

Playing Pitch Strategy Update

2023

Southend-on-Sea City Council



Table of Contents

Southend-on-Sea City Council Playing Pitch Strategy Update 2023	1
1. Introduction	6
2. Methodology	7
Table 2.1 Stakeholder engagement per sport	8
3. Football	9
3.1 Demand Update	9
Table 3.2 Comparison of number of competitive football teams	9
3.2 Supply Update	10
3.3 Significant Issues for Football	10
3.4 Football Summary and Conclusions	10
4. Third Generation Turf (3G) Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPS).....	11
4.1 Supply Update	11
4.2 Demand Update.....	11
4.3 Significant Issues for Third Generation Turf (3G) Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPS) 12	
4.4 Third Generation Turf (3G) Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPS) Summary and Conclusions:	12
5. Cricket.....	12
5.1 Demand Update.....	12
Table 5.2 Comparison of number of competitive cricket teams	12
5.2 Supply Update	13
5.3 Significant Issues for Cricket.....	15
5.4 Cricket Summary and Conclusions	15
6. Rugby Union	16
6.1 Demand Update.....	16
6.2 Supply Update	16
6.3 Significant Issues for Rugby Union	17

6.4	Rugby Union Summary and Conclusions.....	17
7.	Tennis.....	18
7.1	Demand Update.....	18
	Table 7.2 Comparison of number of tennis club members	18
7.2	Supply Update	18
7.3	Significant Issues for Tennis	19
7.4	Tennis Summary and Conclusions.....	19
8.	Netball	20
8.1	Demand Update.....	20
8.2	Supply Update	20
8.3.	Significant issues for Netball	20
8.4	Netball Summary and Conclusions	20
9.	Hockey	21
9.1	Demand Update.....	21
9.2	Supply update.....	22
9.3.	Significant issues for Hockey	22
9.4	Hockey Summary and Conclusions	23
10.	Golf.....	23
10.1	Demand.....	23
10.2	Supply update	24
10.3	Significant issues for Golf	24
10.4	Summary and Conclusions for Golf.....	24
11.	Athletics	24
11.1	Demand Update.....	24
11.2	Supply Update	25
11.3	Significant Issues for Athletics	25
11.4	Athletics Summary and Conclusions:.....	26
12.	Cycling	27

12.1 Demand - 2018 Study	27
12.2 Supply Update	27
13. Parkour.....	28
13.1 2018 Summary	28
13.2 2018 Recommendations	28
13.3 2023 Update	28
14. Bowls.....	29
14.1 Demand Update.....	29
14.2 Supply Update	30
14.3 Significant Issues for Bowls	30
14.4 Summary and Conclusions for Bowls.....	30
15. Multi Use Games Areas (MUGA).....	31
15.1 Demand Update.....	31
15.2 Supply Update	31
15.3 Significant Issues.....	31
15.4 Summary and Conclusions for MUGAs.....	31
Appendix 1: Playing Pitch Strategy Surveys.....	32
Appendix 2: Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan (2018)	34

1. Introduction

1.1. This report updates the Council's evidence base for playing pitches for 2023.

This report is the first update of the following documents:

- [Southend Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan 2018](#)
- [Southend \(PPS\) Assessment Report 2018](#)

1.2. Sport England's Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance 'An approach to developing and delivering a playing pitch strategy' also sets out the purpose of undertaking a review.

1.3. Sport England identify that an annual review should highlight:

- How the delivery of the recommendations and action plan has progressed, and any changes required to the priority afforded to each action (e.g. the priority of some may increase following the delivery of others)
- How the PPS has been applied and the lessons learnt
- Any changes to particularly important sites and/or clubs in the area (e.g. the most used or high quality sites for a particular sport) and other supply and demand information, what this may mean for the overall assessment work and the key findings and issues
- Any development of a specific sport or particular format of a sport
- Any new or emerging issues and opportunities.

1.4. This update aims to follow this approach. For completeness of understanding, it should be read alongside the documents outlined in paragraph 1.1.

1.5. Partner organisations have a vested interest in ensuring existing playing fields, pitches and ancillary facilities can be protected and enhanced. As such, many of the objectives and actions within this document need to be delivered and implemented by sports organisations, education establishments, community sports networks and other stakeholders. In many instances, the Council will not be a key partner in delivering these actions or recommendations, meaning the playing pitch strategy is not just for the Council to act upon, but for all the stakeholders and partners involved within the project.

2. Methodology

2.1. The 2018 Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) focused on the following types of sports facilities:

- Football
- Third Generation Turf (3G) Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPS)
- Cricket
- Rugby Union
- Rugby League
- Hockey
- Golf
- Bowls
- Tennis
- Netball
- Athletics
- Cycling
- Multi-use Games Areas
- Parkour

2.2. As the previous assessment looked at the South Essex area some sports are provided for outside the administrative boundary of Southend-on-Sea City Council. Therefore, this update will only assess facilities that lie within Southend's boundary and where the sport is active in the area.

2.3. To identify any changes implemented since the 2018 PPS was undertaken, national governing bodies (NGBs) and other key stakeholders were asked to complete a survey explaining any changes to demand and supply. The following sports/organisations were contacted:

Table 2.1 Stakeholder engagement per sport

Sport/Sports Provision	Organisation	Rationale
Football	Essex FA, SCC	Governing body of football in Essex and local authority
Third Generation Turf (3G) Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPS)	Essex FA, SCC	Governing body of football in Essex and local authority
Cricket	Essex Cricket Old Southendian and Southchurch CC Westcliff CC Leigh on Sea CC Eastwood CC	Governing body of cricket in Essex
Rugby Union	Rugby Football Union	Governing body of rugby union in Essex
Bowls	SCC	Local authority
Tennis	Lawn Tennis Association, SCC	National governing body and local authority
Netball	England Netball	Governing body of netball
Athletics	England Athletics	Governing body of athletics
Hockey	England Hockey	National governing body
Golf	Golf England	National governing body
Cycling	SCC	Local authority
Bowls	SCC	Local authority

2.4. For each sport the following approach was taken:

- Supply Update – this captures the changes in supply identified by the sports organisations with each activity linked back to the three aims set out by Sport England to protect, enhance and provide.
- Demand Update – this compares participation data from 2018 and 2023. Where a direct comparison is not possible, this report will present the data that is available.
- Significant Issues by Sport – each sport was asked to identify any significant issues from their perspective and also is there had been any further changes to the information presented in the 2018 documents.

- Summary and Conclusions by Sport – The information collated above was then used to determine if any changes were needed to the recommendations for each sport in the respective action plans.
- Where current year update was not provided, this is shown as N/A

2.5. An example of the survey form can be found in Appendix 1.

2.6. The recommendations for each sport from the 2018 PPS Strategy and Action Plan are reproduced in Appendix 2 for reference.

3. Football

3.1 Demand Update

Table 3.2 Comparison of number of competitive football teams

Demand data 2018		Demand data 2023	
Football teams	Number of teams per age group*	Football teams	Number of teams per age group
Men 11v11 (16-45yrs)	86	Men 11v11 (16-45yrs)	98
Women 11v11 (16-45yrs)	4	Women 11v11 (16-45yrs)	3
Youth 11v11 (12-15yrs)	56	Boys 11v11 (12-15yrs)	56
		Girls 11v11 (12-15yrs)	9
Youth 9v9 (10-11yrs)	49	Boys 9v9 (10-11yrs)	34
		Girls 9v9 (10-11yrs)	5
Mini 7v7 (8-9yrs)	48	Mixed 7v7 (8-9yrs)	43
Mini 5v5 (6-7yrs)	42	Mixed 5v5 (6-7yrs)	36
Total	285	Total	284

**The 2018 playing pitch assessment report notes at page 28 that there are five youth girls' teams, but these are not disaggregated between Youth 11v11 and Youth9v9, so this does not allow for direct comparison*

**9v9 includes U11 and U12*

**7 v 7 includes U9 and U10, with 2 female specific teams in this age group*

**5 v 5 includes U8 and below*

- The number of youth/mini teams has dropped slightly except for the 11 v 11 age group.
- The number of women's teams has decreased slightly since 2018
- The number of men's teams increased by 14% between 2018 and 2023

3.2 Supply Update

- St Thomas More sand-based Astro has been converted to 3G AGP
- Garon Park 3G AGP has been delivered
- Outline planning permission has been granted for a new stadium for Southend United Football Club that will include an indoor community soccer dome with a full size 3G AGP. This will be subject to a community use agreement. Delivery likely to be medium to long term.
- Southend Manor have ambitions for investment in ancillary facilities at Southchurch Park

3.3 Significant Issues for Football

- The FA published the [Southend-on-Sea Local Football Facility Plan](#) in December 2018, after publication of the Playing Pitch Strategy. It highlights that nationally funding partners have significantly increased investment to accelerate efforts to deliver more and better football facilities, which includes 3G pitches. Possible increased Section 106 contributions through development may provide additional funding for increased 3G provision.
- Garon Park CIC are actively pursuing a second 3G AGP on site, initial discussions have taken place with Southend Council
- Shoeburyness High School are working with ECFA and Football Foundation to deliver a full size 3G AGP

3.4 Football Summary and Conclusions

- Participation has increased for men's teams although it has remained static or dropped slightly for the youth age groups and women's teams

- The remains a need for additional 3G AGP; proposals are being developed for a second pitch at Garon Park and one at Shoeburyness High School
- The recommendations from 2018 remain valid and should be retained, along with noting the sport specific issues set out above.

4. Third Generation Turf (3G) Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPS)

4.1 Supply Update

- Thomas More sand-based Astro converted to 3G AGP
- Garon Park 3G AGP has been delivered
- Renewal of 3G pitch at Chase High School with community/dual use
- Prince Avenue Academy was granted planning permission in January 2023 for a 7v7 3G AGP with a requirement for a community use agreement¹
- Planning permission was granted in August 2023 for a World Cup Rugby Regulation 22 and FIFA Quality compliant 3G AGP with a full rugby sized pitch at Cecil Jones Academy². While Rugby Union would be the principal sport, the facility is designed for football use as well.

4.2 Demand Update

- As highlighted in section 3, demand for adult's football pitches has increased, as supply for grass pitches has not increased there remains a demand for 3G pitches in the borough.

¹ <https://publicaccess.southend.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=RTGXRYPAJDB00&activeTab=summary>
<https://publicaccess.southend.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=RCE14GPAJ0900&activeTab=summary>

² <https://publicaccess.southend.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=RTGXRYPAJDB00&activeTab=summary>

4.3 Significant Issues for Third Generation Turf (3G) Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPS)

- The remains a need for additional 3G AGP; proposals are being developed for a second pitch at Garon Park and one at Shoeburyness High School

4.4 Third Generation Turf (3G) Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPS) Summary and Conclusions:

- The recommendations from 2018 remain valid and should be retained, along with noting the sport specific issues set out above.

5. Cricket

5.1 Demand Update

- There are six cricket clubs playing in Southend on Sea

Table 5.2 Comparison of number of competitive cricket teams

Demand data 2018		Demand data 2023	
Cricket teams	Number of teams per age group	Cricket teams	Number of teams per age group*
Men (18-55yrs)	26	Men (18-55yrs)	27
Women (18-55yrs)	0	Women (18-55yrs)	0
Boys (7-18yrs)	13	Boys (7-18yrs)	17
Girls (7-18yrs)	0	Girls (7-18yrs)	1
		Mixed (7-18yrs)	1
Total	39	Total	46

Westcliff on Sea Teams	Number of teams
Youth U9	2
Youth U11	2
Youth U13	2
Youth U15	2
Girls U11	1
Adults Saturday	6
Adult Midweek and Adult Sundays	4

- Westcliff have closed the books on U9 team but are still recruiting for all other teams

- There are approximately 200 youths and around 80 adults at the club
- Participation has grown from 18 teams in 2018 to 19 teams in 2023

Old Southendian and Southchurch Teams	Number of teams 2023
Youth U9	0
Youth U11	1
Youth U13	1
Youth U15	1
Adults Saturday	5
Adult Sundays	1

- Old Southendian and Southchurch had 10 teams in 2018 and 9 teams in 2023

Leigh on Sea Teams	Number of teams 2023
Youth U9	2
Youth U11	2
Youth U13	1
Youth U15	1
Youth U19	1
Adults Saturday	4
Adult Sundays	1

- Leigh on Sea Cricket Club had 11 teams in 2018 and have 11 in 2023

Eastwood Teams	Number of teams 2023
Youth U9	0.5
Youth U11	0.5
Youth U13	0
Youth U15	0
Girls under 11	0
Adults Saturday	3
Adult Midweek and Adult Sundays	2

- Eastwood have 3 league sides on Saturday
- Veterans team
- Midweek 20/20
- Small mixed team under 9 and 11

5.2 Supply Update

- There are 15 grass wicket squares in Southend on Sea located across 10 sites.
- All are available for community use and are of a good or standard quality.

- There are six standalone non-turf pitches (NTFs), located at school sites – none are in current use for matches (aside from school use)
- NTFs at Shoeburyness High School, Southend High School for Boys and Westcliff High School for Boys are available for community use.
- The NTF at Belfairs Academy is subject of an active community use agreement with Sport England

Old Southendian and Southchurch Cricket Club

- No change since 2018

Westcliff on Sea Cricket Club

- The nets and artificial wicket in Chalkwell Park have been updated.
- The club has been supplied with cages which can be rolled out to the square – cost to the club £20,000 in 2022.
- A cage and bowling machine has been purchased for the facility at Westcliff High School for Boys, costing £1500 in 2021.
- The club now has covers at Chalkwell Park WHSB, at a cost of £1000.

Leigh on Sea Cricket Club

- The Chalkwell Park Cricket Square facilities have reduced in quality of preparation and performance over the last 4 years since the strategy was implemented.
- The club are at their limit for junior training due to a lack of training facilities but are working with Essex Cricket Club to promote a girl's/women's section of the club, for which further facilities will be required.
- Some equipment has been purchased such as roll out nets.
- The club is very interested in the addition of an artificial wicket to aid youth training and matches and adult training.

Eastwood Cricket Club

- 2 wickets maintained by the Council.
- Exploring getting container shed to invest in more equipment.
- No artificial nets. Currently club must book a pitch on Monday night and wheel a net to the square -very labour intensive so only seniors can do.

5.3 Significant Issues for Cricket

- Westcliff on Sea cricket club has grown hugely from around 50 to 200 youths and from 40 to 80 adults, with teams across Chalkwell, Park, Westcliff High School for Boys and Belfairs Sports Ground and have ambitions to further grow membership levels
- There has been a modest increase in the number of teams at Leigh on Sea Cricket Club and a slight decrease in the number of teams at Old Southendian and Southchurch Cricket Club
- Westcliff on Sea Cricket Club has been asked to be a hub for Women's and Girls' cricket in the area
- Westcliff on Sea Cricket Club is working with the Council's Parks team on non-mechanised work at Chalkwell Park
- Leigh on Sea Cricket Club has had limited investment and is seeking additional facilities including an artificial wicket and enhanced or new NTP (non turf pitch)
- No significant issues for Old Southendian and Southchurch Cricket Club
- Eastwood Cricket Club are struggling as a club, due to ageing players, lack of awareness in local community, and reliance on too few individuals, with youth cricket not as attractive as other bigger clubs.
- Eastwood Cricket Club consider there is a gap in the market for Eastwood sandwiched between Rayleigh, Leigh and Westcliff, but would require a huge effort and more volunteers to promote the club. Would like to approach local primary schools and offer coaching as a way in

5.4 Cricket Summary and Conclusions

- The number of teams has increased since 2018, particularly at Westcliff Cricket Club
- The number of girls participating in cricket has increased.
- Facilities have been improved at Westcliff on Sea Cricket Club, with a growing membership and ambitions to develop further

- Leigh on Sea Cricket Club have had some limited investment e.g. roll out nets but further investment required including the additional of an artificial wicket
- All clubs are seeking to increase participation, particularly for women's teams, however there are a lack of facilities pitches and training facilities to enable this.
- The recommendations from 2018 remain valid and should be retained, along with noting the club specific issues set out above.

6. Rugby Union

6.1 Demand Update

- Southend RFC plays within Southend on Sea
- Westcliff RFC plays within Rochford (but on land owned by Southend on Sea City Council)
- The demand data below is for Southend RFC only
- There are 837 members playing in Southend in 2023 and 20 teams

Demand data 2018		Demand data 2022		Demand data 2023	
Group	Number of teams	Group	Number of teams	Group	Number of teams
Men's	5	Men's	4/5	Men's	N/A
Women's	1	Women's	1	Women's	N/A
Boys'	6	Boys'	6	Boys'	N/A
Girls'	0	Girls'	1	Girls'	N/A
Mini (mixed)	6	Mini (mixed)	7	Mini (mixed)	N/A
Total	18	Total	19/20	Total	N/A

**Accurate affiliation data for these teams is yet to be confirmed by the Game Management System.*

** Westcliff RFC also caters for 16 teams across senior, junior and mini formats but has no female only teams*

6.2 Supply Update

- No known change in supply of facilities
- The Rugby 365 AGP programme is no longer running

- For season 2022/12 the age banding for girls will move from three to four bands (U12,U14, U16 and U18)
- Planning permission was granted in August 2023 for a World Rugby Reg 22 and FIFA Quality compliant floodlit 3G AGP with a full rugby sized pitch at Cecil Jones Academy³. Rugby union will be the principal sport.

6.3 Significant Issues for Rugby Union

- Covid-19 restrictions impacted rugby greatly due to the high contact nature of the sport, with some restrictions still operating in the 2021/22 season. This may have skewed the overall demand data.
- However, participation has grown 20% nationally since the start of the covid pandemic.
- The RFU underwent an organisational restructure in 2020 which has resulted in a number of different support mechanisms for clubs.
- The RFU also began a 3-year partnership with the Grounds Management Association (GMA) in 2021 which gives clubs access to additional pitch quality assessments and maintenance recommendations.
- Westcliff Rugby Club has now moved to the new Clubhouse within the Southend Airport Business Park. The club will however continue to contribute some capacity to the player demand from Southend.

6.4 Rugby Union Summary and Conclusions

- The full impact of covid-19 has not been fully realised for Rugby Union. While there has been an increase in participation nationally it is unclear if this will be maintained long term
- England will host the Women's Rugby World Cup in 2025 – this is likely to lead to opportunities for future investment, with Rugby Women and Girls growing from 3 age bands to 4
- As the situation regarding demand and supply has not significantly changed since 2018 the recommendations of the Playing Pitch

³ <https://publicaccess.southend.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=RTGXRYPAJDB00&activeTab=summary>

Strategy remain valid, including the recommendations in the Action Plan for Southend Rugby Club in relation to security of tenure, clubhouse infrastructure and pitch quality.

7. Tennis

7.1 Demand Update

Table 7.2 Comparison of number of tennis club members

Demand data 2018*		Demand data 2023^	
Age group	Number of members	Age group	Number of members
Seniors	1144	Seniors	1531
Juniors	629	Juniors	628
Total	1763	Total	2159

*Based on response from seven of the nine tennis clubs in Southend

^ Includes data from David Lloyd Leisure Centre

- Junior membership has remained relatively static since 2018
- Senior membership has increased by around a third since 2018

7.2 Supply Update

- There are 9 registered tennis clubs in Southend, and tennis courts within 8 of the city's public parks
- 2 outdoor courts at Garons have been converted to 3 Padel Courts
- Priory and Chalkwell Park's fob system has been upgraded to a keypad Smart Access system
- Thorpe Bay LTC have now created a dedicated junior pavilion
- 4 flood lit tennis/netball courts were installed at Chase High School in 2021
- Condition survey of courts being undertaken
- Planning permission was granted in August 2023 for four floodlit tennis courts at Cecil Jones Academy

7.3 Significant Issues for Tennis

- No significant changes to sport not listed above
- Southchurch Park, Bonchurch Park, Cavendish Gardens, Milton Road Gardens, Shoebury Park have all been refurbished in 2023, with a smart gate access system. The tennis court at Garrison now be operated via a mobile phone app
- Floodlights are mentioned in the plan for Shoebury Park. It would be worth including the need for floodlights at all park sites, to extend the hours of year-round play and to support the financial viability of each park site.
- There appears to be community use of the floodlit tennis/netball courts at Chase High School but the community use agreement required by planning condition to formalise this is not yet in place.

7.4 Tennis Summary and Conclusions

- Large uptake in last two years due to covid; nationally, numbers are still well above pre-covid rates. There has been a drop but participation is still up year on year.
- Continues to be opportunities for the Council to work with the LTA to improve the provision and sustainability of the Council Park tennis court stock.
- The LTA have highlighted funding streams for tennis court improvements
- The recommendations set out above should be incorporated into the PPS
- Ensure long term community use of new flood lit courts at Chase High School through ensuring a community use agreement is submitted and approved to meet the planning condition put in place to safeguard this community use.

8. Netball

8.1 Demand Update

Demand data 2018*			Demand data 2023	
Netball teams	Number of teams	Number of teams	Number of teams	Number of members
Netball women's over 18's	N/A	N/A	14	168
Netball Women's U18's	N/A	N/A	8	79
Netball Women's 14's	N/A	N/A	4	83
Netball women's over 18's	N/A	N/A	3	39
Total			29	369

*No data on teams provided in 2018

Southend Sapphires and Eastwood NC Junior U18 teams have waiting lists

8.2 Supply Update

- Back to Netball and walking netball have moved to Chase High School
- A planning application was granted in August 2023 for three floodlit netball courts at Cecil Jones Academy

8.3. Significant issues for Netball

- Additional demand of walking netball
- Community participation has moved from Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre to Chase High School
- No current plans for further facility development identified since 2018.

8.4 Netball Summary and Conclusions

- Unclear if membership has increased due to lack of data on membership in the 2018 study, however there are waiting lists to join two Southend Netball clubs at U18 level and increased demand for Walking Netball
 - Back to Netball and Walking Netball moved to Chase High School
 - Ensure long term community use of new flood lit courts at Chase High School through ensuring a community use agreement is submitted and

approved to meet the planning condition put in place to safeguard this community use.

9. Hockey

9.1 Demand Update

Demand data 2018*		Demand data 2022		Demand data 2023	
Age group	Number of members	Age group		Age group	
Seniors		Seniors		Seniors	230
Juniors		Juniors		Juniors	169
Total	229	Total	Total		399

*2018 Old Southendians HC – 88 senior and 11 junior members (Warners Bridge)

* 2018 Southend HC – 130 members (3 x senior teams, 3x women’s teams and 2 x junior teams) split across three sites; Sweyne Park School and King Edmund in Rochford and Warners Bridge in Southend. Preferred club is Warners Bridge but majority of capacity at this site utilised by host club Old Southendians

Old Southendians

Teams (e.g. by gender, age)	Number of teams	Number of members 2022	Number of teams	Number of members 2023
2022	2022		2023	
Men	6	88	6	76
Women	3	37	4	41
Youth M	1	25		27
Youth W	1	21		38
Under 11 Mixed	1	N/A	0	17
Masters			1	N/A
Total	12	171	12	199

Southend Hockey club

Teams (e.g. by gender, age)	Number of teams	Number of members 2022	Number of teams	Number of members 2023
2022	2022		2023	
Men	6	88	3	45
Women	3	37	4	68
Youth M	1	25		25

Youth W	1	21		29
U11 Mixed	1	N/A	0	33
Indoor M	1	N/A		N/A
Masters				N/A
Total	12	171	7	200

NB Southend HC currently play outside the area in Rochford and are looking to return to Southend

Hockey Teams	2022	2023 update
Men (17-55yrs)	6	9
Women (17-55yrs)	3	8
Boys (14-16yrs)	1	
Girls (14-16yrs)	1	
Boys (11-13yrs)	N/A	
Girls (11-13yrs)	N/A	
Mixed (5-10yrs)	N/A	
Masters		1

*includes Southend HC

Hockey Junior Members	2022	2023 update
Boys (14-16yrs)	18	N/A
Girls (14-16yrs)	16	N/A
Boys (11-13yrs)	12	N/A
Girls (11-13yrs)	12	N/A
Mixed (5-10yrs)	38	N/A

*includes Southend HC

9.2 Supply update

- Thomas More School has been converted to 3G therefore now only 1 pitch in Southend.

9.3. Significant issues for Hockey

- Warners Bridge needs to reflect that St Thomas More has been resurfaced to 3G so is no longer able to be resurfaced with a sand AGP
- Southend Hockey Club currently play outside the area in Rochford and are looking to return to Southend.

- Southend HC in conversation with Garon Park CIC to develop a new sand AGP to mitigate against the loss at St Thomas More

9.4 Hockey Summary and Conclusions

- Southend Hockey Club are looking to return to play in Southend
- Ambitions for Southend Hockey Club to develop a new sand AGP at Garon Park to mitigate against the loss at St Thomas More

10. Golf

10.1 Demand

10.1a How many members currently play in Southend? Please list out as below:

- There are four affiliated clubs in Southend, playing from 3 affiliated facilities: Belfairs Woods and Golf Course, Garon Park and Thorpe Hall Golf Course.
- Total membership is shown in the table below
- There is a 24% year on year increase in membership across all clubs

Affiliated Club Name	2015 Average	2016 Average	2017 Average	2018 Average	2022 Average	2023 Average
GARON PARK GOLF CLUB	409	350	393	220	427	530
SOUTHEND-ON-SEA GOLF CLUB						<i>(24% increase since 2022)</i>
THORPE HALL GOLF CLUB						
BELFAIRS GOLF CLUB						
No. of Affiliated Clubs	4	4	4	4	4	4

10.1b. As far as you are aware, do any of the clubs have waiting lists and if so what clubs, and for which sections of the clubs?

- Thorpe Hall – Yes, across all categories
- Garon Park – Yes, in all categories except juniors
- Belfairs GC - no
- Southend GC - no

10.2 Supply update

- Garon Park now has an Adventure Golf – Garon Castle Adventures facility for families.

10.3 Significant issues for Golf

- Participation and membership in golf has seen a large resurgence over the last few years and particularly as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, as it was considered to be a much safer and more accessible sport when we emerged from the various periods of restrictions.
- During 2021, more than 4 million people played golf at least twice on a standard-length course, an increase of more than 1.5 million since 2019. National membership has also increased by more than 100k since 2019.
- Driving range usage has also increased massively since pre-pandemic levels, with numbers in 2021 the highest they have been for the last twenty years.

10.4 Summary and Conclusions for Golf

- Increased demand and growth in membership since the assessment was carried out in 2018.
- Two out of the three facilities in Southend are now at full capacity. The quality of Belfairs course has been raised as an issue and consideration should be given to investment or alternative management functions.

11. Athletics

11.1 Demand Update

Club	Demand data 2018		Demand data 2023	
	Age group	Number of members	Age group	Number of members
City of Southend Athletics Club	Seniors and Juniors	170	All	170
Fordy Runs Running Club		N/A		441
Leigh on Sea Striders		N/A		309
Road Runners Club		N/A		25
	Total	170		945

* A number of local clubs, including Leigh on Sea Striders, Flyers Southend, Southend School Athletics, Fordy Runs etc also use the track on weekday evenings.

The runtogether website also lists social runs with local groups, including at Southend and Eastwood tracks

<https://runtogether.co.uk/group-running/find-a-runtogether-group-run?location=SS9%203LA>

11.2 Supply Update

- The 400m facilities at Southend (Garon Park) and Eastwood Academy are still in place and are well placed to serve the population of Southend.
- Southend (Garon Park) track likely to require resurfacing before re-accreditation in 2026/2027.
- Eastwood track has no floodlighting, and the field cage is non-compliant.
- There is a seasonal grass track and external throws area at Southend High School for Boys
- Planning permission was granted in August 2023 for a synthetic 50 metre sprint track at Cecil Jones Academy. This will replace the existing sprint track at the school.
- The above facilities provide sufficient supply to meet the demands for track and field athletics in Southend, but there are opportunities for ActiveTrack (walk/run/jog/cycle loops) in parks and open spaces as part of future housing developments.

11.3 Significant Issues for Athletics

- Southend is well served in terms of competitive track and field facilities within a 30-minute drive time (Basildon and Thurrock) which also covers most of Southend
- Southend on Sea is identified as a priority area and the two tracks serve a general population catchment of circa 450k (with a recommended 20-minute drive time)

- Southend track holds circa 4 licenced track and field competitions per year (in line with England average); Eastwood does not currently host any competitions
- Aiming to achieve UKA TrackMark accreditation at both venues – this would require investment in the following:
 - Southend Athletics Track – improvements are required to Track, Ancillary and Operations by April 2023 to continue hosting licenced competition
 - Eastwood Academy – not yet accredited by UK Athletics and therefore not able to host any licensed competitions. Imperative for venue operator to contact UKA to commence accreditation process; urgent works to Track and Field are required, and there is currently no floodlighting, and no measurement/levels survey.

11.4 Athletics Summary and Conclusions:

- Need to protect the existing track and field facilities and enhance condition:
 - Southend (Garon Park) – maintain TrackMark accreditation and ensure that sink fund provision is made for track resurface in 2027.
 - Eastwood Academy – work towards UKA TrackMark accreditation and explore increased community use at the site.
- Condition surveys of both athletics tracks are required to enable UKA accreditation.
- Key challenges – maximising the use of facilities and expanding development programmes/club membership.
- Possible funding sources include National Governing Body funding support/access to external funding: Sport England, London Marathon Community Trust
- England Athletics/UK Athletics does not have a specific capital programme for facility development but is committed to work closely with projects in areas recognised as being of strategic importance and

will support the local authority and stakeholders to help leverage capital investment to bring projects to fruition.

12. Cycling

12.1 Demand - 2018 Study

- Formal demand is accounted for by three clubs; Southend Wheelers, Just Ride Southend and Richardsons-Trek RT.
- Three bike sharing stations are in place across Southend-on-Sea.
- Sport England's Segmentation Tool identifies latent demand of 6,905 people who would like to participate in the sport within Southend-on-Sea.
- Although there is not requirement for a dedicated facility in Southend-on-Sea there is a need for the Councils to continue to engage with key stakeholders and clubs to further develop cycling across the authority.
- Cycle Southend offers a method for achieving the above.

12.2 Supply Update

- There are no purpose-built facilities within Southend-on-Sea with the nearest dedicated facility located approximately six miles away, at Hadleigh Country Park, within Castle Point District Council area
- Garon Park CIC aspires to obtain an area of unused scrubland and turn this into a Wellness Trail including dedicated walking and cycling paths.
- Sport England Market Segmentation makes it possible to identify that there are currently 11,743 people in Southend-on-Sea which are participating in regular cycling activity.
- Cycle Southend was established in 2008 with an aim to increase the usage of bikes both recreationally and as a preferable method of transport across Southend-on-Sea.

2018 Recommendations

- Continue and explore growth of cycling, through Forward Motion.
- Support ambitions of Garon Park CIC to further benefit the wider cycling offer.
- Ensure any formal cycling activity can be accommodated within neighbouring local authorities.

2023 Update

- Use of active travel plans, through Forward Motion.
- Legal agreement in place for use of the existing storage containers, for Just Ride Southend to sustain their cycling offer at Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre.
- Planning application submitted by Just Ride Southend for an additional two containers to be located on the hard standing area, next to the Garons dive pool. The containers would be used to provide a dedicated workshop and expansion space for wheelchair platform bikes and specialist side by side bikes.

13. Parkour

13.1 2018 Summary

- An Active Lives survey in February 2017 identified that 96,000 people were participating in Parkour throughout the UK
- Southend Parkour delivers classes at St Bernards High School for Girls and Hadleigh Country Park in Castle Point Borough Council area
- Hadleigh Country Park has a purpose-built Parkour facility, with equipment that meets British and European standards; it is a popular destination for Parkour groups across South Essex

13.2 2018 Recommendations

- Support Parkour UK to grow parkour activity within Southend-on-Sea supported by provision at Hadleigh Country Park in Castle Point

13.3 2023 Update

The main groups working in and around Hadleigh park are now Above Parkour and Team Kinetix – who are both working across Essex.

14. Bowls

14.1 Demand Update

Club	Number of members in 2018	Number of members in 2023*
Membership from all 14 clubs	1103	N/A
<i>(of these) Season ticket holders for greens owned by Southend on Sea City Council</i>	<i>549 (In 2019)</i>	<i>436</i>
	1103	N/A

*season tickets purchased in 2023 for play at Council owned sites

In 2018 clubs reported ambitions for an increase of 100 members across Southend on Sea

The number of season ticket holders for Council owned sites dropped significantly in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but appear to have begun to pick up again

Bowls can also be played on a pay per play basis. In 2021 0.5% of income for Council owned sites was from casual usage

Season ticket holders at Council sites	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023 (received to date)
Southchurch	46	8	38	39	N/A
White Hall	138	55	80	105	85
Prittlewell	68	34	60	53	50
Belfairs	35	9	39	54	52
Shoebury	36	27	36	34	38
Chalkwell	38	0	28	31	26
Alexandra	34	4	30	32	36
Fairwood	80	36	63	58	52
Victoria Ladies	31	3	0	Not operating	Not operating
Eastwood	43	0	29	30	N/A
Total	549	176	403	436	339

Source: Southend on Sea City Council

14.2 Supply Update

- There are 17 bowling greens in Southend on Sea located across 12 sites.
- Most greens are owned and managed by Southend on Sea City Council
- In 2018 14 greens were assessed as good quality and 4 as standard quality

14.3 Significant Issues for Bowls

- Shoebury Park, Chalkwell Park and Eastwood Park bowling clubs indicated in 2018 that the quality of the greens they accessed had worsened since the previous season.
- Some recent improvements to irrigation systems have been made at Council owned/managed greens.
- Greens at Belfairs Park, Cavendish Gardens, Southend on Sea and Thorpe Bay Lawn Tennis Club were operating above Bowls England capacity guidance in 2018 – a 2022 review found there is capacity across all greens.
- Southchurch Bowling Club aspired to acquire a disused building in Southchurch Park and refurbish for ancillary facilities at the time of the Playing Pitch Strategy survey in 2018 – this is no longer the case.
- ONS projections indicate an ageing population in Southend on Sea – this may increase demand for use slightly in the future or at least remain static.

14.4 Summary and Conclusions for Bowls

- The Council will undertake condition surveys on the bowls pavilions to understand future lifecycle liabilities and future 'whole life' costs of service
- The Council will explore the opportunity of establishing Priory Park a 'hub' facility for bowls to unlock opportunities for shared use by other clubs and potential rationalisation/repurposing of other bowls greens

15. Multi Use Games Areas (MUGA)

15.1 Demand Update

- MUGAs are open access and do not need to be booked
- Given that demand for MUGAs falls into informal use it is difficult to assess and quantify demand.
- Anecdotally they are popular in the summer months but are likely to be underutilised as only 2 of Southend's MUGAs have floodlighting (at Chalkwell Park and Leigh Marshes)

15.2 Supply Update

- There are 7 sites providing MUGAs in Southend
- Six are owned by the Council where provision is open access
- The 2018 study found none of the MUGAs were good quality
- 2 MUGAs (at Colne Drive and Baron's Court Primary School) were standard quality and 5 others were of poor quality
- It is considered likely there is an under provision due to the low quantity provided, particularly in the Central Analysis Area

15.3 Significant Issues

- Chalkwell and Leigh sites have floodlights but are poor quality – refurbishing would increase usage
- A growing student population and increased number of homes in the City Centre may generate greater demand for informal sports areas within the Central area including the High Street (evidenced by feedback in Local Plan consultation with college students)

15.4 Summary and Conclusions for MUGAs

- Protect existing supply of MUGA and seek quality improvements where possible.
- Explore options to increase supply of MUGAs, particularly in urban areas with little current provision.
- Ensure any new MUGAs can be floodlit to maximise usage and explore floodlighting of existing MUGAs.

Appendix 1: Playing Pitch Strategy Surveys

Example of the survey sent to relevant stakeholders.

Football

Demand

- 1a. How many teams/members currently play football? Please list out as below:

Men 11v11 (16-45yrs)	
Women 11v11 (16-45yrs)	
Boys 11v11 (12-15yrs)	
Girls 11v11 (12-15yrs)	
Boys 9v9 (10-11yrs)	
Girls 9v9 (10-11yrs)	
Mixed 7v7 (8-9yrs)	
Mixed 5v5 (6-7yrs)	

- 1b. As far as you are aware, do any of the clubs have waiting lists and if so which clubs and for what sections of the clubs?

Changes Since 2018

This section refers specifically to the [Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan 2018](#) and [Playing Pitch Assessment Report 2018](#). Please could I refer you specifically to the sections in the following table:

	Relevant pages in PPS and Action Plan document - Sport specific issues, scenarios and recommendations	Relevant pages in PPS and Action Plan document – strategic recommendations	Relevant parts of the Action Plan	Playing Pitch Assessment Report
Football	Pages 9-12 (plus 3G pitches from pages 12-14)	Pages 26-44	pages 48-56	Part 2 pages 14-37 (plus Part 3 3G & AGPS pages 38-44)

2. Please advise of any key changes that you are aware of in relation to the supply of facilities since 2018, in relation to new/enhanced facilities, facilities that have closed or changes to the quality or access to facilities?
3. Have there been any other significant changes for your sport not listed above? Please give details.
4. Will any of the changes detailed above need to be reflected in amendments to the recommendations set out in part 3 of the PPS Strategy and Action Plan for your sport?

Appendix 2: Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan (2018)

The recommendations for each sport from the 2018 Strategy and Action Plan are reproduced here for information. Please also refer to the full document [Southend PPS Strategy and Action Plan 2018](#)

Football Recommendations

- Protect existing quantity of pitches (unless replacement provision is agreed upon and provided).
- Where pitches are overplayed and/or assessed as poor quality, prioritise investment and review maintenance regimes to ensure it is of an appropriate standard to sustain use and improve quality.
- Where pitches are overplayed and assessed as good quality, pursue transfer of demand to sites with actual spare capacity.
- Work to accommodate future demand as well as expressed exported, unmet and latent demand at sites which are not operating at capacity or at sites not currently available for community use that could be moving forward.
- Provide security of tenure for clubs using educational sites through community use agreements.
- Ensure all teams are playing on the correct pitch sizes and explore reconfiguration of adult pitches to accommodate youth 11v11 teams where possible.
- Improve ancillary facilities where there is a demand to do so and where it can benefit the wider footballing offer.
- Ensure that any large housing developments are provided for and assess the need for new pitch provision through master planning on an individual basis.
- Where a development is of a size to justify on-site football provision, focus on the creation of multi-pitch sites that reduce existing shortfalls, with accompanying clubhouse provision included given that single pitch sites without appropriate ancillary facilities can be unsustainable.
- Where a development is not of a size to justify on-site football provision, consider using contributions to improve existing sites within the locality.

- If required, explore ground sharing possibilities across Southend-on-Sea and the wider South Essex region that can provide a more sustainable long-term future for the senior club network.

3G Pitches Recommendations

- Protect current stock of 3G pitches.
- Explore options of providing new 3G pitches first and foremost to meet football training shortfalls, focusing on the Central and West analysis areas.
- Carry out a feasibility study across the wider South Essex sub-region to ensure that 3G deficiencies across all local authorities are relieved via a partnership approach.
- When assessing 3G pitch suitability, give preference to opportunities for multi 3G pitch sites.
- Support creation of additional 3G pitches above and beyond football training shortfalls if it can satisfy rugby demand as well as football demand; or, explore creation of 3G pitches that are both football and rugby appropriate when alleviating shortfalls.
- Consider the need for further 3G pitch provision above and beyond football training shortfalls if certain scenarios become reality e.g. the loss of unsecured sites.
- Ensure that any new 3G pitches are constructed to meet FA/RFU recommended dimensions and quality performance standards to meet performance testing criteria.
- Carry out consultation with England Hockey when deciding upon the location of new 3G pitches to ensure the sustainability of existing sand-based AGPs.
- Ensure that any new 3G pitches have community use agreements in place (especially at the new Southend United Football Club facility).
- Ensure all providers put in place a sinking fund to ensure long-term sustainability.
- Encourage more match play demand to transfer to 3G pitches, where possible, and ensure that pitches remain suitable to accommodate such demand through appropriate certification when it is required.

- Encourage appropriate FA testing at Play football so that match play demand can be retained at the site.
- Where a development is of a size to justify on-site football provision, consider the potential for 3G provision on multi-pitch sites, and as a minimum requirement, design new sites so that they could accommodate 3G provision at a later date, if required.

Cricket Recommendations

- Protect existing quantity of cricket squares, including protection from development that may prejudice the use of a cricket square such as residential development in close proximity to a cricket outfield (ball strike issues).
- Work with clubs and grounds staff to review quality issues on squares to ensure appropriate quality is achieved at sites assessed as standard and sustained at sites assessed as good.
- Ensure security of tenure for all clubs with lease arrangements in place by ensuring agreements have over 25 years remaining.
- For clubs without lease arrangements, explore opportunities for long-term asset transfer or as a minimum ensure community use agreements are entered into to enable long term access.
- Ensure expressed future demand can be accommodated on existing supply of squares.
- Explore options of alleviating overplay at Chalkwell Park through greater utilisation of the existing NTP or via installing another NTP.
- Support proposal for a square to be created at the Youth Ground to alleviate overplay at Garon Park, provided that it does not negatively impact on football activity at the site.
- Seek refurbishment of training facilities where required, particularly at Garon Park.
- Explore options of refurbishment of ancillary facilities where provision is assessed as poor quality (Ekco Social and Sports Club Association, Shoebury Park and Shoebury Garrison Ground).

- Where a development is of a size to justify on-site cricket provision, ensure that any proposals for new squares will attract adequate demand.
- Where a development is not of a size to justify on-site cricket provision, or if sufficient demand cannot be attracted, consider using contributions to improve existing sites within the locality.
- In line with the Indoor Sports and Leisure Strategy, support investment at sites where sports halls are being refurbished or new sports halls are being developed to ensure cricket is catered for, regularly evaluate programming at sports halls to ensure there is capacity to support cricket, and develop relationships between schools and clubs to ensure good access to indoor provision.

Rugby Union Recommendations

- Protect existing quantity of rugby union pitches.
- Improve pitch quality at Southend Rugby Club to reduce overplay, primarily through improved maintenance and the installation of an effective drainage system where appropriate.
- Ensure quality is sustained at Westcliff RFC to ensure that overplay does not worsen.
- Explore the creation of a World Rugby compliant 3G pitch that can be utilised by both clubs to fully alleviate overplay, potentially at Southend Rugby Club, or in partnership with the FA
- Ensure that any proposals for the creation of World Rugby compliant 3G pitches are progressed in co-ordination with proposals for meeting 3G needs for football given that the solutions can help meet the needs of both sports.
- Improve changing facilities at Southend Rugby Club.
- Ensure security of tenure for Westcliff RFC via a long-term lease agreement.
- Retain supply of rugby pitches at school sites for curricular and extra-curricular purposes and encourage secure community availability should demand exist in the future.

Rugby League Recommendations

- Ensure rugby league demand can be accommodated should it exist in the future.

Hockey Recommendations

- Ensure that there is no net loss of hockey suitable AGPs and ensure that no 3G conversions take place that are detrimental to hockey.
- Resurface the AGP at St Thomas More High School as hockey suitable to alleviate shortfall and accommodate Southend HC or provide a new full size sand-based AGP within the District, ideally at Warners Bridge Park following a feasibility study.
- If the AGP at St Thomas More High School is resurfaced, provide security of tenure to users via a community use agreement.
- Improve access to and quality of ancillary facilities at the site to better support post match and social activities.
- If a new AGP is proposed at Warners Bridge Park, ensure it is feasible in the context of other possible developments at the site.
- Ensure a collective view is gathered from local clubs in regards to current and future provision, and that any new pitch creates a hockey hub/ multi-pitch site.
- Ensure sinking funds are in place for long-term sustainability.
- Seek to maximise hockey usage where hockey is being played.

Golf Recommendations

- Retain all current golf courses and facilities.
- Sustain course quality and seek improvements where necessary through implementation of appropriate maintenance regimes.
- Support clubs in membership in retention and potential growth.
- Encourage clubs and providers to work more collaboratively in terms of creating pathways for existing and new players.

Bowls Recommendations

- Retain existing quantity of greens
- Sustain good quality greens and explore improvements on greens assessed as standard quality.
- Support clubs with plans to increase membership so that growth can be maximised.
- Support Southchurch BC in its ancillary facility aspirations.

Tennis Recommendations

- Retain and sustain quality of club courts for competitive play through implementation of appropriate maintenance regimes.
- Sustain quality of club courts for competitive play through implementation of appropriate maintenance regimes.
- Ensure clubs operating above membership thresholds continue to have a supply that adequately meets needs.
- Support Crowstone & St Saviours TC in its ambitions to improve its changing facilities and Westcliff Hard Court TC in its ambitions to resolve car parking issues.
- Improve courts located at education sites to meet curricular and extra-curricular needs.
- Explore extension of ClubSpark scheme at suitable sites (Belfairs Park, Bonchurch Park, Chalkwell Park, Shoebury Park and Southchurch Park).

Netball Recommendations

- Explore options for the Southend & District Netball League to return to Southend-on-Sea.
- Explore improving courts quality at remaining school sites where sufficient demand exists for curricular and extra-curricular activity.

Athletics Recommendations

- Retain track at Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre and sustain quality through appropriate maintenance.
- Retain track at Eastwood Academy for continued school usage.
- Ensure that sinking funds are in place to address future repairs and resurfacing of the track.
- Support the running events taking place as well as exploring the implementation of initiatives not currently serviced to increase participation in recreational running.

Cycling Recommendations

- Continue and explore growth of Cycle Southend initiative.
- Support ambitions of Garon Park CIC to further benefit the wider cycling offer.
- Ensure any formal cycling activity can be accommodated within neighbouring local authorities.

MUGAs Recommendations

- Protect existing supply of MUGAs and seek quality improvements where possible.
- Explore options to increase supply of MUGAs, particularly in urban areas with little current provision.
- Ensure any new MUGAs can be floodlit to maximise usage and explore floodlighting of existing MUGAs.

Parkour Recommendations

- Support Parkour UK to grow parkour activity within Southend-on-Sea supported by provision at Hadleigh Park in Castle Point.