximately 150k and, with 3 sites and 8 courts in total, this is seven courts less than the NGB guidance of one court per 10,000 people (Currently 1:18,000 people approximately). England Squash said their programmes (Squash 101, Squash Stars, Junior 101, Squash 57 and Squash Girls Can) aim to get more participants engaged in squash and creating thriving squash communities. Together they can be delivered in Swale. England Squash offer support locally through grants and funding to local clubs, facilities and coaches that can deliver these programmes. Therefore, squash facilities are required that provide a positive experience and are well maintained so that people return to play more squash. For these programmes to be delivered the current infrastructure must be maintained, losing any courts would have a detrimental impact on being able to provide these interventions in Swale.

Indoor Bowls

Indoor Bowls: Summary of Supply and Demand

5.155. The summary supply and demand analysis for indoor bowls is set out in Table 36.

Table 36: Summary Analysis – Indoor Bowling Supply and Demand

Facility Type	
Quantity	There is one indoor bowls facility in Swale at Milton Recreation ground which has 6 rinks. There is one club, Swale Indoor Bowling Club which is affiliated to the England Indoor Bowls Association (EIBA).

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Facility Type		
Quality	Swale IBC was built in 2001 and refurbished in 2006.	
Accessibility	The centre is located in Milton Recreation Ground with good parking facilities and operates pay and play as well as club time.	
Availability	Swale Indoor Bowls Centre is a play and pay facility offering six indoor rinks and is also home to Swale Indoor Bowls Club.	
Future Demand	Scenario	Future Demand for Additional Indoor Bowls Rinks By 2038
	Estimate population increase to 196,594 by 2038	- 8 (12 – 14 in total)
	In reality the number of participants is reducing at Swale IBC, and some of those participating come from outside Swale. The indoor offer at Swale IBC is seasonal but due to the specialist provision, means that the bowling facilities are used for less than 50% of the year. The existing facility is not multi-use and therefore, when not being used for bowling, cannot be utilised for any other activity.	

Quantity

- 5.151. An indoor bowls facility comprises a number of indoor rinks (usually a minimum of 3 rinks). Indoor Bowls is a more specialist sport and tends to be participated in by bowlers who play outside in the summer, to practise and compete during the winter months. Indoor bowls offers participative opportunities to all but is played mostly by an older population and those with disabilities (wheelchair and visually impaired).
- 5.152. There is one indoor bowls facility in Swale which is the Swale Indoor Bowls Centre at Milton Recreation Ground, Sittingbourne; this has 6 rinks. There is one club based at this facility, Swale IBC, which is affiliated to the England Indoor Bowls Association (EIBA).
- 5.153. The Club was opened in 2001 and refurbished in 2006. In addition to providing “recreational bowling” to the local population, they have also provided a number of teams competing in the EIBA affiliated leagues and competitions.
- 5.154. The nearest alternative site within the ‘acceptable’ 30-minute drive time is Deangate Ridge at Hoo in Rochester and another which is a 33-minute drive time away in Oyster IBC at Whitstable.

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Map 19: Indoor Bowls by access type in Swale



Indoor Bowls by access type in Swale



- 5.155. As a guide, demand is calculated as one rink per 14,000-17,000 of total population. A 9-11 rink bowling area, therefore, is required for a population of 150k although this will be dependent upon the population profile of the area. The number of rinks required can be related to the estimated number of members: assume 80-100 members per rink¹⁹. With the potential for the older population in Swale to increase and the current supply of indoor bowling in Swale being six rinks, these should be maintained as a minimum. Analysis of future demand suggests that potentially development of an additional 6-8 rinks could be considered if the current facility is retained for bowling.
- 5.156. Although the analysis above indicates the need for a small increase in indoor bowls provision, in reality the number of participants is reducing at Swale IBC, and some of those participating come from outside Swale. The indoor offer at Swale IBC is seasonal but due to the specialist provision, means that the bowling facilities are used for less than 50% of the year. The existing facility is not multi-use and therefore, when not being used for bowling, cannot be utilised for any other activity.
- 5.157. There are nearby indoor bowling facilities in Rocester and Whitstable. Short mat bowls is also played in some informal facilities in Swale e.g. West Faversham Community Centre, Newington Village Hall and Tunstall Village Hall.

Indoor Tennis

Indoor Tennis: Summary of Supply and Demand

- 5.158. Table 37 sets out the summary supply and demand analysis for indoor tennis in Swale.

Table 37: Summary Analysis – Indoor Tennis Supply and Demand

Facility Type	Assessment Findings
Quantity	There are currently no indoor tennis courts in Swale. Based on the LTA figure of 12,500 population for 1 indoor court there is a need for 12 indoor courts, this will increase if the population increases. Any provision of indoor tennis courts should be LTA and tennis club led.
Quality	N/A
Accessibility	N/A
Availability	N/A

¹⁹ Source: General Statement from EIBA. Not Swale specific

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- 5.159. Indoor tennis courts are considered because they are a completely different facility from outdoor tennis courts, which, unless club courts, tend to be used for recreational tennis. Indoor courts are significantly more expensive to use, and therefore tend to provide for those who are already tennis participants, or who wish to learn to play tennis and can afford private or group coaching.
- 5.160. It is a requirement of the ANOG methodology that indoor tennis courts are covered by an Indoor Facility Strategy to complement the findings of a playing pitch study which assesses needs for outdoor courts.
- 5.161. The Swale Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) considers all outdoor tennis courts in the borough. There are currently no indoor tennis courts in Swale.
- 5.162. Based on the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) figure of 12,500 population for one indoor court there is a current need for 12 indoor courts. Any indoor tennis court provision should be led by the LTA and Tennis Club.
- 5.163. There are two main tennis clubs in Swale: Sittingbourne Tennis Club, and Faversham Tennis Club. There are no community venues to play tennis on the Isle of Sheppey and the courts at the Sheppey Leisure Complex are in a very poor state of repair. The LTA would like to have a Padel programme at the Sheppey Leisure Complex.
- 5.164. Outdoor tennis is notionally provided at two park venues in Swale at Milton Recreation Ground and King George's Park.
- 5.165. The LTA has identified a lack of indoor facilities in Swale, and this is identified in the Facility Strategy for the region. Indoor courts would be a priority for strategic loan funding from the LTA.

Gymnastics Centres

Summary Supply and Demand Analysis - Gymnastics Centres

- 5.166. There are no SBC gymnastics centres in Swale. There are two dedicated gymnastics centres in Swale at Faversham Activity Centre and Bourne Gymnastics club. These are specialist facilities, attracting beginners but also talented gymnasts.

Quantity

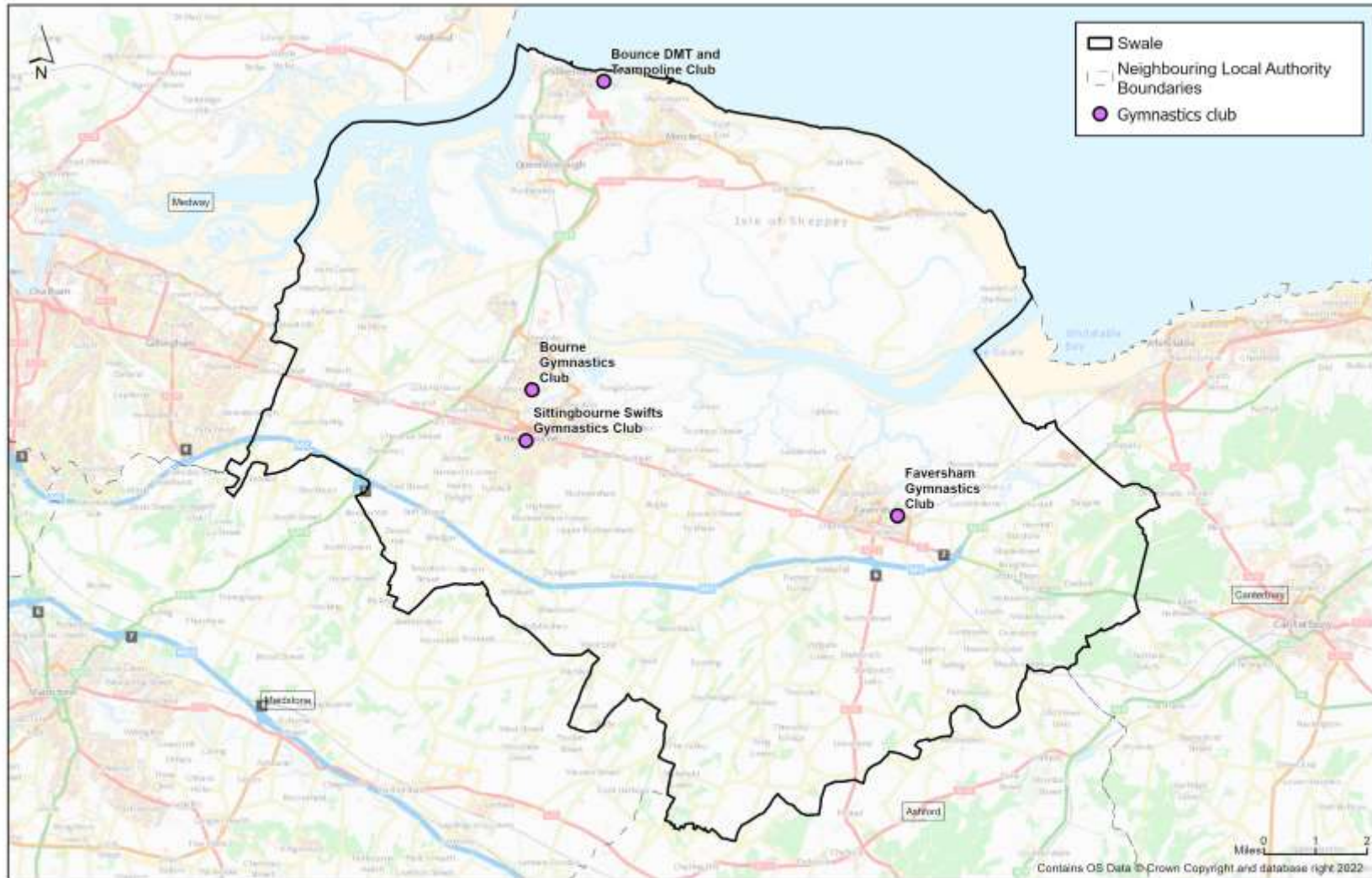
5.167. There are three British Gymnastics affiliated clubs and one British Gymnastics Trampoline club in Swale (see Map 20):

- Faversham Gymnastics Club is based at Faversham Activity Centre and according to British Gymnastics (BG) in July 2022 there are approximately 374 affiliated members of the club with 150 on a waiting list.
- Sittingbourne Swifts Gymnastics Club is based at the Swallows Leisure Centre and has approximately 191 affiliated members, with a 151 on a waiting list.
- Bounce DMT and Trampoline Club is based at Oasis Academy (West site) on the Isle of Sheppey. There are 51 affiliated members.
- Bourne Gymnastics Club is based on Tribune Drive Sittingbourne. It is a recently formed club from a school site and at time of writing British Gymnastics had no further information about this club.

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Map 20: Gymnastics Centres in Swale



Gymnastics clubs in Swale

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Table 38: Summary of Gymnastics Clubs

Club Name	Address	About the Club
Faversham Gym Club	Whitstable Road	Dedicated facility.
Sittingbourne Swifts Gym Club	Swallows Leisure Centre	Based at a leisure centre, not a dedicated facility.
Bounce DMT and Trampoline Club	Oasis Academy (West), Sheppey	Based at an academy / school, not a dedicated facility.
Bourne Gym Club	Tribune Drive Sittingbourne	Dedicated facility (unit)

NGB Consultation: British Gymnastics and Trampolining

5.168. Consultation with British Gymnastics is summarised below:

- British Gymnastics Facility Development Priorities (for the period 2022 – 2027) is currently being prepared

5.169. British Gymnastics Strategies are outlined in the [Strategic Framework \(2017 - 2021\)](#) and British Gymnastics Priorities (for the period 2017 - 2021) are:

- Diversify sources of revenue to develop and grow the provision of gymnastics
- Build the capacity and grow the demand in gymnastics
- Raise the profile and increase the appeal of gymnastics

5.170. There is no geographic focus to the British Gymnastics Facility Strategy. Focus is based on need, suitability, and partners' ability to support a project to successful completion.

5.171. Nationally, there is a large demand for more gymnastics opportunities and clubs all report large waiting lists, which is mirrored in Swale. A key part of BG's strategy to increase participation is to support clubs, leisure providers and other partners moving into their own dedicated facilities, offering more time and space for classes.

5.172. British Gymnastics Facility Development Priorities (for the period 2017 - 2021) outlined are:

- Support increased capacity within gymnastics through clubs, leisure providers and other delivery providers
- Guide funding investment through the United Kingdom from British Gymnastics, Home Country Sports Councils, Local Authorities, and other potential funders.
- Maintain and improve the quality of facilities and equipment within existing delivery partners.

- Develop insight, understanding and direction of how Facility Developments can contribute towards other BG Strategic Priorities

- 5.173. The Facilities Strategy highlights the key benefits that BG will work towards to improve facilities for gymnastics particularly by supporting clubs with their plans for improvement of their spaces and to relocate to better and bigger spaces.
- 5.174. Clubs moving into dedicated facilities will be able to increase their membership and diversify their range of activities including to the local community and by working with other organisations offering physical activity opportunities.
- 5.175. Currently approximately 1/3 of clubs operate from their own facility, 1/3 non-dedicated school venues and 1/3 from non-dedicated leisure centres.
- 5.176. British Gymnastics target has been to have 40 clubs per year moving into dedicated spaces.
- 5.177. British Gymnastics has no capital investment monies available; however, the facility development team has offered to support, develop, and guide clubs, leisure providers and other partners to help achieve their facility requirements.

Water Sports

Watersports: Summary of Supply and Demand

- 5.178. Table 39 sets out the summary supply and demand analysis for water sports in Swale.

The Medway and Swale

- 5.179. Swale borough has access to the Medway estuary and the River Swale. The Medway estuary and the Swale extend from Whitstable on the East Swale past Garrison Point at Sheerness to Allington Lock near Maidstone. Strategically located in North Kent, they provide a wide network of sheltered tidal waters which are ideal for all sorts of water sports, whether competitive events or cruising with the possibility of overnight anchorages in quiet creeks. Above Allington Lock the non-tidal waters of the upper Medway offer excellent motor cruising through the Kent countryside.
- 5.180. Despite the commercialisation of parts of the estuary, much of the Medway and Swale and their coastline, with their salt marshes and migrating birds, is in conservation terms of European significance.
- 5.181. At the same time the estuary has great cultural and historic interest. Rochester Cathedral dates from 604 and Rochester Castle, dates from the early years after the Norman Conquest. Rochester was besieged by the Vikings in 885. Further down river Chatham Historic Dockyard is developing as a heritage centre, reminding us of its days as a strategic base for the Royal Navy.

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- 5.182. The Medway and Swale have good communications by rail and by motorway with most of Kent and involve a journey of perhaps an hour from much of South London. They provide an excellent base from short cruises to various places of interest on the East Coast, while for those who wish to go further afield the coasts of northern France, Belgium and Holland are within reach. Every summer sees cruisers from these countries visiting the Medway and Swale.
- 5.183. Table 39 sets out the summary supply and demand analysis for water sports in Swale.

Table 39: Water Sports - Assessment Summary

Facility Type – Water Sports	Key Points
Quantity	There 15 clubs and organisations who regularly use the waters of the Medway and Swale for recreational purposes based in Swale borough. Between them these clubs and organisations offer a wide diversity of opportunities for leisure boating on the Medway and Swale ranging from water-skiing, dinghy racing, canoeing, and rowing to motor cruising, yacht racing, smack and barge racing, kayaking paddle boarding windsurfing, water skiing and jet skiing.
Quality	The quality of all facilities is fair to good.
Accessibility	Accessibility to formal watersports activities is governed by the location of safe access to the water and by seasonality. The River Medway and Swale have good communications by rail and by motorway with most of Kent and involve a journey of perhaps an hour from much of South London. They provide an excellent base from short cruises to various places of interest on the East Coast, while for those who wish to go further afield the coasts of northern France, Belgium and Holland are within reach. Every summer sees cruisers from these countries visiting the Medway and Swale.
Availability	Taking part in watersports requires specialist equipment and coaching; this may not be affordable for everyone.
Demand in 2038	There is no formal methodology for assessing supply and demand for water sports. They play an important role in broadening the overall physical activity offer in the borough and can introduce individuals to new and exciting opportunities to be active, as well as the chance to develop life skills, meet new people and learn new skills. They also contribute to tourism and the visitor economy. Wherever possible the opportunity to develop more water sports participation should be progressed and existing activity sites should be protected and enhanced. Support should be provided in developing Faversham Creek and Queenborough Harbour.

Provision in 2022

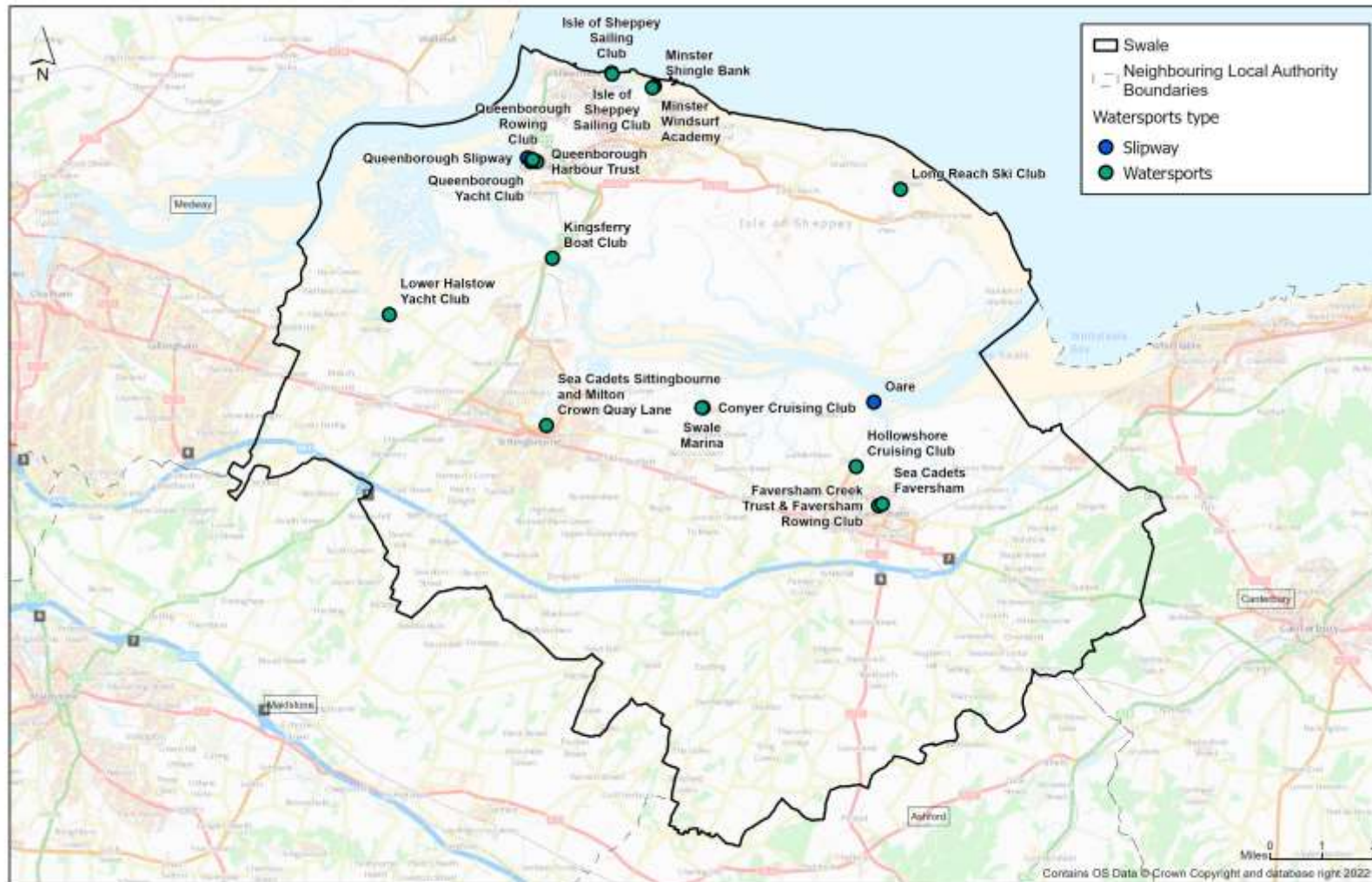
Water Sports - Quantity

- 5.184. There are fifteen water sports venues and organisations in and around the Medway and Swale in Swale Borough. These sites are shown on Map 21.

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Map 21: WaterSports venues in Swale:



Watersports in Swale

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5.185. The range of water sports and activities offered includes:

- Dinghy Sailing
- Yacht racing
- Rowing
- Kayaking
- Canoeing
- Smack and barge racing
- Motorboat cruising
- Catamarans
- Jet ski
- Paddleboarding
- Water skiing
- Paddleboarding
- Hydrofoiling

Table 40: Water sports venues and activities in and around the London Borough of Newham

Sr.No.	Name	Address	Activities	Type of Use	Courses
1	Swale Marina	Conyer Teynham Sittingbourne Kent ME9 9HN	Cruising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conyer Cruising Club • Pay & Play • Residential • Visitors 	N/A
2	Conyer Cruising Club	Conyer Teynham Sittingbourne Kent ME9 9HN	Sail and Motorboats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memberships 	N/A
3	Faversham Creek Trust – Faversham Rowing club	Morrisons Wharf North Lane Faversham ME13 7DY	The Trusts aim is to develop the basin at Faversham Creek providing a maritime heritage facility. The Rowing Clubs provide Inland and coastal rowing. Events include skiff and sailing barge festivals. Possible Nautical Festival 2024.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership • Events 	✓
4	Hollowshore Cruising club	The Boatyard Oare Road	Cruising /clubhouse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership 	✓

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Sr.No.	Name	Address	Activities	Type of Use	Courses
5	Isle of Sheppey Sailing Club	Faversham ME13 7TX. Marine Parade Sheerness Kent ME12 2BE	Amateur dinghy and catamaran sailing. Boats currently at the club include: Dinghies: 49er, 505, Osprey, Laser 4000, Laser 2, Solo, Laser 3000, 420, Blaze, Laser, Topper Catamarans: Dart 18, Sprint 15, Shadow X, Nacra F18, Nacra 6, Tornado	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership 	✓
6.	Kentish Sail Association		Annual Swale Smack and Sailing Barge Race on the River Swale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership 	N/A
7.	Kingsferry Boat Club	Kingsferry Bridge, Sheppey	Sail Cruisers and motor cruisers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership 	N/A
8.	Long Reach Ski Club	Warden Leysdown-On-Sea ME12 4NG	Use of slipway adjacent to Kingsferry Bridge. Jet ski and personal watercraft.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pay and Play Membership 	N/A
9.	Lower Halstow Yacht club	Lower Halstow Sittingbourne ME9 7EB	Predominantly a sailing cruising club, but it also has a few very keen and active dinghy sailors. During the season the extremely popular series of "Top of the Tide" races is held.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership 	✓
10.	Minster Windsurfing Academy	Minster on Sea ME12 2FD.	Windsurfing, Kayaking and Paddleboarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pay and Play 	✓
11.	Queenborough Harbour Trust	South Street Queenborough ME11 5AF	Charged with running the mooring services at Queenborough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Fees and Visitor fees 	N/A
12.	Queenborough Rowing Club	North Road Queenborough ME11 5EU	Rowing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership 	✓

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Sr.No.	Name	Address	Activities	Type of Use	Courses
13	Queenborough Yacht Club	7 High Street Queenborough Kent ME11 5AA	Sail Cruisers, Dinghy's Paddleboarders	• Membership	✓
14.	Sea Cadets Sittingbourne and Milton	Crown Quay Lane Sittingbourne ME10 3SN	Sailing, windsurfing and powerboating	• Membership	✓
15.	Sea Cadets Faversham	Conduit Street Faversham ME13 7DF	Sailing, windsurfing and powerboating	• Membership	✓

Swale Marina

- 5.186. Swale Marina can be found at the head of Conyer creek which runs off the river Swale between Sittingbourne and Faversham. From here the sheltered waters of the rivers Swale and Medway are within easy reach, and it is well placed for trips up the Thames, the East Coast or even a Channel crossing. The sailing window is dependent on tides & draft: 4hours or more on spring tides, less on neaps, but as neaps are morning & evening tides yachts can be out for the day.
- 5.187. The Marina has 200 pontoon mud berths for vessels up to 45ft and 2m draft, all with access to electricity and water and offers residential berths for narrowboats and widebeams up to 60 ft.
- 5.188. The clubhouse is open at weekends and for special events, offering a licensed bar and food. The clubhouse welcomes all berth holders, their families, and guests, all visitors (including those on club rallies), as well as RYA affiliated club members by sea and land.
- 5.189. The marina is also the home of the Conyer Cruising Club which operates club cruises, racing, and social events.

Conyer Cruising Club

- 5.190. The club offers its members a full and varied programme for both cruising sailors that race and racing sailors who cruise supplemented by a host of social events throughout the year. The club is based at Swale Marina and has use of the marina clubhouse.

Faversham Creek Trust

- 5.191. Faversham Creek Trust was founded in 2011 by local people to preserve and regenerate the Creek and safeguard its future. Their mission is to fight

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for the Creek as a genuine heritage project whereby the skills of boatbuilders and other maritime trades could be passed on to young people; traditional boats such as sailing barges and other traditional working craft would find a haven there, for overwintering; and where the Creek could be a resource for all the community.

5.192. The Trusts purpose comes under three main areas of focus:

- Maritime heritage: preservation of skills, trades and creek-side sites; restoration and mooring of historic ships & boats.
- Accessibility and usability of the creek: campaigning to restore navigability of the creek basin by securing an opening bridge & dredging; improve water quality.
- Enjoyment: leisure use such as rowing, festivals, and educational walks & talks

5.193. The basin, which is where the Trust has its home in an old building formerly used for gas purification, is really the last section of the Creek where these activities can be supported and find a home, given the extensive housing development along the banks further downstream.

5.194. One of the first things the trust did was the restoration of the Victorian Purifier Building in the Creek Basin, which now hosts the community building of St Ayles Skiffs, resulting in the significant growth of Cinque Ports Rowing Club and Faversham Rowing Club.

5.195. The trust continues to campaign to secure a restored opening bridge into the basin with restoration of the navigation.

5.196. The Trusts vision is that the Basin of the Creek, currently silted up and neglected, will be a centre of boatbuilding training and a place where visiting barges and smacks will again moor. Local communities, families, schoolchildren, and tourists will visit to learn about historic boats such as the Saxon Graveney boat and the majestic Thames Barge.

Cinque Ports Rowing Club and Faversham Rowing Club

5.197. Cinque Ports Rowing Club hold regular “have a go” rowing sessions where they encourage everyone to have a try; buoyancy aid, instruction, a boat, and an oar are provided free. Open to 12 years plus at every level of fitness, agility, and inexperience. Support, instruction and guidance provided.

5.198. The boats are of a design/class called the St Ayles Skiff and adhere to the rules and regulations of the St Ayles Skiff International Association. They have a four-rower crew and one cox. They have traditional fixed seats, as opposed to modern, sporty rowing boats with seats that move fore and aft on rollers.

5.199. Faversham Rowing Club started in 2021 and promotes and encourages participation in inland and coastal rowing. The club supports members of all ages and abilities to learn and develop their skills as rowers, educates members on safety and good working practices and compete in rowing events.

Hollowshore Cruising Club

- 5.200. The club has a modern clubhouse based at Youngs Boat Yard, at the head of Oare Creek, Faversham. The club has a programme of cruising and social events and make a special effort to welcome those new to sailing. Members frequently cruise in company and regularly can be found in the Medway, the Thames Estuary and East Coast ports, as well as those in France and Holland.
- 5.201. There are two free club buoys for occasional overnight stays or awaiting the tide to get back to your mooring. The club bar is open at Sunday lunchtimes, between 12 noon and 3pm.

Isle of Sheppey Sailing Club

- 5.202. The Club is ideally situated in Sheerness, with access at all states of tide via wide concrete ramps and a gently shelving shingle beach to some of the best dinghy and catamaran sailing waters. It's affiliated to the Royal Yachting Association, the sport's governing body, and was one of the first sailing clubs in the Southeast to become an RYA Training Centre, able to offer training to members in both dinghies and powerboats.
- 5.203. The club's facilities include:
- Large, modern, spacious, purpose-built clubhouse.
 - Hall for up to 200 with adjoining bar, lounge, and kitchen.
 - Disabled toilet, shower & changing area (added with Lottery grant in 2011).
 - Licensed bar (with wet & dry sides).
 - Unique fully integrated race tower accessible from the main building, commanding 180° views of the sailing area & 180° of the local area from the roof.
 - Upstairs observation lounge (with plans to redevelop & extend).
 - Secure & sheltered primary boat park with launching at all states of tide via wide concrete ramps directly in front of the clubhouse.
 - Large satellite boat compound 1km to the east with its own slipway (usable for 3 hours either side of high water) shared with Minster Windsurf Academy.
- 5.204. Annually hosts the Isle of Sheppey Round the Island Race — Europe's longest dinghy, cat & board race.

Kentish Sail Association

- 5.205. The Kentish Sail Association organises the annual Swale Smack and Sailing Barge race in the River Swale and strives to promote an interest in

traditional craft. Each race draws together perhaps the biggest fleet of historic vessels that can be seen at any one time in the country.

Kingsferry Boat Club

- 5.206. The club aims to provide low-cost boating facilities for owners (and their families) of motor cruisers, fishing boats and sailing craft, kept on tidal moorings leased from the Medway Port Authority (Peel Ports), southeast of Kingsferry bridge. Members lay and maintain their own moorings. Facilities include dinghy and car parking, fresh water, electricity, and boat slipway/cradle. The club arranges occasional cruises, fishing competitions and social events. There is a club hut so members can make a hot drink or shelter.

Long Reach Ski Club

- 5.207. Use of slipway adjacent to Kingsferry Bridge.

Lower Halstow Yacht Club

- 5.208. The Club is situated at the end of Lower Halstow Creek, which leads into Stangate Creek and onwards to the River Medway opposite Thamesport Container Terminal.
- 5.209. Lower Halstow Creek is tidal, and all members boats take to the mud at low tides. All Club moorings are of the swinging type with the boat attached to a sinker via a buoy with a riser chain and swivel. These moorings and their equipment are supplied by the Club, but it is a member's responsibility (and a Club rule) to check them annually and report their condition to the Mooring Masters. Winter lift out and storage is available subject to numbers. Vessels are launched and recovered either on their own trailer or the clubs lift gear. The club has 2 lift cradles and a tractor. Size, weight, and draught limits apply. Boats are stored in our own yard which has all night lighting and CCTV. There is power and water available around the yard for winter maintenance.
- 5.210. The wooden jetty, with a two-tier dinghy landing, can be moored alongside at the end for landing or loading, or on the northern side which has a drying pad for mid-season scrub offs. The concrete slip extends to the end of the jetty on the south side.
- 5.211. Ashore there is a Club hut which provides a comfortable meeting and relaxation area along with a kitchen and shower room. Alongside is a steel container in which oars may be stored and has toilet facilities.

Minster Windsurfing Academy

- 5.212. Located at Minster beach, the shingle bank is three quarters of a mile long with little or no shore dump. NW to SE winds give chop or small waves, SW

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(Offshore) results in flat water. The academy offers windsurfing, paddleboarding and kayaking all with instruction. You can participate on an hourly or daily basis without becoming a member. Windsurfing kit is available to hire if you can sail on your own accord. There is plenty of parking, rescue facilities operate throughout the year by the local club and the beach is shared with the Isle of Sheppey Sailing Club.

Queenborough Harbour Trust

- 5.213. Queenborough Harbour Trust leases the Harbour Office in South Street and the quay, including the painting and the scrubbing berth up to the start of the fishermen's' quay, as well as the dinghy park and the concrete barge from Swale Borough Council. Originally Swale Borough Council had intended that the Trust would be granted a lease of 25 years to operate and manage the harbour, however in line with other recent asset transfers, they have agreed to a 125-year lease.
- 5.214. The bed on which the majority of the moorings in the Swale rests is rented from Queenborough Fishery Trust who have established Queenborough Harbour Trust as their agents for the moorings that run from the northerly entrance of the Swale-to-Swale Bridge.
- 5.215. Queenborough Harbour Trust now owns outright the All-Tide Landing and the attached pontoon.
- 5.216. The purpose of the Trust is to continue developing the Queenborough Harbour maritime services to the benefit of the local and maritime community. The primary business goal is to develop the harbour moorings and services as an attractive location for mooring holders and visitors. This will help to ensure its long-term viability and support the local business community.
- 5.217. For many years, Swale Borough Council operated the Harbour at a substantial loss. Since taking over the mooring services, Queenborough Harbour Trust has operated at a (small) surplus, which has been ploughed back into the Harbour's operations.
- 5.218. The Trust has invested in improving the maintenance of the moorings. Previously they were only inspected at three-year intervals, but now the moorings are maintained annually in line with best practice.
- 5.219. The Trust has implemented a free trot boat service for the benefit of mooring holders and visitors.
- 5.220. Since the Trust took over the operation of the Harbour, visitor numbers have nearly doubled in less than three years. There are now more than 1600 visitor overnight stays every year.
- 5.221. Queenborough Harbour Trust applied for and were successful in being awarded a substantial Government grant to install a sixty-metre walk-ashore mooring pontoon.
- 5.222. Now that the basic infrastructure has been improved, the Trust are developing the services that the boating community expects. The development of easy access to power, water and fuel are vital, as is enhanced security facilities.

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- 5.223. With the increase in mooring holder and visitor numbers, the Trust want the Harbour to be seen as a 'destination', not just a stopping off point. To this end the Trust will be working with Queenborough Town Council and Visit Swale to encourage visitors to enjoy the local attractions, boosting the current 5,000 annual visitors who arrive by boat.

Queenborough Rowing Club

- 5.224. The club meets Sunday mornings 10.00am all year and in the summer 6.00pm Wednesday evenings (April – September).
- 5.225. Although possessing a mixed array of craft the club mainly row Scarborough Gigs which are fixed seat four oared 27-foot-long boats. The club has competed over the past years in the Great River Race, and they hold several club excursions including an annual rowing holiday. The club also offers beginners come and try sessions and is open to all age groups.

Queenborough Yacht Club

- 5.226. Queenborough Yacht Club is situated on the west side of the Isle of Sheppey and boasts deep water mooring at all states of the tide. The position of the harbour allows easy access to the Swale, River Medway, and Thames Estuary. The Clubhouse is situated at 7 High Street Queenborough, very near the old causeway.
- 5.227. The club is open on Friday from 2pm to 8pm, Saturday evenings from 6pm to 9pm and Sunday from 12 noon to 7pm. The club house boasts shower facilities and bar. There is an active sailing calendar through the season and regular social events throughout the winter.
- 5.228. Members have exclusive use of a new 12 metre pontoon attached to the All-Tide Landing.
- 5.229. Visiting clubs are always welcome, as are all members of the sailing fraternity. Visiting yachtsmen are welcome to use the refurbished showers for a small fee.

Sea Cadets Sittingbourne and Milton

- 5.230. The Sittingbourne Sea Cadet Unit is called Training Ship (TS) WYVERN, located in Crown Quay Lane, Sittingbourne.
- 5.231. A wide range of activities and opportunities is on offer from sailing, canoeing, and Power Boating to Football, First Aid, cooking and stewarding, and Adventurous Training.
- 5.232. The Sea Cadets are local boys and girls aged 10 to 17 who are interested in learning maritime skills and traditions, in serving their community. Parade hours are Mondays from 7.15pm to 9.30pm and Wednesdays from 7.15pm to 9.30pm. Cadets also can elect to participate in training courses and outings during weekends and holidays.

Sea Cadets Faversham

- 5.233. The Sittingbourne Sea Cadet Unit is called Training Ship (TS) HAZARD, located in Conduit Street, Faversham.
- 5.234. A wide range of activities and opportunities is on offer from sailing, canoeing, and Power Boating to Football, First Aid, cooking and stewarding, and Adventurous Training.
- 5.235. The Sea Cadets are local boys and girls aged 10 to 17 who are interested in learning maritime skills and traditions, in serving their community. Parade hours are Tuesdays from 7.00pm to 9.00pm and Wednesdays from 7.00pm to 9.00pm. Cadets also can elect to participate in training courses and outings during weekends and holidays.

Water Sports - Quality

- 5.236. The quality of all the water sports facilities is standard to good; clearly these are adventure sports involving risk so quality equipment and the correct environment is vital.
- 5.237. The facilities provide opportunities for residents and local school pupils to be active and learn new skills; they also have a role in attracting visitors to the borough.

Demand in 2022

Consultation

Survey Responses (Education Institutions, Sports Clubs)

- 5.238. Detailed analysis is provided of education institution and sports club feedback in paragraphs 5.8 – 5.14. There was no specific feedback on watersports.

National Governing Bodies

- 5.239. There was no response from watersports National Governing Bodies to the consultation.

Water Sports - Accessibility

- 5.240. Clearly the existing water sports sites are more accessible to those in the north of the borough. The Medway estuary and the Swale extend from

Whitstable on the East Swale past Garrison Point at Sheerness to Allington Lock near Maidstone. accessibility to these activities is governed by both the location of water and the location of safe access. An 8-knot speed limit operates on the River Swale.

- 5.241. The watersports facilities are not open year-round, given weather constraints.

Water Sports - Availability

- 5.242. The range of water sports offered is open to everyone, but clearly affordability may be an issue for some people, given they are all operated on a breakeven basis or commercially. Some activities are less expensive than others; most offer learn to/beginner opportunities, and some activities also have a club linked into developing participation.

Provision Requirements by 2038

- 5.243. There is no formal methodology for assessing supply and demand for water sports. They play an important role in broadening the overall physical activity offer in the borough along with encouraging visitors and tourism and can introduce individuals to new and exciting opportunities to be active, as well as the chance to develop life skills, meet new people and learn new skills.
- 5.244. Wherever possible the opportunity to develop more water sports participation should be progressed and existing activity sites should be protected and enhanced.
- 5.245. Support should be provided to enhance watersports and maritime facilities particularly Faversham Creek and Queenborough Harbour.

6. Penultimate Stage – Applying the Assessment Analysis

Overview

- 6.1 Swale's population will grow by approximately 29% based on potential housing growth over the coming years to 2038, so there is a particular need to ensure sufficient provision of accessible, quality and affordable facilities – formal and informal, and multi-purpose spaces to meet local need.
- 6.2 More, and better, access to physical activity at local level is important for residents, particularly those who are currently inactive, and those without access to private transport, to participate, and become physically active. Many of these inactive people will live in the few, but significantly more deprived areas of the Borough; ensuring those who lead challenging lives are able to be more active for health benefits is critical. Linking facility provision, informal and formal, to opportunities for active travel, and informal places will help to facilitate more active lifestyles for more people.
- 6.3 This is very important given the need to retain and continue to grow existing levels of physical activity in the Borough and address the existing health inequalities across the area.
- 6.4 In Swale, there is insufficient pay and play accessible sports hall, swimming and health and fitness provision to meet demand by 2038. The existing level of indoor bowling provision should be retained; gymnastic and boxing clubs should be supported (strategically) to develop specialist facilities.
- 6.5 It is very important that the potential to utilise community centres/halls, and other informal places and spaces better for sports hall activities, which could provide at a more local level, and therefore facilitate participation by those who are elderly, do not have access to a car, have young children, or have a disability, is fully explored, developed and implemented.

Vision

- 6.6 As a minimum, SBC wishes to have good quality, fit for purpose facilities that are considered to be attractive to users, well maintained and sustainable. This includes community sport and leisure facilities, places and spaces for swimming, fitness and sports hall sports/activities available for all residents. This includes both formal and informal multi-purpose spaces e.g. community halls in which to play sport and be physically active.
- 6.7 Facilitating opportunities to be more physically active, more often is also important, to contribute to a reduction in the health inequalities in and across Swale, to help people to live and age better.
- 6.8 The provision of high quality and accessible facilities, and where appropriate the opening up of other informal places, and spaces, as well as the development of new provision, will contribute to the future overall priority for the development of healthier lifestyles in Swale, across all age groups. This will contribute towards the Vision 'to enable Swale communities to be healthy and tackle health inequalities'.

6.9 The Vision for future provision of sport and leisure in Swale is:

“That the residents of Swale are encouraged, motivated, informed and have the opportunity to be more active and healthier. Enabling them to live life to the full, be happy and well, reaching their full potential. ”

6.10 Sustainable, high quality, and critically, accessible facility provision has a critical role to play in delivering these opportunities; Swale Borough Council needs to plan for the investment requirements of its existing facilities, and work in partnership with other providers and stakeholders to address the other priorities identified through this Strategy.

Aims

6.11 The aim of providing sufficient high quality, fit for purpose and accessible provision, places and spaces is to:

- Increase the proportion of the population that is physically active; the level of activity undertaken will support efforts to further reduce health inequalities;
- Develop additional facility provision where need is evidenced e.g. as a result of population growth;
- Design in flexibility; future facility provision may need to be more multi-purpose in nature, reflecting changing participation trends and opportunities;
- Encourage new participants to start taking part in physical activity;
- Enable opportunities for participation to be provided in a wider range of places and spaces, and particularly at a very local level, using e.g. community centres/halls;
- Facilitate the continued development of healthier lifestyles across Swale’s communities;
- Contribute to a reduction in health inequalities, and specifically obesity, reduced inactivity, across Swale; and
- Create active environments where the opportunity to be more physically active is an integral part of everyday life.

Principles for Future Provision

6.12 The principles that should guide all future sport and leisure facility development in Swale are:

- Ensure residents in all areas of Swale have pay and play access to good quality, local, accessible and affordable provision, whether it is a formal sports hall or a community hall, or other informal provision;
- Aim to ensure that any new, sports facilities on education sites provide a balance of opportunities (through a formal agreement) for community access – both pay and play and club use;
- Replace / refurbish ageing facilities where new provision is needed; all new and refurbished provision should be designed and developed based on Sport England and (National Governing Body) NGB guidance, and guidance be fully inclusive;
- Rationalise existing provision where new fit for purpose facilities can replace/improve existing buildings (but existing levels of provision need to be maintained as a minimum, given some existing facility under-supply going forward);
- Invest in existing formal and informal provision to improve quality; and
- Invest strategically to ensure economic viability and sustainability of provision.

Facility Specific Analysis

6.13 Highlighted below are the key factors and issues that need to be taken into account in planning for future facility provision.

- **Population Growth** - Clearly, increased population will result in increased demand for sports facilities;
- **Housing Development**- one of the principal justifications for provision of additional community sports facilities is because additional residents increase demand for sports facilities. There will be a need to ensure good quality community sport and leisure facilities are available to meet existing and future demand. The potential for investment in additional provision of formal sports facilities and community halls, secured through developer contributions should be explored, given the housing growth planned to 2038. However, linked to housing development is the potential for other infrastructure development e.g. schools, health facilities, which could also link into future provision of sports facilities;

- **Reduction in Health Inequalities** – more active lifestyles will continue to benefit both individual and community health and are increasingly significant in post pandemic, given the high levels of deaths recorded, particularly amongst the older population; there are some significant pockets of deprivation in Swale outlined in section 2 of this report and there are some very specific factors to which the provision of quality, affordable and accessible sports facilities can contribute:
 - Maintenance of active lifestyles;
 - Improved mental health;
 - Reduced levels of cardiovascular disease; and
 - Reductions in levels of obesity
- **Maintaining and growing participation levels** in sport and physical activity to contribute to more active lifestyles; facilitating more regular activity for the most inactive 27.8% of the Swale community ²⁰is a priority. Participation rates for adults in Swale are lower than in Kent and nationally.
- Addressing the future supply of sports halls, swimming pools, gymnastics facilities and indoor bowls rinks, and particularly the need for investment across the portfolio due to the age and condition of the existing assets
- The need to retain and grow participation in physical activity for community health benefits;
- The need to invest in active environments, where physical activity is the norm;
- The need to improve accessibility to provision at local level, particularly for the 19.4% of the population without access to private transport;
- There is already some sport and physical activity being delivered in community centres/halls across the borough; there is opportunity to increase awareness of this and to extend it, particularly where there are halls available with pay and play access. This could complement the provision of indoor hall space; and
- The opportunity for investment in ‘active’ infrastructure to facilitate increased provision of cycling, jogging and walking routes in the borough, connecting new and existing settlements, education and leisure sites, for example cycling. Active travel should be a consideration in all housing developments across the borough where appropriate.

6.14 The key issues for future provision of built facilities in Swale are set out in Table 39

²⁰ Source: Active Lives April 2023, data November 2021 - November 2022

Table 41: Key Issues, Impacts and Implications by Facility Type

Facility Type	Key Issue	Impact/Implications
<p>Sports Halls</p>	<p>There are currently 11 sports halls sites in Swale (+3 courts and above) and 18 activity halls (14 are on school sites).</p> <p>Only 3 sports halls offer pay and play access and 7 offer community use for clubs and organisations.</p> <p>Swallows Leisure Centre is operating at 100% capacity and Sheppey Leisure Centre at 87% capacity at peak time. There is a much lower used capacity across the other sites.</p>	<p>It is important that as a minimum, existing community access arrangements are maintained (these are informal at present). SBC should seek to engage with those organisations who are currently operating with much lower used capacity figures to encourage greater access to their sports halls during peak hours and secure this use through formal Community Use Agreements (CUA) where possible, given that the majority of sports hall facilities are on education sites. e.g. Fulston Manor School, Oasis Academy, Queen Elizabeth's Academy and The Abbey School.</p> <p>If any of the schools reduced or withdrew their current community sports hall provision, this would impact on the overall supply of badminton courts and must be taken into account in any future planning decisions.</p> <p>Need to ensure other informal halls provide daytime opportunities for sport and physical activity, to meet needs of e.g. older people not in work, parents looking after young children not in work, shift workers</p> <p>Any new sports halls developed on education sites should provide community access via a planning condition, allowing for access to both individuals and clubs/groups. The three most recent planning permissions given for new sports halls in the borough (total of 12 badminton courts) did not require a CUA.</p> <p>Existing sports halls currently unavailable for community access should be made available, where possible.</p> <p>Need to maintain existing levels of community access sports halls</p> <p>Need to prioritise pay and play use at the SBC sports halls and multi-purpose halls</p> <p>The key issues for the NGBs are set out in Section 5 but essentially relate to the need for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • access to additional badminton courts at peak times, • support for sustainable and specialist gymnastics and boxing facilities, access to indoor halls for winter hockey training markings for boccia in sports halls support to grow netball participation regain access to Newhouse Youth and Sports Centre for table tennis

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Facility Type	Key Issue	Impact/Implications
	<p>There is a current over-supply of 2 courts and an identified future demand for +9.5 (SFC) additional badminton courts in the scenario modelled taking into account future housing developments.</p> <p>In the FPM (which includes Newhouse Y&CC as part of the available supply), unmet demand as a percentage of total demand is 8.3% (equivalent of 3.5 badminton courts) with 435 weekly visits in the peak period not being met across the Swale district. 85.4% of this unmet demand is due to people living outside the catchment of a facility as opposed to there being a lack of capacity at existing sports halls.</p>	
	<p>The average age of the sports halls in Swale is 27 years old. The Council-owned sports halls at Sheppey Leisure Centre and Swallows are older and were built in 1980 and 1989 respectively (42 and 33 years old).</p>	<p>Consideration should be given to seeking developer contributions for refurbishment/ redevelopment of existing facilities so that the quality of these facilities can be improved, and the stock of facilities maintained. Formal community use agreements (CUA) should be a condition of any planning obligations.</p>
Swimming Pools	<p>The public pools at Sheppey Leisure Complex, Swallows Leisure Centre and Faversham Pools provide pay and play community access to swimming 7 days a week.</p> <p>The estimated used capacity of these pools is 63% which is only just below the Sport England benchmark of pools being comfortably full at 70% of pool capacity.</p> <p>SBC's swimming pool sites are of reasonable quality but with investment required in all 3 sites. The pool at Sheppey Leisure Centre is a priority for investment.</p> <p>The Local Plan 2020 - 2038 estimates 19,404 new dwellings within Swale administrative boundaries and a population growth (x 2.3) of 44,629 to an overall total of 196,594.</p> <p>Based on the future population growth, and consequent increased demand, there is a need to consider provision of additional swimming provision in the Borough.</p>	<p>The overall identified future demand for additional swimming pool provision reflects the growth in the population from housing development across the Local Plan period. Therefore, provision of additional swimming provision does need to be considered.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to extending the number of lanes at Sheppey Pool from 6 lanes to 8 lanes as part of any future development of the site.</p> <p>The remaining additional water space requirements are met by the existing outdoor Faversham Pool, which is a heated facility, open all year round, but has been excluded from the Facility Planning Model analysis.</p> <p>Consideration should also be given to reviewing the current pool programmes at the public pay and play pool facilities in Swale to ensure that the most hours are given to the most popular activities.</p> <p>Using the Sports Facility Calculator, this would result in a demand for 188.49 sqm of additional water space in the borough (including the outdoor pool in Faversham).</p>
Health and Fitness	<p>There is a total of 596 fitness stations within the borough.</p> <p>SBC provides 17% (102) of the overall supply of 596 fitness stations in the Swale borough area.</p>	<p>There is a need to retain community access to affordable fitness stations.</p>

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Facility Type	Key Issue	Impact/Implications
	<p>There are 6 fitness suites with 50 or more stations. There are currently 11 fitness centres all providing 20 or more fitness stations.</p> <p>An assessment of community accessible and affordable health and fitness suites with 20 or more fitness stations shows that there is a current small over supply of fitness stations in Swale (56 stations). By 2038 there is an under-supply of -21 fitness stations.</p>	<p>There are 581 fitness stations in total in the borough and a calculated demand for 527 stations. There is therefore a current over-supply of 54 fitness stations. (See Appendix 12). By 2038, demand increases to 602 fitness stations which results in a small under-supply of -21 fitness stations.</p> <p>There is therefore a need to maintain the current level of community accessible and affordable provision as a minimum and ideally look to increase the number of fitness stations as part of any future redevelopment of Sheppey Leisure Complex or Swallows Leisure Centre.</p>
Squash Courts	There is a total of 8 squash courts in Swale, 2 of which are glass-back. 6 courts are available for community access. The other 2 courts are available for registered club members at 2 separate sites (Syndale Park and Tonics Fitness Centre).	No need for additional provision
Indoor Bowls	There is one indoor bowls facility in Swale which is the Swale Indoor Bowls Centre at Milton Recreation Ground, Sittingbourne which has 6 rinks.	<p>Demand is calculated as one rink per 14,000-17,000 of total population, therefore with population growth there is a theoretical need for an additional 6-8 rinks.</p> <p>In reality, participation is decreasing at local level.</p> <p>A wider review of provision for indoor bowling could be useful to determine the facilities needed in the future in Swale and neighbouring authorities, to ensure facilities are sustainable.</p>
Gymnastics and Trampoline	<p>There are 4 British Gymnastics affiliated clubs in Swale: 2 in Sittingbourne, 1 in Faversham and 1 in Sheppey.</p> <p>There are no specialist gymnastics facilities in Swale, although there is the Faversham Gymnastics and Fitness Club</p>	Club-led development of an additional dedicated gymnastic facility, dependent on funding would be supported by the NGB, subject to the level of interest expressed by existing clubs in the borough.
Boxing	There are 6 affiliated clubs in Swale with 4 located on Sheppey.	There is a need for sustainable, long-term premises for 2 of the clubs on the Isle of Sheppey (Minster and Sheppey)

6.15 For watersports there are opportunities to continue to develop access to this type of provision and this development should be supported through partnership working and commercial investment.

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6.16 Swale Visitor Economy Framework identifies several actions for water activities. Work stream 3 Product Quality and Development identifies the development of water activities, These are identified below:

Table 42: Swale Visitor Economy Framework – Action Plan

Recommendations		Responsibility	Timescale	Resources/Partners
<p>Develop Water Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with yacht club, sailing club, Barge Museum and rowing club to develop visitor offer • Identify a provider to hire SUP's, sea kayaks, wind surfing and kite boarding • Raise awareness of wild and outdoor swimming offer including Blue Flag beaches and Faversham lido with outdoor swimming groups and triathlons • Work with boat tour providers to further develop tours to Maunsell Sea Forts from Queensborough, seal watching as well as photography and art tours • Explore the possibility of reopening the ferry link from the mainland to the Isle of Harty • Install mooring posts at Milton Creek 	4,5,6	Swale Borough Council Businesses Visit Swale	Long Term	Swale Borough Council, Local clubs, relevant water agencies

6.17 Based on the supply and demand analysis summarised in Table 40, the following facility needs are identified:

- Additional swimming pool provision by 2038; ideally through the redevelopment and extension of the existing Sheppey Pool;
- Retaining as a minimum existing sports hall provision by 2038;
- Extending community access to additional sports hall provision (9.5 badminton courts) by 2038 (this would help address the needs of hockey, netball, badminton and potentially table tennis). Improved floor markings would address the needs of boccia.
- Small increase in affordable fitness provision (21 fitness stations)
- Retaining existing levels of community accessible (including pay and play) sports halls, swimming pools, squash courts, indoor bowls, and fitness stations as a minimum;
- Potential for a club-led development of dedicated gymnastics facilities

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- Exploration of the need for additional indoor bowling rinks
- Need for sustainable and specialist boxing facilities
- Continued development of access to watersports

6.18 Retaining and improving the quality of provision is important in Swale to ensure that participation levels are retained and wherever possible increased. Active Lives highlights that 27.8% of the Swale community is inactive enough to have any health benefit.

6.19 The provision of good quality, local community facilities, accessible and affordable to meet identified need, is key to facilitating participation growth, and contributing to a reduction in the health inequalities in the Borough. This reflects Public Health and SBC's health and well-being priorities, to facilitate sustained behaviour change to reduce obesity, improve health, contribute to addressing mental health issues and increase participation. Based on the quality audits and assessments, and the supply and demand analysis, the priorities for future investment in facility provision are:

Table 43: Summary of Facility Investment Priorities

Facility Type	Priority for Future Provision	Location
Sports Halls	Retain provision of existing levels of community accessible and affordable sports hall facilities as a minimum	Boroughwide
	Community access to an additional 9.5 badminton courts by 2038 (sport specific needs to address include: badminton, boccia, hockey, netball and table tennis)	Boroughwide Education sites and SBC facilities (Sheppey dryside is being re-developed as part of the Levelling Up project)
	Refurbish/redevelopment of existing ageing facilities	e.g. Fulston Manor School, Oasis Academy, Queen Elizabeth's Academy and The Abbey School.
	It may also be possible to secure additional access for community pay and play at existing education facilities. Potential to use planning obligations from housing developments to improve facilities. Link to formal community use agreements.	
Swimming Pools	Retain provision of existing levels of community accessible and affordable swimming facilities as a minimum	Boroughwide
	Seek to redevelop and extend water provision at Sheppey Pool from 6 lanes to 8 lanes (under-supply of water space of 188.49 sq. m by 2038)	Sheppey Pool
		Sheerness/Sheppey and Faversham Pools

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Facility Type	Priority for Future Provision	Location
	Consideration should also be given to reviewing the current pool programmes at the public pay and play pool facilities in Swale to ensure that the majority of hours are given to the most popular activities.	
Health and Fitness	Maintain provision of pay and play accessible health and fitness provision space, at Sheppey Sports Complex and Swallows Leisure Centre	Sheerness and Sittingbourne
	Look at opportunities to expand this level of provision on site as part of any future redevelopment (21 stations)	Faversham Pools, Sheppey Leisure Complex
Squash	Retain existing levels of provision within the borough.	Boroughwide
Indoor Bowls	Retain provision of existing indoor bowling rinks at Milton Recreation Ground	Sittingbourne
	Explore increasing indoor bowls provision	
Gymnastics and Trampoline Boxing	Potential for club-led development of additional dedicated gymnastics facilities	Boroughwide
	Potential for club-led development of dedicated boxing facilities	
Activity Halls	Develop use of community centres for informal sport and physical activity.	Boroughwide
Watersports General Provision	Continued development of access to a range of watersports	In appropriate and safe locations
	Overall, and specifically through the housing growth agenda, provision of more active environments, reflecting active travel, safe cycle routes to school, the need to link existing and new communities with walking/cycling/jogging routes	Boroughwide

6.20 Other future facility provision, linked particularly to long term population growth and housing development, is the development of new and improved walking, jogging and cycling routes/connectivity, to encourage active travel, and provide an environment in which physical activity can be easily integrated into daily life.

Capital Investment

- 6.21 It is clear from the strategy analysis that there is a need for some capital investment in Swale, to address future needs. Whilst some of this investment relates to additional facility provision there is also a need to start planning now for the refurbishment of Sheppey Sports Complex (pools), Swallows Leisure Centre, and Faversham Pools. Investment is also required in some of the voluntary sector and education facilities.
- 6.22 To protect the current accessible supply of sports halls in Swale Borough on education sites from the risk of loss of access for sports clubs and community groups, it is recommended that the Council seeks to secure community use agreements (CUAs) in negotiation with the schools' governing bodies. Typically, CUAs can be negotiated when a school requires either a planning consent (e.g. for extension to its facilities) or external funding support towards the capital cost of refurbishing or extending school sports facilities. In these circumstances, a CUA can be negotiated as a condition of the grant or the planning consent.
- 6.23 To protect the attractiveness of the current supply to the community, it will be necessary to invest in upgrading a number of the existing accessible sports halls and ancillary facilities. The priority refurbishment needs are:
- Sheppey Leisure Centre - 42 years old and last refurbished 20 years ago.
 - Queen Elizabeth Grammar School - 50+ years old and in very poor condition; planning consent in place for a replacement 4 court sports hall. Changing rooms also need upgrading.
 - Swallows Leisure Centre - 33 years old. Refresh of sports hall.
 - Oasis Academy West - consider options to improve physical access to the sports hall for community users.
- 6.24 Highsted Grammar School has planning permission for a 4-court sports hall dated 30/10/20 (20/503768/FULL). Borden Grammar School also has planning permission for a two-storey new standalone teaching block and 3-court sports hall dated 14/9/21 (21/504168/COUNTY). Neither application include community use agreements as pre-requisite to the planning approval. A third application for the demolition and erection of a new 4 badminton court sports hall at Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School was agreed 19/7/22 (22/502791/PAMEET). This also has no requirement for a community use agreement.

Partnership Working with Education Sites

- 6.25 It is also clear that delivery of the levels of investment required will only result from a local partnership approach. The development of improved sports facilities, and physical activity environments, will facilitate increased participation, which in turn will benefit individual and community health. The challenge is that the greatest health benefit will be gained by encouraging the inactive, to become active.

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- 6.26 In order to deliver the identified strategy needs, and the key outcome of increased participation to address health inequalities, plus meet demands from increased population, there is an opportunity for some changes in approach to delivery. The development of new/replacement facilities, increasing and optimising the available capacity in existing education facilities, provides a mechanism to deliver these outcomes.
- 6.27 The key issue to address initially is that of future partnership with education sites, to retain community access for clubs and groups as a minimum, and where possible agree Community Use Agreements (CUAs) which provide balanced access for the community on a pay and play basis. Increasing capacity to offer and deliver increased participative opportunities, particularly for those who are currently inactive, could contribute significantly to a reduction in health inequalities in the Borough.
- 6.28 **To address the future under-supply of sports halls accessible to the community in peak period, the following strategic options are identified:**
- To assess the feasibility of repairing and reopening the New House Sports & Youth Centre sports hall in partnership with Kent County Council, Sittingbourne Table Tennis League and other local voluntary sector organisations as appropriate.
 - Seek to negotiate with Swale Academies Trust (SAT) access for community groups and clubs to the existing sports halls at Sittingbourne School and The Westlands School. (It is noted that Sittingbourne School was formerly a dual-use sports centre managed by the borough council. Since transfer to SAT, community access has been restricted to the outdoor sports facilities).
- 6.29 **To address the future under-supply as a consequence of proposed new housing developments in the borough and forecast population growth, the following strategic options are identified:**
- Review the plans with current planning consents at Bordon Grammar School (3 court sports hall) and Highsted Grammar School (4 court sports hall) with the schools' governing bodies with a view to negotiating CUAs. Options may exist to enhance the facilities and community access to the benefit of both the schools and their local communities. Explore the opportunities for S106 funding contributions from proposed housing developments in the vicinity of the schools.
 - Ensure that community access is designed into plans for the sports halls and activity halls within any future schools provided as part of the infrastructure to support major new housing developments to 2038, and that CUAs are negotiated as part of the planning conditions.

Recommendations and Action Plan

Recommendations

Sports Halls, Swimming Pools and Fitness Facilities

Recommendation 1 (R1)

The existing levels of community accessible (including pay and play) sports hall, swimming pool and fitness provision in the Borough are retained as a minimum, but these need not necessarily be the same facilities as at present.

(PROTECT)

Recommendation 2 (R2)

Discuss the options for all leisure facilities i.e., new build or refurbishment and explore the options for location of future community accessible (including pay and play) sports hall, swimming pool and fitness provision.

(PROVIDE)

Recommendation 3 (R3)

Accessibility to be considered and factored in to ensure all facilities are as inclusive as possible.

(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Recommendation 4 (R4)

Explore the potential for integrated operational leisure management across both Sheppey Leisure Complex and Swallows Leisure Centre and Faversham Pools to identify economies of scale.

(PROVIDE)

Sports Halls

Recommendation 5 (R5)

Re-furbish the Sheppey sports hall and remodel to include activities more conducive to getting more of this specific community more active throughout their lives.

(PROVIDE)

Recommendation 6 (R6)

Swale Borough Council (through Planning policy) seek to develop appropriate formal access arrangements i.e. Community Use Arrangements (CUA) with any new education sports halls to align with the new Kent and Medway Sports Strategy. Any planning applications for new sports halls on education sites should be considered by SBC Planning Services for formal Community Use Agreements (CUA).

(PROVIDE)

Recommendation 7 (R7)

Open dialogue with all education sites where there is access for clubs/groups but not the wider community on a pay and play basis to try and increase access to physical activity facilities.

(PROTECT AND PROVIDE)

Recommendation 8 (R8)

Work with partners to replace/refurbish ageing sports halls in the borough, particularly those on education sites where there is potential to develop a formal Community Use Arrangement (CUA).

(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Swimming Pools

Recommendation 9 (R9)

Explore the options available to Swale Borough Council to address the supply of water space in the Borough to meet the future need. Swale Borough Council to work with funding and delivery partners to identify medium to longer term investment opportunities for additional swimming pool provision.

(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Recommendation 10 (R10)

Prioritise the replacement of Sheppey Pool and if possible, extend the scale of water provision to reduce the borough's overall future under-supply. Replacement of this facility could be linked to the redevelopment of the Sheppey dryside facilities.

(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Recommendation 11 (R11)

Continue to invest in/refurbish the swimming pool at Swallows Leisure Centre to retain its quality as the facility continues to age.

(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Recommendation 12 (R12)

Continue to invest in/refurbish the facilities at Faversham Pools to retain its quality as the facility continues to age

(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Other Physical Activity and Sports Facilities

Recommendation 13 (R13)

Working in partnership, consider the potential for investment in new fitness facilities at Faversham Pools to broaden the offer for the county.

(PROVIDE)

Recommendation 14 (R14)

Establish dialogue with England Hockey to the work with partners to identify an indoor sports hall space that could be adapted for use by hockey for indoor training.

(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Recommendation 15 (R15)

Dialogue is established with England Gymnastics, Faversham Gymnastics Club and Bourne Gymnastics & Trampoline Club to further explore the potential of facilitating club-led development of additional gymnastics facilities i.e. new additional provision.

(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Recommendation 16 (R16)

Dialogue is established with England Indoor Bowls Association and local clubs to monitor the need for increased provision of indoor bowling rinks in the borough.

(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Recommendation 17 (R17)

Dialogue is established with Schools and England Badminton to review whether the schools want to sub-lease their sports hall facilities directly to the badminton clubs to enhance the provision of badminton courts in the borough.

(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Recommendation 18 (R18)

Continued development of access to a range of watersports/activities as set out in the Swale Visitor Economy Framework

(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Recommendation 19 (R19)

Invest in the development of additional/replacement facilities to address identified gaps in consultation with Active Kent and Medway. Developer contributions/funding as set out in national planning policy guidance (National Infrastructure Levy – NIL), towards the development of new/improved facilities should be collected on an ongoing basis wherever possible, to contribute to capital investment for physical activity and leisure.

(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Recommendation 20 (R20)

Where appropriate, Swale Borough Council and its partners seek to secure developer contributions from strategic developments that could contribute towards the development/refurbishment of strategic facilities, additional and safe walking, running, and cycling routes, and where possible to open up other informal, multipurpose places and spaces where people can be active.

(PROVIDE AND PROTECT)

Recommendation 21 (R21)

Swale Borough Council and all its partners identify the level of capital funding required to address the identified investment needs for sports facilities, and investigate all available sources for capital funding, on a partnership basis. To support this process, it is recommended to involve Active Kent and Medway (Kent Sports Partnership).

(PROVIDE)

Recommendation 22 (R22)

Swale Borough Council and its partners prioritise investment in the development of high-quality community sports facilities/spaces, with local partners. Increasing available capacity and therefore opportunities to take part in regular physical activity, in the local community, will contribute to improved health and wellbeing, increased participation and better community cohesion.

(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Recommendation 23 (R23)

There should be on-going monitoring of this Strategy through its implementation, but as a minimum, progress should be reviewed and refreshed every five years. On-going monitoring should include partnership working with neighbouring local authorities to keep aware of facility changes and developments.

(PROTECT)

Action Plan

- 6.30 In order to realise the above Vision and Aims for sport and leisure facility provision in Swale there are key priorities that need to be addressed and implemented. These are set out below in the Action Plan, based on the recommendations for future provision. The investment costs quoted are based on a combination of our knowledge of new build schemes, industry norms, and Sport England cost guidelines. These are based on sq. m construction costs.

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Table 41: Strategy Action Plan

Recommendation	Action	Responsibility	Timescale		Resources / Partners
			Short	= 1 – 5 Years	
			Medium	= 5 – 10 Years	
			Long Term	= 10+ Years	
<p>Recommendation 1 (R1)</p> <p>The existing levels of community accessible (including pay and play) sports hall, swimming pool and fitness provision in the Borough are retained as a minimum, but these need not necessarily be the same facilities as at present.</p> <p>(PROTECT)</p>	<p>Ensure the need for existing levels of pay and play sports hall, swimming pools and fitness provision is reflected in the Local Plan.</p> <p>Review current sports facilities programme and access for pay and play and community use. Monitor club versus casual use.</p>	Swale Borough Council Officers	Ongoing		Swale Borough Council Planning and Leisure Officer time.
			Ongoing		Swale Borough Council Leisure Officer time
<p>Recommendation 2 (R2)</p> <p>Discuss the options for all leisure facilities i.e., new build or refurbishment and explore the options for location of future community accessible (including pay and play) sports hall, swimming pool and fitness provision.</p> <p>(PROVIDE)</p>	Produce a strategic plan for facility development and collaborate to look at increasing capacity and / or investment – mutually beneficial	Swale Borough Council Officers (including planners) and representatives from Active Kent and Medway	Short Term		Swale Borough Council Officers (leisure and planners).
<p>Recommendation 3 (R3)</p> <p>Accessibility to be considered and factored in to ensure all facilities are as inclusive as possible.</p> <p>(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)</p>	Swale Borough Council, and other partners (Boccia England) to improve disability access to leisure facilities, including the consideration of adding in sports hall floor markings for Boccia	Swale Borough Council Officers	Short Term		Swale Borough Council and existing relevant education establishments. England Boccia NGB representative.

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Recommendation	Action	Responsibility	Timescale		Resources / Partners
			Short	= 1 – 5 Years	
			Medium	= 5 – 10 Years	
			Long Term	= 10+ Years	
<p>Recommendation 4 (R4) Explore the potential for integrated operational leisure management across both Sheppey Leisure Complex and Swallows Leisure Centre and Faversham Pools to identify economies of scale.</p> <p>(PROVIDE)</p>	<p>Review contract for management of leisure facilities with a view to re-procurement; this needs to reflect the proposals for potential new facility at Sheppey and management of Faversham Pools.</p> <p>Meet with Faversham Pools Trust to formulate a joint strategic plan to develop options appraisal for future sustainability of leisure provision in Faversham and across Swale.</p> <p>Consider facility transfer from Faversham Pools Trust to the Council</p>	Swale Borough Council Officers	Short Term		<p>Swale Borough Council Leisure Officer time. External consultants.</p> <p>Swale Borough Council Leisure Officers time and Chairman/ Board from Faversham Pools Trust.</p> <p>Swale Borough Council legal department</p>
<p>Recommendation 5 (R5) Re-furbish the Sheppey sports hall and remodel to include activities more conducive to getting more of this specific community more active throughout their lives.</p> <p>(PROVIDE)</p>	Continue to develop and progress the development of the Sheppey Leisure Complex (dryside) refurbishment project	Swale Borough Council Officers	Short Term		Levelling up Fund grant; SBC officers; external consultants
<p>Recommendation 6 (R6) Swale Borough Council (through Planning policy) seek to develop appropriate formal access arrangements i.e., Community Use Arrangements (CUA) with any new education sports halls to align with the new Kent and Medway Sports Strategy. Any planning applications for new sports halls on education sites should be considered by SBC Planning Services for formal Community Use Agreements (CUA).</p> <p>(PROVIDE)</p>	Planning applications for new sports halls on education sites should be considered by Swale Borough Council's Planning Services for formal Community Use Agreements (CUA)	Swale Borough Council Officers (including planners)	Short-Medium Term (and ongoing thereafter)		Swale Borough Council Leisure and Planning Officers time. Principal Head of local Academies and / or Executive Head Teachers of schools. Active Kent and Medway Officer(s).

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Recommendation	Action	Responsibility	Timescale		Resources / Partners
			Short	= 1 – 5 Years	
			Medium	= 5 – 10 Years	
			Long Term	= 10+ Years	
<p>Recommendation 7 (R7)</p> <p>Open dialogue with all education sites where there is access for clubs/groups but not the wider community on a pay and play basis to try and increase access to physical activity facilities.</p> <p>(PROTECT AND PROVIDE)</p>	<p>Seek to establish dialogue with all relevant education sites about opening up increased access for pay and play use.</p>	<p>Swale Borough Council Officers (including planners)</p>	<p>Short-Medium Term (and ongoing thereafter)</p>	<p>Swale Borough Council Leisure and Planning Officers time. Principal Head of local Academies and / or Executive Head Teachers of schools. Active Kent and Medway Officer(s).</p>	
<p>Recommendation 8 (R8)</p> <p>Work with partners to replace/refurbish ageing sports halls in the borough, particularly those on education sites where there is potential to develop a formal Community Use Arrangement (CUA).</p> <p>(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)</p>	<p>Develop a standard CUA for application in any forthcoming planning obligations.</p> <p>Swale Borough Council and its partners work with relevant educational organisations to review, revise and or implement Community Use Agreements, which provide a better balance of pay and play and club use and longer opening hours where appropriate.</p>	<p>Swale Borough Council Officers; consultation with school</p> <p>Swale Borough Council Officers; Education establishments; Sport England</p>	<p>Short – Medium Term</p>	<p>Swale Borough Council leisure officer and planning, consultation time with new school/facility</p> <p>Swale Borough Council and existing relevant education establishments, Sport England.</p> <p>Time costs for developing Community Use Agreements.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 9 (R9)</p> <p>Explore the options available to Swale Borough Council to address the supply of water space in the Borough to meet the future need as identified in the FPM.</p> <p>(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)</p>	<p>Swale Borough Council to work with funding and delivery partners to identify medium to longer term investment opportunities for additional swimming pool provision.</p>	<p>Swale Borough Council Officers</p>	<p>Medium Term</p>	<p>Swale Borough Council officer time;</p>	

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Recommendation	Action	Responsibility	Timescale		Resources / Partners
			Short	= 1 – 5 Years	
			Medium	= 5 – 10 Years	
			Long Term	= 10+ Years	
<p>Recommendation 10 (R10)</p> <p>Prioritise the replacement of Sheppey Pool and if possible, extend the scale of water provision to reduce the Borough's overall under-supply. Replacement of this facility could be linked to the redevelopment of the Sheppey dryside facilities.</p> <p>(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)</p>	<p>The swimming pools at Sheppey Sports Complex are tired and the only municipal pools on the Isle of Sheppey. It is therefore important that a plan for redeveloping the swimming pools in this part of the Borough is implemented using available grant funding in order to maintain and improve quality of provision.</p>	<p>Swale Borough Council Officers</p>	<p>Short – Medium Term</p>		<p>Swale Borough Council officer time; Sport England and other funding sources</p>
<p>Recommendation 11 (R11)</p> <p>Continue to invest in/refurbish the swimming pool at Swallows Leisure Centre to retain its quality as the facility continues to age.</p> <p>(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)</p>	<p>Undertake a feasibility study to plan for the refurbishment of the pools including pool plant and changing rooms</p>	<p>Swale Borough Council</p>	<p>Short – Medium Term</p>		<p>Swale Borough Council officer time; Sport England and other funding sources</p>
<p>Recommendation 12 (R12)</p> <p>Continue to invest in/refurbish the facilities at Faversham Pools to retain its quality as the facility continues to age</p> <p>(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)</p>	<p>Undertake a feasibility study in conjunction with Faversham Pools Trust to plan for the refurbishment of the pools (indoors and outdoors) including pool plant, changing rooms and roof support structure (trusses).</p>	<p>Faversham Pools Trust (with Swale Borough Council)</p>	<p>Short Term</p>		<p>Swale Borough Council officer time; Chairman of Faversham Pools Trust; Sport England and other funding sources</p>
<p>Recommendation 13 (R13)</p> <p>Working in partnership, consider the potential for investment in new fitness facilities at Faversham Pools to broaden the offer for the county.</p> <p>(PROVIDE)</p>	<p>Work with the Faversham Pools Trust to explore the potential for development of fitness facilities on site.</p>	<p>Faversham Pools Trust (with Swale Borough Council)</p>	<p>Short – medium Term</p>		<p>Swale Borough Council officer time; Chairman of Faversham Pools Trust; Sport England and other funding sources</p>

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Recommendation	Action	Responsibility	Timescale		Resources / Partners
			Short	= 1 – 5 Years	
			Medium	= 5 – 10 Years	
			Long Term	= 10+ Years	
<p>Recommendation 14 (R14) Dialogue is established with England Hockey and then to work with partners to identify an indoor sports hall space that could be adapted for use by hockey for indoor training.</p> <p>(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)</p>	<p>Meet with England Hockey to determine where, and how, indoor hockey can be accommodated within existing sports hall provision within Swale.</p>	<p>Swale Borough Council Officer.</p>	Short Term		<p>Swale Borough Council with England Hockey NGB.</p>
<p>Recommendation 15 (R15) Dialogue is established with England Gymnastics, Faversham Gymnastics Club and Bourne Gymnastics & Trampoline Club to further explore the potential of facilitating club-led development of additional gymnastics facilities i.e. new additional provision.</p> <p>(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)</p>	<p>Explore further club-led provision/partnership for specialist gymnastics provision given high level of members/participation.</p>	<p>Swale Borough Council Leisure and Planning Officers.</p>	Short – Medium Term		<p>Swale Borough Council Planning and Leisure Officer time; Bourne Gymnastics and trampoline club and the NGB - British Gymnastics</p>
<p>Recommendation 16 (R16) Dialogue is established with England Indoor Bowls Association and local clubs to monitor the need for increased provision of indoor bowling rinks in the borough.</p> <p>(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)</p>	<p>Explore further club-led provision/partnership for specialist indoor bowls provision</p>	<p>Swale Borough Council Leisure</p>	Medium Term		<p>Swale Borough Council Planning and Leisure Officer time; New Milton Indoor Bowls and the NGB – English Indoor Bowls Association (EIBA)</p>

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Recommendation	Action	Responsibility	Timescale		Resources / Partners
			Short	= 1 – 5 Years	
			Medium	= 5 – 10 Years	
			Long Term	= 10+ Years	
<p>Recommendation 17 (R17) Dialogue is established with Schools and England Badminton to review whether the schools want to sub-lease their sports hall facilities directly to the badminton clubs to enhance the provision of badminton courts in the borough.</p> <p>(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)</p>	<p>Support education establishments who do not have a CUA to target development activities as part of a holistic approach to sustainable community health and wellbeing – mutually beneficial</p>	<p>Swale Borough Council Council Officer Leisure</p>	Short – Medium Term		<p>Swale Borough Council and existing relevant education establishments. England Badminton NGB representative.</p>
<p>Recommendation 18 Continued development of access to a range of watersports/activities as set out in the Swale Visitor Economy Framework.</p> <p>(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)</p>	<p>Work with yacht club, sailing club, Barge Museum and rowing club to develop visitor offer</p> <p>Identify a provider to hire SUP's, sea kayaks, wind surfing and kite boarding</p> <p>Raise awareness of wild and outdoor swimming offer including Blue Flag beaches and Faversham lido with outdoor swimming groups and triathlons</p> <p>Work with boat tour providers to further develop tours to Maunsell Sea Forts from Queensborough, seal watching as well as photography and art tours</p> <p>Explore the possibility of reopening the ferry link from the mainland to the Isle of Harty</p> <p>Install mooring posts at Milton Creek</p>	<p>Swale Borough Council Council Businesses Visit Swale</p>	Long Term		<p>Swale Borough Council, Local clubs, relevant water agencies</p>
<p>Recommendation 19 (R19) Invest in the development of additional/replacement facilities to address identified gaps in consultation with Active Kent and Medway.</p> <p>(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)</p>	<p>Developer contributions/funding as set out in national planning policy guidance (National Infrastructure Levy – NIL), towards the development of new/improved facilities should be collected on an ongoing basis wherever possible, to contribute to capital investment for physical activity and leisure.</p>	<p>Swale Borough Council Council Officers</p>	Short Term and Ongoing thereafter		<p>Swale Borough Council Planning and Leisure Officer time;</p>

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Recommendation	Action	Responsibility	Timescale		Resources / Partners
			Short	= 1 – 5 Years	
			Medium	= 5 – 10 Years	
			Long Term	= 10+ Years	
<p>Recommendation 20 (R20) Where appropriate, Swale Borough Council and its partners seek to secure developer contributions from strategic developments that could contribute towards the development/refurbishment of strategic facilities, additional and safe walking, running, and cycling routes, and where possible to open up other informal, multipurpose places and spaces where people can be active.</p> <p>(PROVIDE AND PROTECT)</p>	<p>Swale Borough Council should develop a detailed approach to securing developer contributions to support the emerging local plan e.g. through a Planning Obligations SPD.</p> <p>The use of Sport England’s Sports Facility Calculator should specifically be referenced with assisting to identify demand for and financial contributions towards halls and pools.</p>	Swale Borough Council Leisure and Planning officers. Sport England.	Short – Medium Term		Swale Borough Council Planning and Leisure Officer time; Developers
<p>Recommendation 21 (R21) Swale Borough Council and all its partners identify the level of capital funding required to address the identified investment needs for sports facilities, and investigate all available sources for capital funding, on a partnership basis. To support this process, it is recommended to involve Active Kent and Medway (Kent Sports Partnership).</p> <p>(PROVIDE)</p>	<p>Swale Borough Council Leisure and Planning Officers to identify potential levels of capital funding from residential development, and any other funding sources.</p> <p>Involve Active Kent and Medway in this process</p>	Swale Borough Council Leisure and Planning Officers. Sport England, local partners	Short – Medium Term		Swale Borough Council Planning and Leisure Officer time; Developers Relevant local partners

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Recommendation	Action	Responsibility	Timescale		Resources / Partners
			Short	= 1 – 5 Years	
			Medium	= 5 – 10 Years	
			Long Term	= 10+ Years	
<p>Recommendation 22 (R22) Swale Borough Council and its partners prioritise investment in the development of high-quality community sports facilities/spaces, with local partners. Increasing available capacity and therefore opportunities to take part in regular physical activity, in the local community, will contribute to improved health and wellbeing, increased participation and better community cohesion.</p> <p>(PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)</p>	<p>Swale Borough Council to work with its local partner providers and relevant health and community partners to ensure provision of, and access to, appropriate community sports facilities and opportunities to provide physical activity in the local community.</p>	<p>Swale Borough Council Leisure Officers; Public Health and Local Providers and Community Partners</p>	Ongoing		<p>Swale Borough Council Leisure Officer time; Swale Borough Council Community Partners; Public Health and Swale Borough Council Partner providers.</p>
<p>Recommendation 23 (R23) There should be on-going monitoring of this Strategy through its implementation, but as a minimum, progress should be reviewed and refreshed every five years. On-going monitoring should include partnership working with neighbouring local authorities to keep aware of facility changes and developments.</p> <p>(PROTECT)</p>	<p>Ensure a monitoring process is in place to refresh the strategy and action plan every 5 years.</p> <p>Ensure ongoing dialogue with neighbouring authorities to be aware of facility changes and developments that may impact on Copeland residents and facility plans for the future.</p> <p>Establish a steering group made up of key stakeholders to take forward the actions in the action plan. This could be the same as the steering group recommended for implementing the PPS but excluding the outdoor playing pitch NGBs.</p>	<p>Swale Borough Council and all partners</p>	Short – Medium Term and then Ongoing thereafter		<p>Swale Borough Council Planning and Leisure Officer time; Developers and relevant local partners;</p>

N.B. It is recognised that any new schools are currently outside the direct control of Swale BC. This should not, however, prevent local partnerships for community access.

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