

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL BUILT FACILITIES ASSESSMENT

NEEDS ASSESSMENT – FINAL REPORT August 2026

QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

Knight, Kavanagh & Page Ltd
Company No: 9145032 (England)

MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

Registered Office: 1 -2 Frecheville Court, off Knowsley Street, Bury BL9 0UF
T: 0161 764 7040 E: mail@knp.co.uk www.knp.co.uk



Cert Num: 6543-QMS-001

Quality assurance	Name	Date
Report origination	Chris Horner / Rachel Burke	24 September 2025
Quality control	John Eady	30 September 2025
Client comments		
Final Client comments		
Final approval		

CONTENTS

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION	6
1.1 Introduction	6
1.2: Scope of the project.....	7
1.3: Background	8
1.4: Report structure	10
SECTION 2: BACKGROUND	11
2.1: National context	11
2.2: Local context.....	19
2.3: Demographic profile	24
SECTION 3: SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT	36
3.1: Methodology.....	36
3.2: Site visits	37
3.3: Catchment areas	38
SECTION 4: SPORTS HALLS	39
4.1: Supply	39
4.2: FPM	53
4.3: Demand.....	56
4.4: Future demand and the Sport England Sports Facilities Calculator (SFC).....	63
4.5: Summary of key facts and issues	64
SECTION 5: SWIMMING POOLS	66
5.1: Supply	66
5.2: FPM	73
5.3: Demand.....	76
5.4: Sport England's Facilities Calculator (SFC).....	78
5.5: Summary of key facts and issues	80
SECTION 6: HEALTH AND FITNESS SUITES	82
6.1: Supply	83
6.2: Demand	89
6.3: Studios	90
6.4: Summary of key facts and issues	92
SECTION 7: SQUASH	94
7.1 Supply	94
7.2: Demand.....	96
7.3: Summary of key facts and issues	96

SECTION 8: INDOOR BOWLS	97
8.1: Supply	99
8.2: Demand	100
8.3: Summary of key facts and issues	101
SECTION 9: INDOOR TENNIS	102
9.1: Supply	102
9.2: Demand	104
9.3: Padel tennis	104
9.4: Summary of key facts and issues	105
SECTION 10: GYMNASTICS AND TRAMPOLINING	106
10.1: Supply	107
10.2: Demand	107
10.3: Summary of key facts and issues	108
SECTION 11: COMBAT SPORTS	110
11.1: Supply	113
11.2: Demand	114
11.3: Summary of key facts and issues	114
SECTION 12: TABLE TENNIS	116
12.1: Supply	116
12.2: Demand	117
12.3: Summary of key facts and issues	118
SECTION 13: WATER SPORTS	119
13.1: Introduction	119
13.2: Supply	119
13.3: Demand	120
13.3: Summary of key facts and issues	120
SECTION 14: COMMUNITY AND VILLAGE HALLS	122
14.1: Introduction	122
14.2: Supply	122
14.2 Demand	124
14.3 Summary of key facts and issues	125
SECTION 15: CLIMBING WALLS	126
15.1: Supply	126
15.2: Demand	127
15.3: Summary of key facts and issues	127
SECTION 16: SUMMARY: STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS	129

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Knight, Kavanagh & Page Ltd (KKP) was appointed to produce a built facilities strategy (BFS) and a playing pitch strategy (PPS) for Southend-on-Sea City Council. This work will provide key evidence to support the development of indoor and outdoor leisure facilities in Southend-on-Sea and inform the production of the Southend-on-Sea Local Plan.

With regard to the BFS work, the Council's stated objectives are to:

- ◀ Undertake a local authority wide assessment of indoor sport and recreation facilities, building upon existing information, to establish the quantity and quality of existing provision and any additional provision required to meet future needs to 2045.
- ◀ Develop a strategy and realistic action plans for indoor sports provision. This will need to be prioritised and realistic in recognition of diminishing public resources and limited budgets.
- ◀ Follow best practice advice including Sport England's: "Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance".
- ◀ Provide a clear direction on where future investment from the Council or external sources should go in the Southend-on-Sea area.
- ◀ Provide clear and justified conclusions.
- ◀ Provide advice and guidance on how to maintain an up-to-date record of existing provision in terms of condition, demand, aspirations of clubs etc.

The process involves gathering evidence about provision and overall need detail to develop:

- ◀ A clear picture of the quantity, quality, accessibility and availability of facilities serving the area within the local authority and adjacent authorities.
- ◀ A clear understanding of existing and future demand for facilities considering local population data, local and national participation rates, unmet, latent, dispersed and future demand, local activity priorities and sports specific priorities.
- ◀ A clear understanding of the resultant required level of provision in quantity, quality, accessibility and availability terms and develop key findings and facility implications that could be used by the Authority with reference to a toolkit for provision.

The linked intelligence and needs assessment encompasses:

- ◀ A documented assessment of current use and future need for sports/amenity facilities within the Authority; focusing on quantity and quality issues in relation to supply and demand until 2045.
- ◀ Identification of all sites to ensure they can be protected and improved for the long-term benefit of sport.
- ◀ Identification of education facilities which could be utilised to address identified deficits in provision.
- ◀ Detail with regard to need to inform development and implementation of planning policy.
- ◀ Detail with regard to need to inform the assessment of planning applications – linked to a toolkit via which contributions can be best directed to enhance existing provision.

Development priorities cover:

- ◀ A priority list of realistic, deliverable projects which will help to meet current deficiencies, provide for future demand and feed into wider infrastructure planning work.
- ◀ Proposed potential changes to the supply of provision due to capital programmes e.g., for educational sites.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Financial budgeting encompassing:

- ◀ Advice in respect of achieving the most efficient management and maintenance of sports facility provision.
- ◀ Prioritisation of internal capital and revenue investment.
- ◀ Evidence to help secure internal and external funding including S106 / CIL funding linking to potential developments coming forward.

The audit was conducted between June-August 2025. Where access was not available KKP carried out non-technical quality assessments via desk research. Where possible the quality of this was supplemented utilising virtual 'walk arounds' of the health and fitness suites or videos and photos present on operators' websites or in discussion with operators.

1.2: Scope of the project

This report provides detail as to what exists in Southend-on-Sea, its condition, location, availability and overall quality. It considers demand for facilities based on population distribution, planned growth, and takes into consideration health and economic deprivation. The facilities/sports covered include sports halls (and associated indoor sports), swimming pools, health and fitness, dance/aerobic studios, squash, indoor tennis, indoor bowls, gymnastics and trampolining, combat sports, table tennis, water sports and community halls. In delivering this report KKP has:

- ◀ Individually audited identified sports halls (conventional i.e., 3+ court halls) swimming pools (minimum size 160m² which is equivalent to 4 lanes x 20m), health and fitness facilities (including, within reason, dance studios), squash courts, gymnastics facilities, indoor tennis courts, indoor bowls facilities, gymnastics and trampolining, combat sports, table tennis, water sports and community hall facilities.
- ◀ Analysed supply and demand to identify gaps and opportunities to improve provision.
- ◀ Sought to identify the extent to which delivery of leisure facilities is undertaken with full reference to the corporate strategies of the Council and other relevant strategic influences.
- ◀ Identified areas of good practice and opportunities for improved service to drive up participation levels.

This evidence-based report thus provides a quantitative and qualitative audit-based assessment of the facilities identified above. It is a robust, up-to-date assessment of need and identifies opportunities for new, enhanced, and rationalised provision. Specific deficiencies and surpluses are identified to inform the provision required. The specific objectives are, thus, to:

- ◀ Review relevant Council strategies, plans, reports, corporate objectives.
- ◀ Review the local, regional, and national strategic context.
- ◀ Produce demographic analysis of the local population at present and in the future (to 2045).
- ◀ Audit indoor facilities provided by the public, private, voluntary and education sectors.
- ◀ Consider potential participation rates and model likely demand.
- ◀ Analyse the balance between supply of, and demand for, sports facilities and to identify potential under and over-provision – now and in the future.
- ◀ Identify key issues to address in the future provision of indoor sports facilities.

This process follows the Assessment Needs and Opportunities Guidance (ANOG) methodology for assessing indoor sports need, developed by Sport England. It also accords with relevant paragraphs of the most up-to-date version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

1.3: Background

Southend-on-Sea is a unitary authority area and seaside city located on the north bank of the Thames Estuary in the county of Essex, in the East of England. Covering an area of approximately 42 square kilometres, it is one of the smallest local authority areas in terms of land area yet has a relatively high population density due to its urban character. Southend is bordered to the west by the borough of Castle Point and to the north by Rochford District, while the southern boundary is formed by the Thames Estuary.

It became a unitary authority in 1998, having previously been administered as part of Essex County Council. It was granted city status in 2022. The area comprises several distinct neighbourhoods and former villages, including Leigh-on-Sea, Westcliff-on-Sea, Southchurch, Shoeburyness, and Thorpe Bay. It is widely known for its seaside attractions, including Southend Pier, the longest pleasure pier in the world.

Southend-on-Sea has excellent transport links. The A127 and A13 are the primary road routes connecting the city with London to the west and the wider Essex area to the east. The A127 provides a direct link to the M25 motorway, providing good access routes to the greater London area.

The city is also served by two mainline railway lines: the London Liverpool Street to Southend Victoria line, and the London Fenchurch Street to Southend Central line. These provide direct rail services to central London, making Southend a popular location for commuters.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

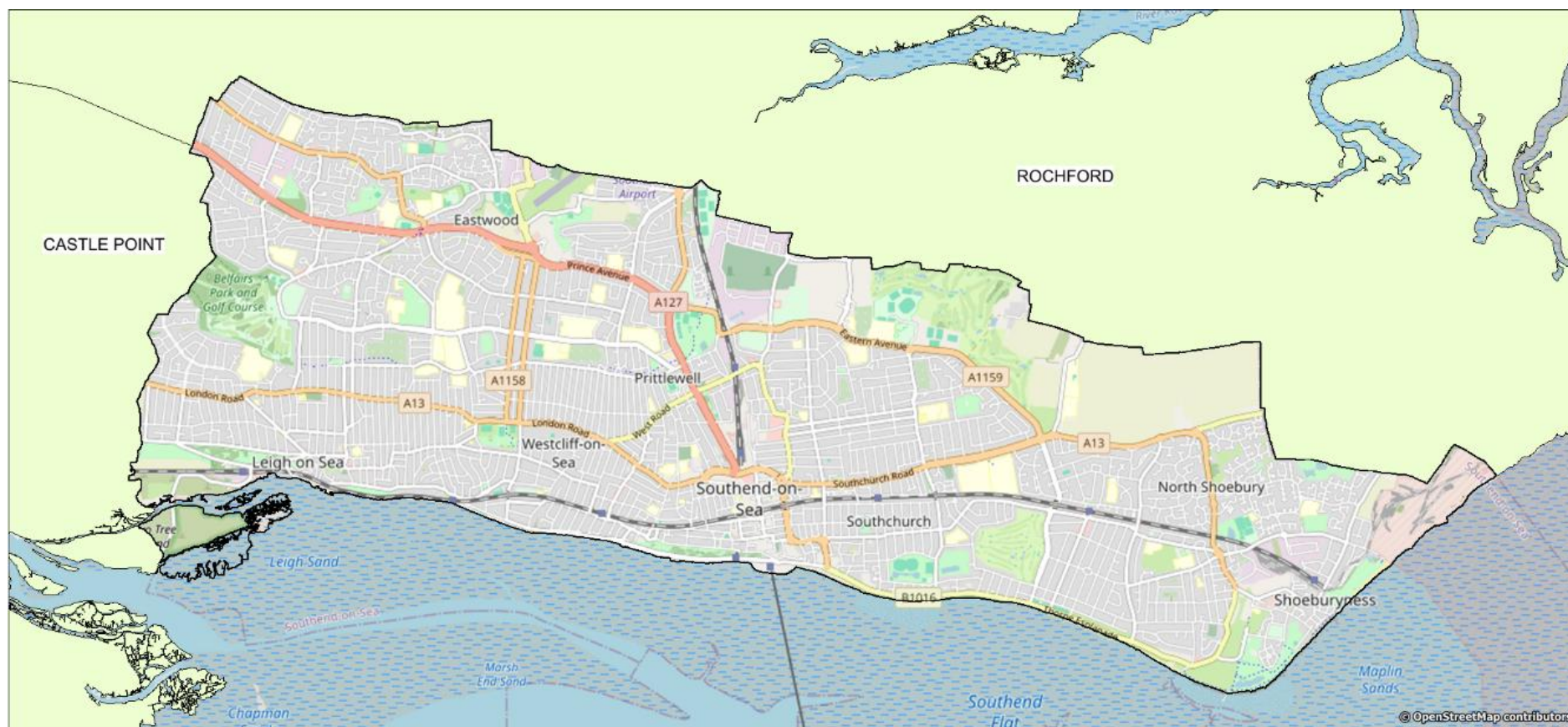


Figure 1.1: Southend-on-Sea with main roads and neighbouring authorities.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

1.4: Report structure

The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) in a report entitled 'Strategic Planning: Effective Co-operation for Planning Across Boundaries (2015)' puts the case for strategic planning based on six general principles:

- ◀ Have focus.
- ◀ Be genuinely strategic.
- ◀ Be spatial.
- ◀ Be collaborative.
- ◀ Have strong leadership and
- ◀ Be accountable to local electorates.

KKP has paid due regard to these strategic principles and this needs assessment report is, thus, structured as follows:

- ◀ Section 2 - review of background policy documentation (national/regional/local) and a profile of the population and socio-demographic characteristics of the Authority.
- ◀ Section 3 - description of methodology employed to assess provision.
- ◀ Section 4 - assessment of sport halls provision.
- ◀ Section 5 - assessment of swimming pool provision.
- ◀ Section 6 - assessment of health and fitness provision.
- ◀ Section 7 - assessment of squash.
- ◀ Section 8 - assessment of indoor bowls.
- ◀ Section 9 – assessment of indoor tennis.
- ◀ Section 10 – assessment of gymnastics and trampolining.
- ◀ Section 11 – assessment of combat sports.
- ◀ Section 12 – assessment of table tennis.
- ◀ Section 13 - assessment of water sports.
- ◀ Section 14 – assessment of community and village halls.
- ◀ Section 15 – Assessment of climbing walls
- ◀ Section 16 - Strategic recommendations.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

SECTION 2: BACKGROUND

2.1: National context

The Government's [Get Active: A strategy for the future of sport and physical activity](#) has a focus on increasing physical activity, making sport more welcoming and inclusive, and ensuring the long-term financial and environmental sustainability of the sector. In addition, the recently launched cross-departmental National Physical Activity Taskforce has a focus on environmental sustainability in the sector, clear targets for increasing physical activity rates and a new vision for leisure facilities from 2023.

Get Active sets out how the government will work with the sector to achieve these aims by ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to get active. Central to this is a focus on ensuring that children establish a lifetime of engagement with sport and physical activity. This is accompanied by the introduction of national targets for participation to help hold Government and the sector to account for delivering the change that is needed.

Sport England

Sport England aims to ensure positive planning for sport, enabling the right facilities to be provided in the right places, based on up-to-date assessment of needs for all levels of sport and all sectors of the community. This assessment report has been produced for Southend-on-Sea City Council applying the principles and tools identified in ANOG.

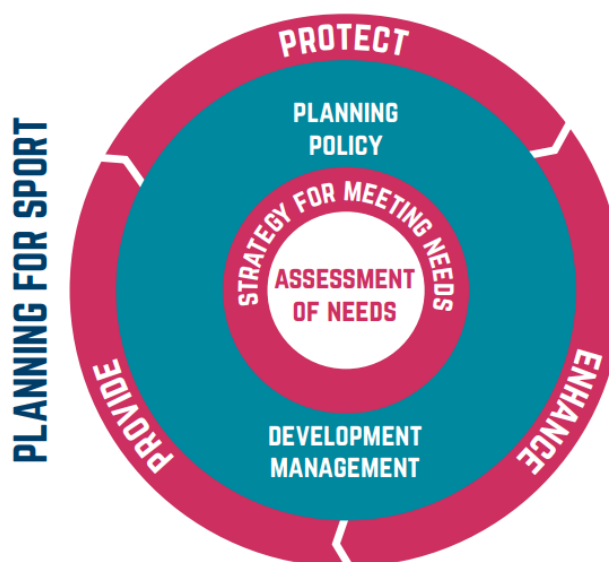


Figure 2.1: The Sport England Planning for Sport Model

Assessment of need is core to planning for sporting provision. It is underpinned by 12 planning-for-sport principles which help the planning system to contribute to sustainable development by fulfilling the key role of the NPPF in creating strong, vibrant and healthy communities.

Applying them ensures that the planning system plans positively to enable and support healthy lifestyles, delivers community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs, and provides opportunity for all to experience the benefits that taking part in sport and physical activity brings. They apply to all areas of the planning system at local authority/neighbourhood level and, as such, are of relevance to all involved in, or looking to engage with, the system.



Figure 2.2: Sport England's 12 planning principles

Sport England: Uniting the Movement 2023

Sport and physical activity have a major role to play in improving the physical and mental health of the nation, supporting the economy, reconnecting communities, and rebuilding a stronger society for all following the global pandemic. Reflecting this, Sport England has recently released its new strategy, Uniting the Movement, its 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

It seeks to tackle the inequalities that it states are long seen in sport and physical activity noting that 'providing opportunities to people and communities that have traditionally been left behind, and helping to remove the barriers to activity, has never been more important'.

The three key Strategy objectives are:

- ◀ Advocating for movement, sport and physical activity.
- ◀ Joining forces on five big issues.
- ◀ Creating the catalysts for change.

As well as advocating sport and physical activity via the building of evidence and partnership development, it identifies five big issues upon which people and communities need to address by working together. They are described as the major challenges to England being an active nation over the next decade as well as being the greatest opportunities to make a lasting difference. They are designated as building blocks that individually would make a difference but tackled collectively could change things profoundly. The issues are:

- ◀ Recover and reinvent: recovering from the biggest crisis in a generation and reinventing as a vibrant, relevant, and sustainable network of organisations providing sport and physical activity opportunities that meet the needs of different people.
- ◀ Connecting communities: focusing on sport and physical activity's ability to make better places to live and bring people together.
- ◀ Positive experiences for children and young people: an unrelenting focus on positive experiences for them - as the foundations for a long and healthy life.
- ◀ Connecting with health and wellbeing: strengthening the connections between sport, physical activity, health, and wellbeing, so that more people can feel the benefits of, and advocate for, an active life.
- ◀ Active environments: creating and protecting the places and spaces that make it easier for people to be active.

To address these five big issues, the right conditions for change need to be created: across people, organisations, and partnerships to help convert plans and ideas. This will include a range of actions, including development of effective investment models and applying innovation and digital technology to ensure sport and physical activity are more accessible.

Its specific impact will be captured via funded programmes, key interventions and partnerships forged. For each specific area of action, key performance indicators will be developed to help evidence the overall progress being made by all those involved in supporting sport and physical activity.

Total annual social value of sport and physical activity in England 2024¹

Sport and physical activity are widely recognised for making people happier, healthier, and fostering stronger communities. That is why creating more opportunities for those who need them most is central to Sport England's Uniting the Movement strategy.

The report on the social and economic value of community sport and physical activity in England 2020² created an evidence base to better understand the value of taking part in sport and physical activity. Sport England, in partnership with State of Life, sports economists from the Sport Industry Research Centre (SIRC) at Sheffield Hallam University, and the Institute of Sport at Manchester Metropolitan University, developed an updated national model to quantify the social value of community sport and physical activity.

¹ [Link to Sport and physical activity generates over £100 billion in social value | Sport England](#)

² [Link to Social and economic value of community sport and physical activity in England 2020](#)

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

The October 2024 report breaks down the social and economic impact of community sport and physical activity into two parts. Part One focuses on the primary benefits, such as physical and mental health improvements, while part two explores the broader value to society. The report's findings are that community sport and physical activity contributed £107.2 billion annually to the UK in 2023/2024, through both social and economic benefits. Of this, £96.7 billion is attributed to primary value, with individual wellbeing improvements driven by adult volunteering, youth participation, and adult participation. This underscores the profound impact of sport and physical activity on quality of life, as improved health and wellbeing positively influence relationships, social connections, and productivity.

Sport England: The Future of Public Sector Leisure (2023)

Engagement by Sport England with the public leisure sector has highlighted that the pandemic has accelerated the appetite for local authorities to look at leisure services and re-examine the purpose of their provision, delivery against local community outcomes and consider their alignment with broader strategic outcomes, particularly health.

Key insight from the report ([Sport England: The Future of Public Sector Leisure](#)) includes:

- ✦ 68% of sports halls and swimming pools were built 20+ years ago. Although more than £150m was invested in the opening of new public leisure and swimming facilities in 2018/19³, with another £200m worth of assets in construction or planning there remains significant levels of ageing public leisure stock.
- ✦ 72% of all school swimming lessons take place in a public leisure facility. This includes both statutory learn to swim programmes and the water safety curriculum across primary schools. Swimming club use is also predominantly based at public leisure facilities.

The report also noted that the leisure sector emerged from the pandemic in a fragile state. Emergency funding ⁴ helped to avert financial catastrophe and enabled the additional costs of maintaining public assets and reopening services to be met. Funding sources are, however, finite and are now virtually exhausted. At best, financial pressures risk limiting the ability of stakeholders to deliver against their commitments; at worst they may result in the permanent closure of some services or facilities.

In respect of the recovery of the sector to pre-pandemic participation levels, data generated via the [Moving Communities](#) platform suggests that in October 2021, throughput levels (13.2 million) were still lower than the monthly average in 2019 (17.8 million). Recovery of participation levels across different activities has been imbalanced and has leaned towards those activities which deliver a faster return to pre-pandemic levels of revenue generation.

Sites refurbished in the last 10 years are seeing a throughput recovery of 68% compared with a recovery of 62% for those last refurbished 20+ years ago, suggesting that investment in newer facilities creates spaces that have greater appeal, increase user confidence levels and provide a more relevant offer to meet current customer demands.

To address these significant challenges, a repositioning of the traditional offer of public leisure into one akin to an active wellbeing service is advocated focusing on added value and supporting the delivery of key local priorities, alongside wider government policy around Levelling Up, net zero and health inequalities.

³ 2 Mintel Report on Leisure Centres and Swimming Pools (September 2019)

⁴ Local authorities invested £160 million The National Leisure Recovery Fund £100m, Leisure operators drew on £171 million of reserves alongside further relief measures such as the Government's furlough scheme.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Chief Medical Officer Physical Activity Guidelines 2019

This updated the 2011 physical activity guidelines issued by the four chief medical officers (CMOs) of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. They drew upon global evidence to present guidelines for different age groups, covering the volume, duration, frequency and type of physical activity required across the life course to achieve health benefits.

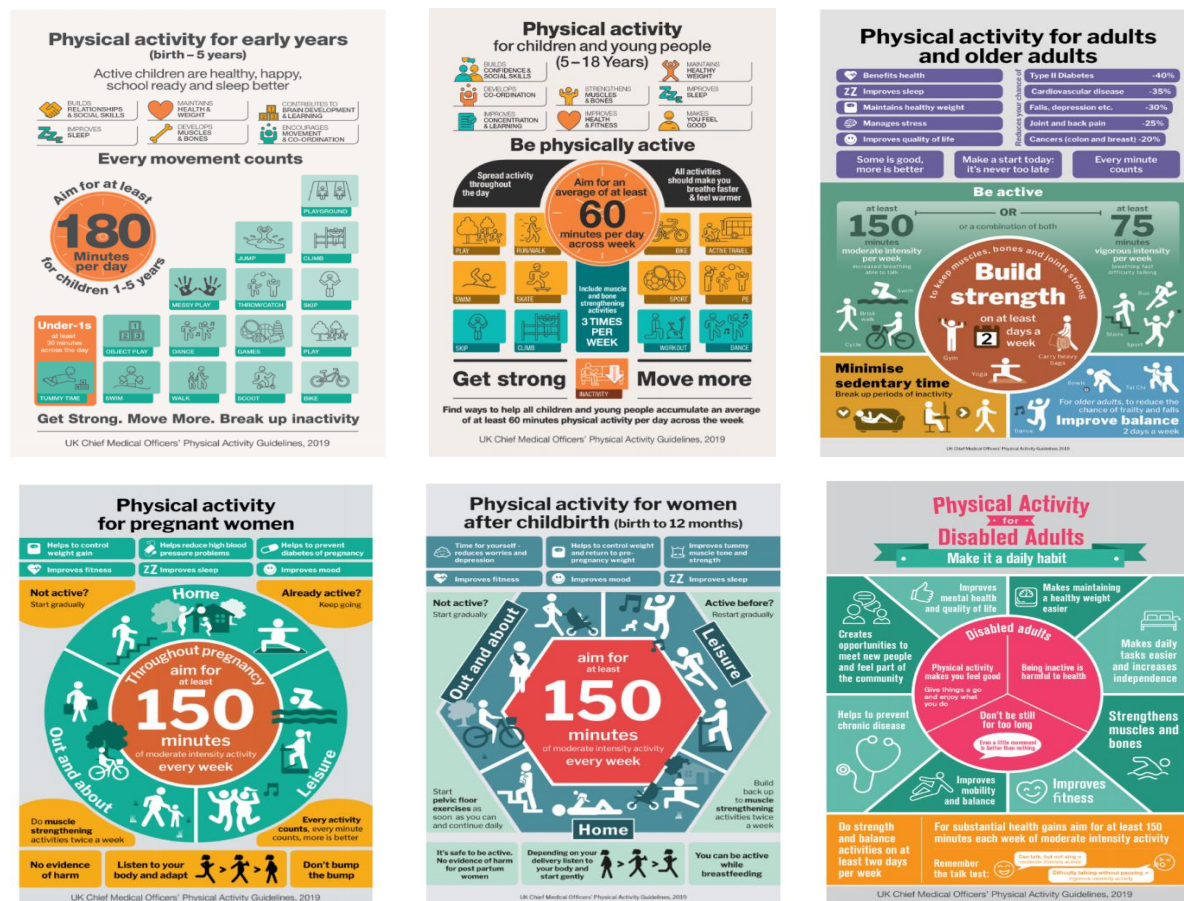


Figure 2.3: Physical activity guidelines

Since 2011, evidence of the health benefits of regular physical activity for all groups has become more compelling. In children and young people, regular physical activity is associated with improved learning and attainment, better mental health and cardiovascular fitness, also contributing to healthy weight status. In adults, there is strong evidence to demonstrate the protective effect on physical activity on a range of many chronic conditions including coronary heart disease, obesity and type 2 diabetes, mental health problems and social isolation.

Regular physical activity can deliver cost savings for the health and care system and has wider social benefits for individuals and communities. Key factors for each age group are as follows:

- Under-5s: This is broken down into infants, toddlers and pre-schoolers. They should spend at least 180 minutes (3 hours) per day in a variety of different exercises, whereas infants should be physically active several times every day in a variety of ways, including interactive floor-based activities.
- Children and young people (5-18 years): they should engage in moderate-to-vigorous intensity physical activity for an average of at least 60 minutes per day across the week.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

- ◆ Adults (19-64 years): For good physical and mental health, adults should aim to be physically active every day. This could be 150 minutes of moderate exercise, 75 minutes of vigorous exercise or even shorter durations of very vigorous intensity activity, or a combination of moderate, vigorous and very vigorous intensity activity.
- ◆ Older adults (65+): should participate in daily physical activity to gain health benefits, including maintenance of good physical and mental health, wellbeing, and social functioning. Each week older adults should aim to accumulate 150 minutes (two and a half hours) of moderate intensity aerobic activity.

The report also recognises an emerging evidence base for the health benefits of performing very vigorous intensity activity performed in short bouts interspersed with periods of rest or recovery (high intensity interval exercise, HIIT). Available evidence demonstrates that high intensity interval exercise has clinically meaningful effects on fitness, body weight and insulin resistance. This option has therefore been incorporated into the recommendation for adults.

It, thus, emphasises the importance of regular activity for people of all ages. It presents additional guidance on being active during pregnancy, after giving birth, and for disabled adults. The new guidelines are consistent with previous ones, introducing some new elements and allowing flexibility in achieving recommended physical activity levels for each age group.

Joseph Rowntree Foundation UK Poverty 2025 report

This notes that more than one in five people in the UK now live in poverty (including 4.3 million children. Of these, 40% are described as being in 'deep poverty', with an income considerably below the standard poverty line. Groups which face particularly high levels of poverty. They include (figures relate to 2021/22 unless otherwise stated):

- ◆ Larger families – 45% of children in families with three more children were in poverty.
- ◆ Families whose childcare responsibilities limit their ability to work – 44% of children in lone-parent families were in poverty.
- ◆ Many minority ethnic group-based households have higher rates of child, very deep and persistent poverty.
- ◆ 30% of disabled people (38% for those with a long-term, limiting mental health condition).
- ◆ 28% of informal carers (those with caring responsibilities). They have limited ability to work and unpaid social-care givers experience an average pay penalty of nearly £5,000/annum.
- ◆ Families not in work – more than half of working-age adults (56%) in workless households are in poverty - compared with 15% in working households. Around two-thirds of working-age adults in poverty actually live in a household where someone is in work.
- ◆ Part-time workers and the self-employed - the poverty rate for part-time workers was nearly triple that of full-time workers (22% compared with 8%).
- ◆ 43% of people in rented accommodation and 35% of private renters (after housing costs).
- ◆ Poverty rates for people claiming different income-related benefits are much higher than the national average poverty rate.

Environmental sustainability

The UK Government produced its net zero strategy 'Build Back Greener' in October 2021. This sets out how it intends the UK to meet its target for decarbonisation by 2050. It focuses on interventions such as:

- ◆ A fully decarbonised power system by 2035 with all electricity from 'low carbon sources'.
- ◆ Improved efficiency of heating for homes and buildings, aiming for all new appliances to be based on low carbon technologies, such as electric heat pumps or hydrogen boilers.
- ◆ Low carbon fuel supply – by scaling up the production of low carbon alternatives including hydrogen and biofuels.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

[Sport England](#)⁵ reports that climate change and the increased occurrence of extreme weather that it brings are already affecting sports facilities, meaning that the sector needs to build greater resilience to counter this very real threat.

It proposes that a wide range of issues should be considered when approaching project development to, and the resultant environmental impact of, for example, new swimming pool development. This applies to determining whether to refurbish an existing building with carbon already embedded or to build a new⁶. In establishing a sustainability strategy early on Sport England suggests some key principles as part of a 'pathway to sustainability' and net zero carbon in respect of building design and operation. These include:

- ✦ Reducing energy consumption as the first measure to reduce carbon emissions and energy costs.
- ✦ Changing behaviour - eliminate energy waste and operate energy control systems more effectively at no extra cost.
- ✦ Passive design - building orientation and placement on site is critical to achieving net zero targets i.e., harnessing sites' natural resources to benefit cross ventilation, natural lighting, solar gain, shelter or shading.
- ✦ Fabric efficiency - maximise building fabric and glazing performance.
- ✦ Minimising initial energy demand to reduce demand on plant/technologies incorporated.
- ✦ Installing efficient systems and investing in appropriate energy-efficient products such as heating, ventilation, fittings, controls, sensors, heat pumps and recovery systems.
- ✦ On-site renewables incorporating low/zero carbon technologies to produce energy on site.
- ✦ Off-site renewables - only use energy providers which use renewable energy.

The Physical Literacy Consensus Statement for England – Sport England (2023)

This has been developed to facilitate a shared understanding of physical literacy for those working in the sport, education, physical activity, recreation, play, health and youth sectors. It offers a broad overview of physical literacy, why it matters and how it can be developed and supported. Developing a consensus on this has been a priority, as understanding what impacts people's relationship with movement and physical activity throughout life will enable those working in the sector to ensure their offer is as appealing as possible.

In essence, physical literacy represents the extent to which individuals have a positive relationship with movement and physical activity. The Youth Sport Trust has published findings evidencing that a total of 4,000 hours of physical education (PE) have been lost from the curriculum of state-funded secondary schools. PE hours have fallen victim to more time spent online, poor school attendance and declining health and wellbeing levels in young people. Between 2012-2023, the amount of PE in England reportedly fell by more than 12%.

Evidence also shows that children with high levels of physical literacy are twice as likely to engage in sport and physical activity. In later life, adults who feel they have the opportunity, ability and enjoy being physically active are more likely to be so. To increase physical activity in both children and adults, it is important to consider the cultural and environmental factors which affect physical activity levels alongside the influence of previous experiences.

Ensuring good quality and regular PE in schools is considered to be essential to improving the mental and physical wellbeing of young people and will enable them to develop new skills, achieve greater academic success and live longer, happier, healthier lives.

⁵[Sport England Environmental Sustainability policy](#)

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Sport England Swimming Pool Support Fund

In 2023, a funding pot of £63 million was announced to ease the pressure on leisure centres with managing the cost of operating, maintaining and heating swimming pools. The funding, is available to all pools run by councils and charities. Those run on behalf of local authorities are eligible.

No facilities based in Southend-on-Sea were successful in achieving funding during phase one of the Swimming Pool Support Fund, however, Shoeburyness Leisure Centre was awarded £47,040 in phase two.

National Planning Policy Framework 2026

The NPPF sets out planning policies for England. It provides a framework for local people and their councils to produce distinct local and neighbourhood plans, reflecting the needs and priorities of local communities. It states the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It identifies the need to focus on three themes of economic, social, environmentally sustainable development:

A presumption in favour of sustainable development is a key aspect for any plan-making and decision-taking processes. In relation to plan-making, the NPPF states that local plans should meet objectively assessed needs. It is clear about sport's role delivering sustainable communities through promoting health and well-being. Sport England, working within the provisions of the NPPF, wishes to see local planning policy protect, enhance and provide for sports facilities based on robust and up-to-date assessments of need, as well as helping to realise the wider benefits participation in sport can bring.

The **promoting healthy communities** theme identifies that planning policies should be based on robust, up-to-date assessment of need for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Specific needs, quantitative/qualitative deficiencies and surpluses should be identified and used to inform provision requirements in an area.

Summary of national context

In the context of the challenging economic environment, there is a need to reconnect communities, reduce inequality and create stronger societies. The aim is to create a catalyst for change, with sport and physical activity a key driver and people in all age groups either getting or remaining active. Ensuring an adequate supply of suitable facilities to support this aim is a key requirement of the planning system in line with national policy recommendations.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

2.2: Local context

Southend-on-Sea Local Plan

The Council is developing a new Local Plan to guide the city's growth and development into the 2045. This will replace and consolidate a number of existing documents, including the Core Strategy (2007), Development Management Document (2015), Central Area Action Plan (2018), and selected policies from the Airport Joint Area Action Plan (2014). The aim is to provide a single, streamlined planning framework that sets a clear vision, objectives, and policies for sustainable growth, protection of environmental and heritage assets, and the delivery of infrastructure and services in line with housing and employment needs.

Currently in the consultation stage, it is due to be submitted in 2026 and adopted in 2027 and will set out Council policies on housing, employment, transport, climate resilience, and green infrastructure, as well as the potential creation of a new neighbourhood to the north of the city.

The primary focus for the regeneration of Southend will focus on the development of new homes within the existing built-up area and on land at Fossetts Farm to the north of the City. Land North of Southend is also being promoted for development. The full breakdown of development areas is as follows:

- ◆ Southend Central Neighbourhood (incorporating City Centre and Central Seafront): 3,600.
- ◆ Fossetts Farm: 1,350.
- ◆ The other neighbourhoods of Southend: 1,850.
- ◆ Intensification across the City (windfall): 3,000.
- ◆ Development on Land North of Southend: 4,900
- ◆ Total: 14,700 homes

The Built Facilities Strategy and Action Plan tests both the higher growth scenario of 14,700 homes and a lower growth scenario of 9,800, which is the same as the above minus the development on Land North of Southend.

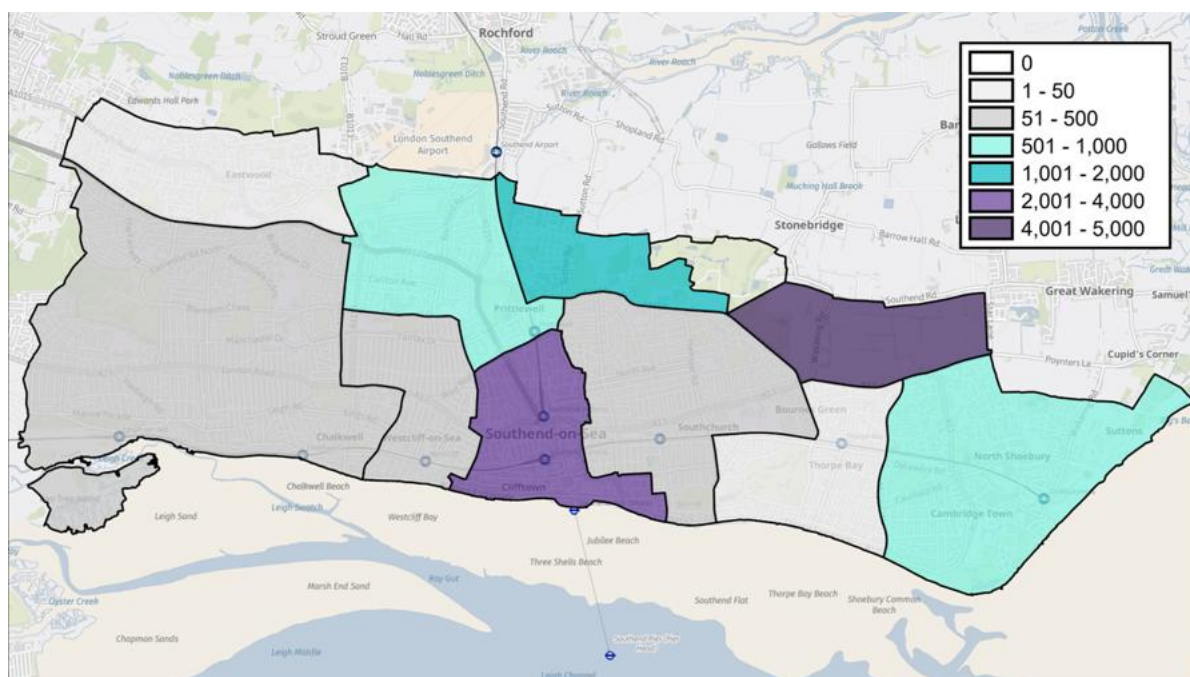


Figure 2.4: A map of Southend-on-Sea housing development areas.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Other commitments included in the new Local Plan include job creation, protection of green spaces, climate resilience, improve transport links and supporting healthy communities.

Southend-on-Sea Corporate Plan 2024-2028

This encapsulates the council's role delivering good quality services under four priorities:

Table 2.1: A summary of the Southend-on-Sea Corporate Plan

Priority	Description
A growing city with a strong and prosperous community	This focuses on driving inclusive economic growth across Southend. The Council aims to boost local business, increase job opportunities, and maximise the impact of its spending, supporting the "Southend pound." It commits to enhancing tourism, culture, and leisure sectors to stimulate prosperity and ensure economic benefits reach all residents.
A safe city ensuring quality of life for all	The aim is to build resilient, supportive communities where everyone can live well. Key areas include improving community safety, delivering quality affordable housing, and strengthening essential infrastructure. The Council prioritises wellbeing and protective services to enhance everyday life for residents.
A clean city with a resilient environment	The Council is committed to environmental sustainability and resilience. Priorities include coastal and flood defence management, promoting sustainable transport options, optimising waste management and recycling, and maintaining high standards for public spaces, positioning Southend as a model of environmental stewardship.
A transforming council delivering efficient, cost-effective services	This relates to the organisation itself, emphasising transformation and modernisation. The Council is focused on delivering value-for-money services through digital innovation, customer-focused service redesign, and ongoing operational efficiency improvements.

Southend-on-Sea JSNA (Joint Strategic Needs Assessment)

The Southend-on-Sea JSNA is not a single document. It comprises of the following nine reports which describe different aspects of Southend-on-Sea's resident's lives:

- ◀ [SEND JSNA – published 8 January 2025](#)
- ◀ [Smoking Cessation JSNA - published 17 November 2023](#)
- ◀ [Housing and Health JSNA - published 31 July 2023](#)
- ◀ [Sexual and Reproductive Health JSNA - published 2nd April 2023](#)
- ◀ [Children's \(Growing Well\) JSNA - published 21 March 2023](#)
- ◀ [Adults Social Care JSNA - published 9 December 2022](#)
- ◀ [Substance Misuse Needs Assessment - published 1 November 2022](#)
- ◀ [Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment - published 30 September 2022](#)
- ◀ [Early Years \(Starting Well\) JSNA - published 26 September 2022](#)

The suite of JSNA and related needs assessment documents collectively provides a comprehensive picture of population health and service needs across life stages and thematic areas. The most recent, the SEND JSNA (January 2025) focuses on the needs of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, aligning with broader ambitions to improve multi-agency data sharing and integrated care pathways.

This builds on earlier thematic assessments such as the Smoking Cessation JSNA and Substance Misuse Needs Assessment, which address behavioral health risks and addiction support and the Sexual and Reproductive Health JSNA, which explores access to contraception, STI prevention and reproductive wellbeing.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

The Housing and Health JSNA and Adult Social Care JSNA reflect the intersection of social determinants and service provision, highlighting how housing quality, accessibility, and care infrastructure impact health outcomes.

Meanwhile, the Children's (Growing Well) and Early Years (Starting Well) JSNAs likely map developmental needs, early intervention priorities, and educational readiness, reinforcing the life course approach. The Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment rounds out the portfolio evaluating access to pharmacy services and their role in public health delivery.

The Physical Activity JSNA evidences that adult obesity rates in Southend have remained worse than the England average for the past three years, while levels of physical activity among children aged 5–16 are statistically better than national averages for both active and less active groups. National data shows children without outdoor space are far less likely to meet recommended activity levels, and lone parents are less likely than couples to achieve weekly activity targets. In Southend, younger children (Years 1–4) score below England averages for enjoyment, competence, and confidence in sport, while swimming ability varies: fewer Year 7–8 pupils can tread water compared to the national average, but self-rescue rates are higher than average for Years 3–11 and improve with age.

Together, these documents form a strategic evidence base that informs local authority planning, commissioning, and partnership working. They support targeted interventions, resource allocation, and the development of integrated strategies to reduce health and physical activity inequalities and improve outcomes across the population.

Southend-on-Sea Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2024

This provides a framework for improving residents' physical and mental health, reducing inequalities, and supporting quality of life. It guides the work of the Council, health partners, and other organisations, recognising the influence of housing, education, employment, transport, and the built environment on health outcomes.

Seven priorities are identified. These include tackling health inequalities by addressing social and economic factors; promoting effective partnerships between local government, the NHS, and the voluntary sector; and ensuring accessible services that meet the needs of all residents. The strategy also focuses on workforce development to maintain service quality, using spatial planning to encourage healthy lifestyles, improving information and digital resources to help residents navigate services, and delivering coordinated communications to provide clear public health messages.

Overall, it offers a shared framework for aligning the work of multiple partners around common priorities and integrating health considerations into the wider policy agenda for the authority.

Active Essex – Fit for the Future Strategy

This outlines five key strategic priorities to improve health and wellbeing across Essex:

- ❖ Strengthening communities.
- ❖ Sport and Physical Activity Sector.
- ❖ Children and Young People.
- ❖ Active Environments.
- ❖ Levelling up Health and Wellbeing.

There is a need to hardwire physical activity into multiple systems and evidence the benefits and impact of physical activity. Working together with local people in a place-based approach, Active Essex will utilise available resources where they are needed most to create better health, economic and social benefits.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Leisure operator – Freedom Leisure

As of July 2025, Freedom Leisure took over management of the three council owned public leisure facilities (Belfairs Swim Centre, Shoeburyness Leisure Centre and Southend Leisure & Tennis Centre) for an initial three-year period with the option for a further two years - from Fusion Lifestyle. At the time of audit, Freedom Leisure had only been in operating the centres for a couple of weeks and was, thus, only able to provide limited data and information.

Green City Action Plan

Under the new leisure management contract, Freedom Leisure, in partnership with the Council, has plans to improve energy efficiency at all public leisure sites. Solar panels have been installed at Shoeburyness Leisure Centre and LED lights now feature at Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre.

These changes form part of a wider objective to establish a pathway to net zero carbon emissions. The Council recognises the need to review the energy efficiency of its larger assets such as public leisure sites.

Southend-on-Sea Playing Pitch Strategy update (2023)

This highlights the need to protect the current stock of grass and 3G football pitches, cricket squares and other playing pitch provision. It notes that the athletics track located at Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre should be retained and the quality improved through appropriate maintenance. It also advocates development of a sinking fund to be used when the track needs resurfacing.

Southend-On-Sea Indoor and Built Facilities Needs Assessment (2018)

This outlined the need for modernised public leisure facilities and greater access to school sports facilities via implementation of community use agreements (CUAs).

Summary of local policy

Southend-on-Sea is undergoing a period of transformation guided by a new Local Plan, set for adoption in 2027, which will consolidate existing planning documents into a single framework for sustainable growth to 2045.

The Local Plan prioritises the development of 14,700 new homes, particularly within the city and at Fossetts Farm, and on land north of Southend, alongside improved transport, climate resilience, green infrastructure, and a potential new northern neighbourhood. It complements the 2024–2028 Corporate Plan which outlines four priorities: fostering inclusive economic growth, enhancing safety and quality of life, promoting environmental sustainability, and modernising council services.

This is supported/endorsed by the JSNA which provides detailed insights into residents' health and wellbeing across nine thematic reports, and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021–2024, which aims to reduce health inequalities through integrated, place-based approaches.

Further supporting community wellbeing, the Active Essex “Fit for the Future” strategy promotes physical activity as a core component of health and social policy. The Authority's three leisure centres are now under new management. The 2023 Playing Pitch Strategy update stresses the importance of maintaining and improving sports infrastructure, including the athletics track at Southend Leisure & Tennis Centre while the 2018 Indoor and Built

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Facilities Needs Assessment highlights the need for modernised leisure spaces and better access to school sports facilities through CUAs.

Together, these strategies and plans form a cohesive vision for a healthier, more prosperous, and resilient Southend-on-Sea.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

2.3: Demographic profile

Population (Data source: 2024 Mid-Year Estimate (MYE), ONS)

The total population of Southend-on-Sea is 185,256 (males = 90,528 and females = 94,998). Its age and gender composition is shown below.

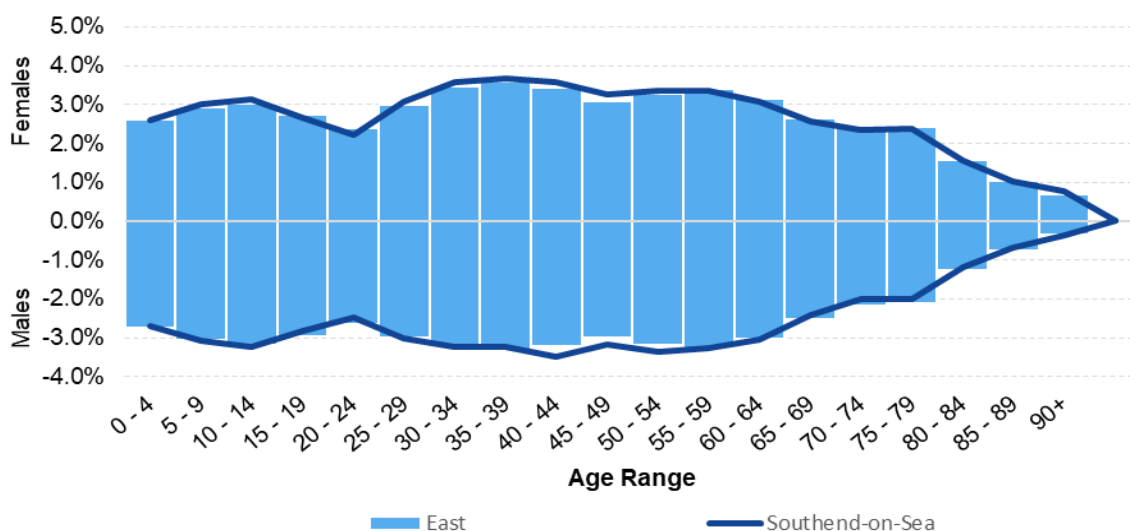


Figure 2.5: Comparative age/sex pyramid for Southend-on-Sea and the Eastern region.

There are no significant differences between Southend-on-Sea's population's age and gender composition when compared to the Eastern region.

The population density map is based on lower super output areas (LSOAs) from the most recent ONS Census. It covers all parts of the country irrespective of whether the SOA is in an area of high-density housing and flats or it covers farms and rural villages. Map shading, however, allows concentrations of population to be easily identified, for example, major urban areas such as flats, terraced houses and estates tend to be illustrated via the darkest shading while rural areas, housing adjoining parks and other non-residential land uses tend to be the lightest shades.

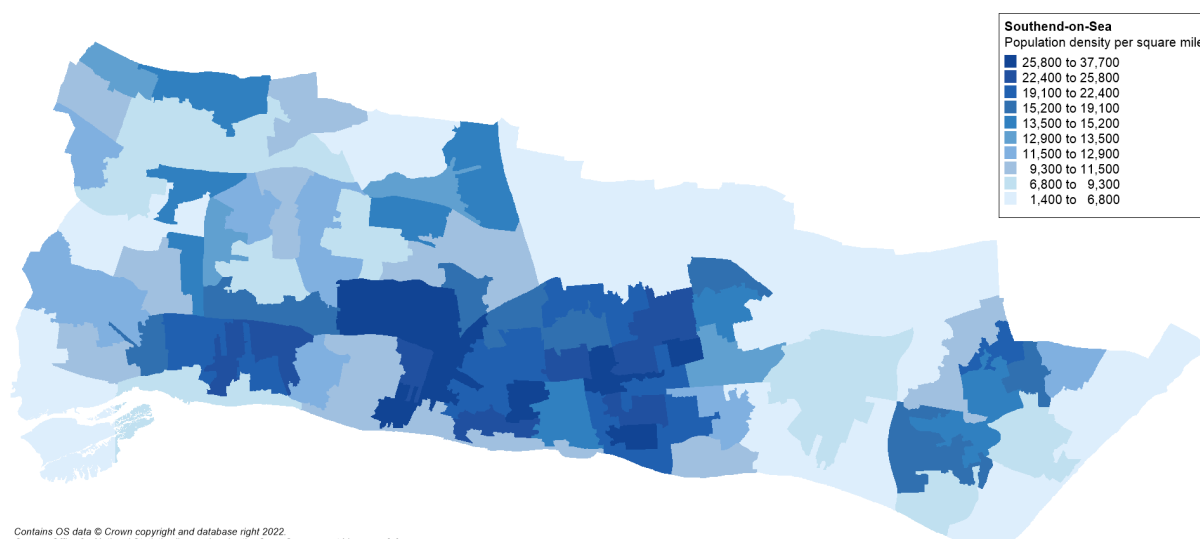


Figure 2.6: Population density 2022 MYE: Southend-on-Sea (LSOAs)

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Ethnicity (Data source: 2021 Census, ONS)

Southend-on-Sea's ethnic composition broadly reflects that of England as a whole. The largest proportion (87.5%) of the population classified its ethnicity as white; higher than the comparative England rate; 81.0%. The next largest population group (by self-classification) is Asian, at 5.5% (lower than the national equivalent (9.6%).

Table 2.2: Ethnic composition – Southend-on-Sea and England

Ethnicity	Southend-on-Sea #	Southend-on-Sea %	England #	England %
White	158,079	87.5%	45,783,401	81.0%
Mixed	5,553	3.1%	1,669,378	3.0%
Asian	9,864	5.5%	5,426,392	9.6%
Black	5,153	2.9%	2,381,724	4.2%
Other	2,036	1.1%	1,229,153	2.2%
Total	180,685	100.0%	56,490,048	100.0%

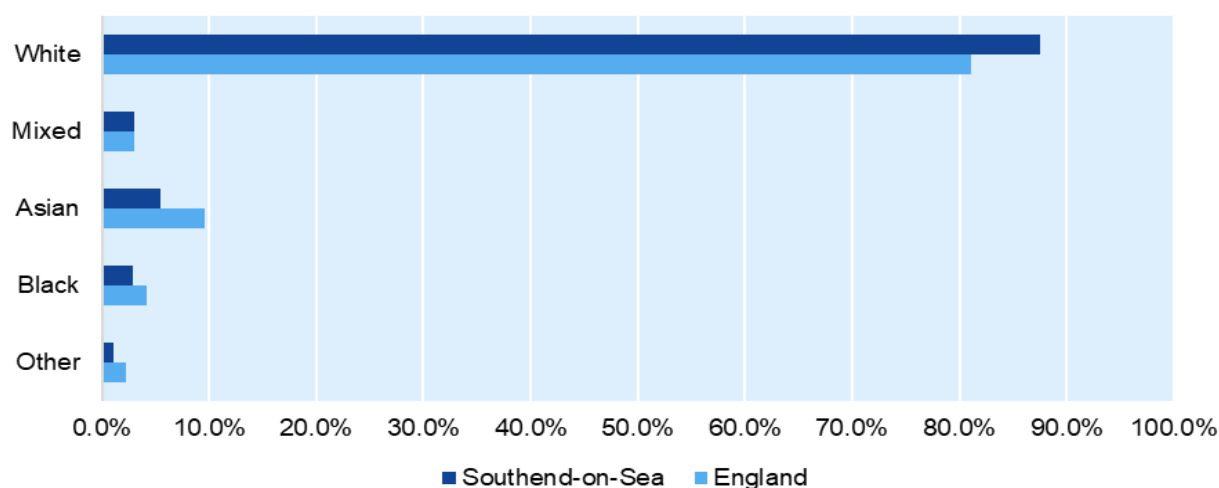


Figure 2.7: Ethnicity in Southend-on-Sea and England

Car and van ownership (Data source: 2021 Census, ONS)

In total 59,100 (75.4%) households in Southend-on-Sea have at least one car or van. This is lower than the equivalent rate in the Eastern region (83.2%) and England and Wales (76.8%). While there is a spread over the four categories, the highest proportion of households in Southend-on-Sea (44.3%) have access to one car or van.

Table 2.3: Comparative car and van ownership

Car / van ownership	S-o-S #	S-o-S %	East #	East %	England #	England %
No cars or vans	19,246	24.6%	442,121	16.8%	5,777,962	23.3%
1 car or van	34,739	44.3%	1,092,400	41.6%	10,236,901	41.3%
2 cars or vans	18,412	23.5%	789,796	30.0%	6,485,729	26.2%
3 or more cars or vans	5,949	7.6%	304,466	11.6%	2,282,601	9.2%
Total	78,346	100.0%	2,628,783	100.0%	24,783,193	100.0%

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Crime (Data source: Crime in England and Wales year ending March 2025, ONS)
Crime data is only available for police force areas. Southend-on-Sea is in the Essex Police Force Area, which comprises 14 local authorities (Basildon, Braintree, Brentwood, Castle Point, Chelmsford, Colchester, Epping Forest, Harlow, Maldon, Rochford, Southend-on-Sea, Tendring, Thurrock, and Uttlesford). The population of Southend-on-Sea accounts for 9.6% of the Essex Police Force Area.

During the 12 months to March 2025 the number of recorded crimes per '000 persons in the Essex Police Force Area was 76.3. (2023 MYE) This is lower than the equivalent rate for England and Wales as a whole (87.2). The number of recorded crimes in the Essex area has fallen significantly (by 8.1%) since March 2024 (2022 MYE). The number for England and Wales fell by 3.8% over the same period.

Table 2.4: Comparative crime rates: Essex and England & Wales.

Authority/area	Recorded crime (Apr '24 – Mar '25)	Population 2023 MYE	Recorded crime per 1,000 population
Essex	144,786	1,896,590	76.3
England & Wales	5,309,536	60,854,727	87.2

As an alternative to the crime figures for police force areas the Index of Deprivation measures the risk of personal and material crime at a more local level. In Southend-on-Sea, 36.9% of the population are in the top three cohorts most at risk compared to 30.0% nationally.

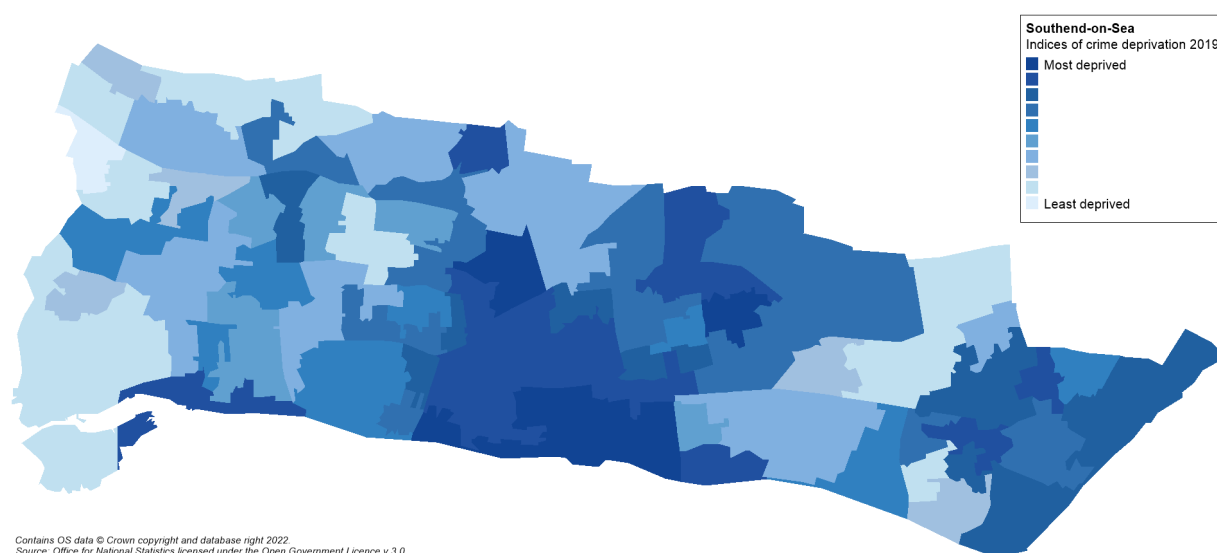


Figure 2.8: Map of crime deprivation

Income and benefits dependency (Data source: Nomis 2025)

The median figure for full-time earnings (2024) in Southend-on-Sea is £43,155; the comparative rate for the Eastern region is £39,702 (-8.0%) and for Great Britain is £37,950 (-12.1%). 4,975 people in Southend-on-Sea claimed out of work benefits⁷ in June 2025. This is an increase of 3.3% when compared to June 2024 (4,815).

⁷ This includes both Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) and Universal Credit. Universal credit also includes other benefits including employment and support allowance (ESA) and child tax credits.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Deprivation (Data source: 2019 indices of deprivation, MHCLG)

Relative to other parts of the country Southend-on-Sea experiences average levels of deprivation; around one third of the district's population (34.8%) falls within areas covered by the country's three most deprived cohorts compared to a national average of c.30%. Similarly, 30.5% live in the three least deprived groupings in the country, this compares to a 'norm' of c.30%. The pattern is broadly replicated for health but not to the same extent.

Around one quarter of Southend-on-Sea's population (25.6%) falls within the areas covered by the three most deprived cohorts, this compares to a national average of c.30%. Similarly, 28.3% live in the three least deprived groupings compared to a 'norm' of c.30%.

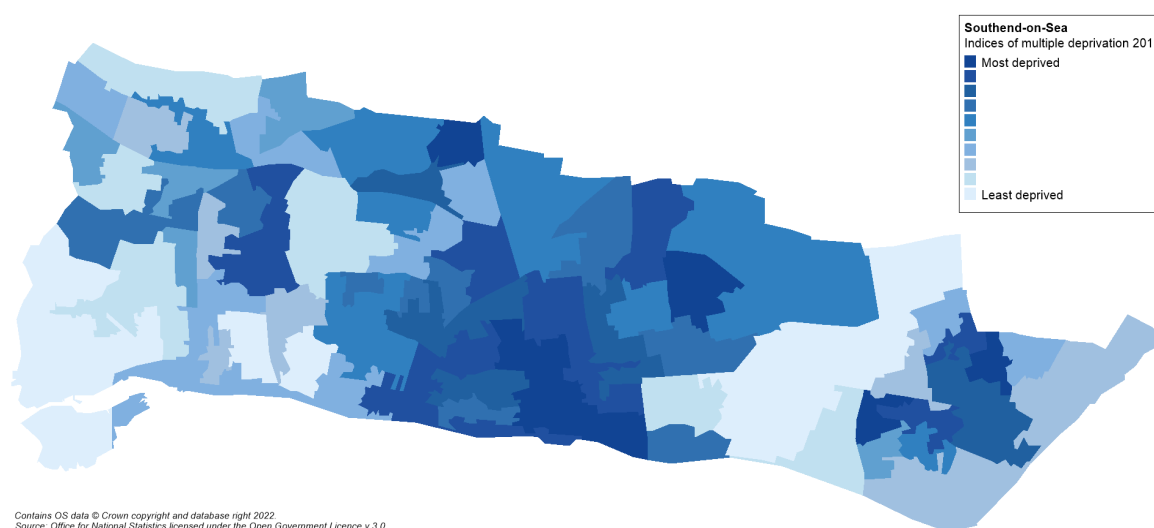


Figure 2.9: Map of multiple deprivation

Table 2.5: IMD cohorts – multiple deprivation in Southend-on-Sea

10% bands	Population in band	%	Cumulative %
Most deprived - 10.0	15,823	8.8%	8.8%
20.0	24,953	13.9%	22.8%
30.0	21,619	12.1%	34.8%
40.0	16,578	9.2%	44.1%
50.0	21,465	12.0%	56.0%
60.0	8,492	4.7%	60.8%
70.0	15,692	8.8%	69.5%
80.0	13,494	7.5%	77.1%
90.0	20,882	11.7%	88.7%
Least deprived - 100.0	20,236	11.3%	100.0%

Health data (Data source: ONS)

In keeping with patterns seen alongside average levels of health deprivation, life expectancy in Southend-on-Sea is similar to the national figure; the male rate is currently 78.5 compared to 79.1 for England, and the female equivalent is 82.4 compared to 83.1 nationally⁸.

⁸ Office of National Statistics: Life Expectancy at Birth by local areas in the United Kingdom, 2023.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

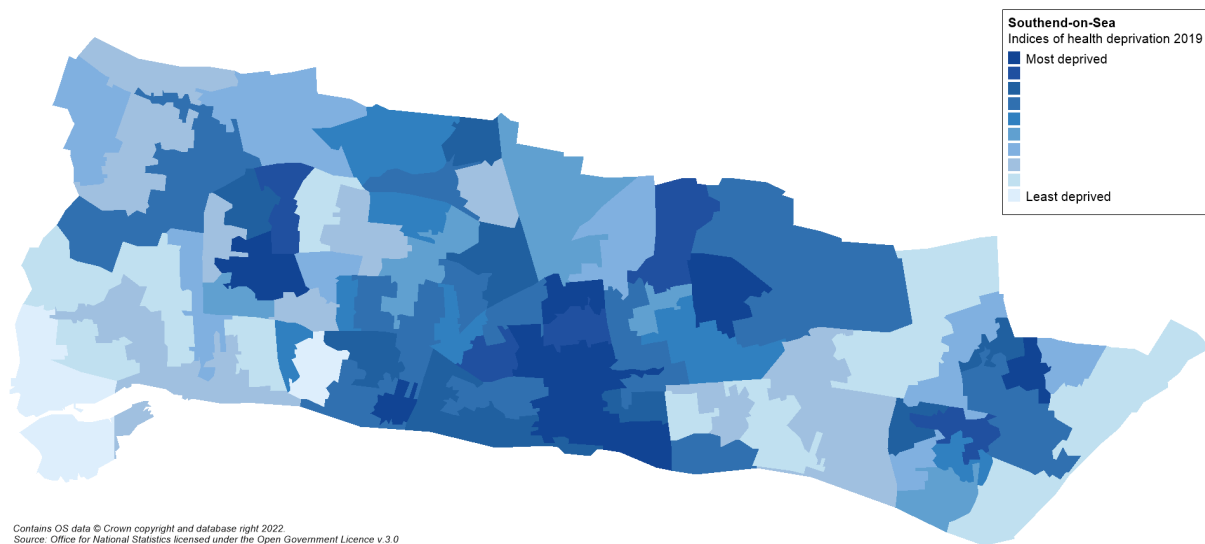


Figure 2.10: Map of health deprivation

Table 2.6: IMD cohorts – health deprivation in Southend-on-Sea.

10% bands	Population in band	%	Cumulative %
Most deprived - 10.0	19,933	11.1%	11.1%
20.0	8,908	5.0%	16.1%
30.0	17,118	9.6%	25.6%
40.0	36,598	20.4%	46.1%
50.0	16,040	8.9%	55.0%
60.0	9,718	5.4%	60.4%
70.0	20,170	11.3%	71.7%
80.0	25,681	14.3%	86.0%
90.0	21,960	12.3%	98.3%
Least deprived - 100.0	3,108	1.7%	100.0%

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

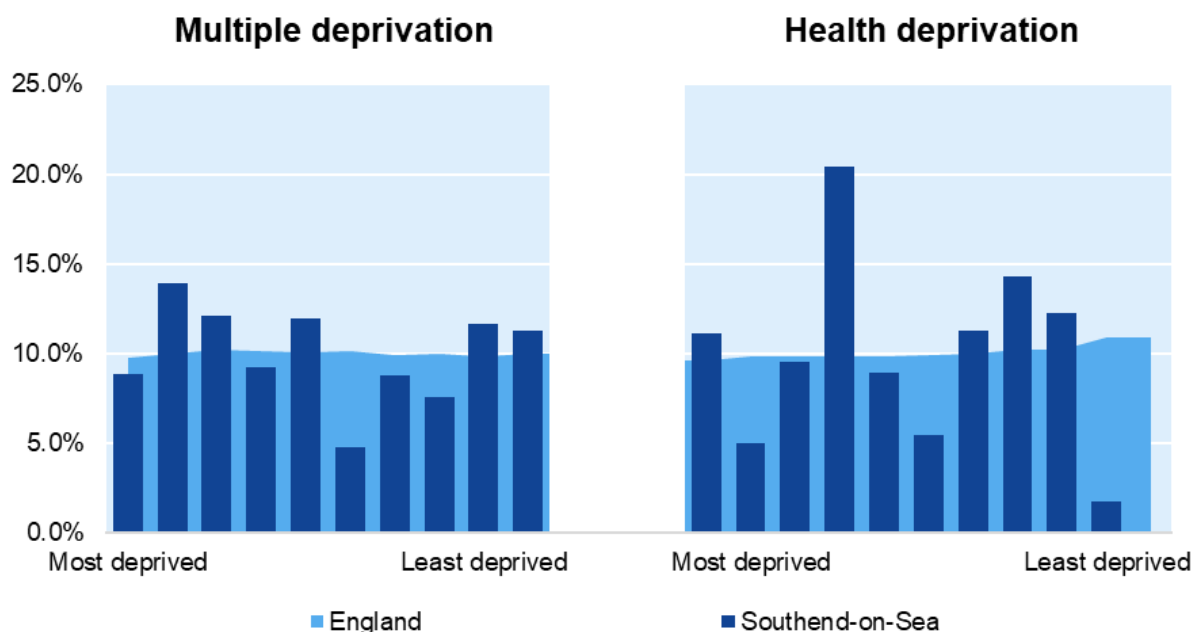


Figure 2.11: Index of multiple and health deprivation.

Weight and obesity (Data Sources: NCMP⁹ and NOO¹⁰)

Obesity is widely recognised to be associated with health problems such as type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease and cancer. At a national level, the resulting NHS costs attributable to overweight and obesity are projected to reach £9.7 billion by 2050, with wider costs to society estimated to reach £49.9 billion per year. These factors combine to make the prevention of obesity a major public health challenge.

Adult rates of obesity or overweight in Southend-on-Sea are below national but above regional rates. However, child rates are below both national and regional rates.

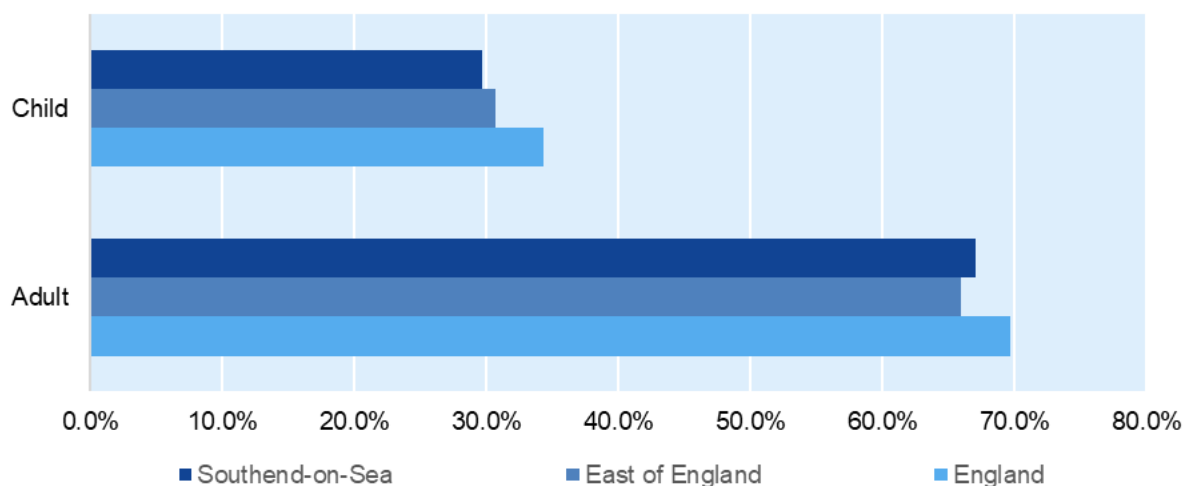


Figure 2.12: Adult and child obesity rates

⁹ National Child Measurement Program

¹⁰ National Obesity Observatory

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

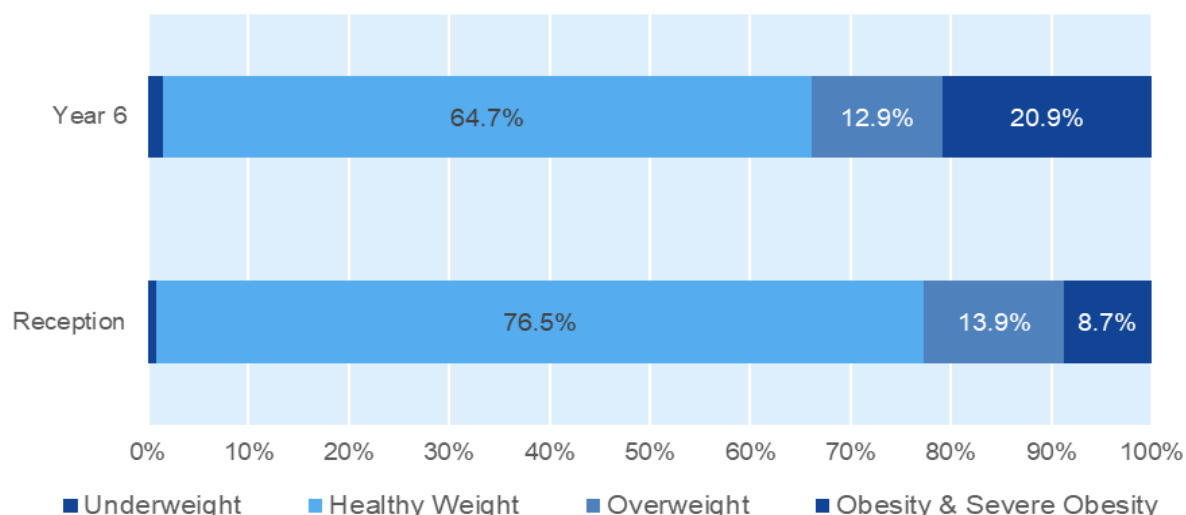


Figure 2.13: Child weight – reception and year 6 (2021-22)

As with many other areas, obesity rates increase significantly between the ages of 4 to 11. Fewer than one in 10 children (8.7%) in Southend-on-Sea are obese in reception year and 13.9% are overweight. By Year 6 this rise to one in five (20.9%) obese and 12.9% overweight. In total by Year 6 around one third (33.8%) are either overweight or obese.

Active Lives Survey (Data Source: Sport England November 2023/24)

This is based on 16+year olds taking part in walking, cycling, fitness, dance and other sporting activity. As identified in Table 6, a lower percentage of the Southend-on-Sea population is inactive compared to England and the Eastern region and a higher percentage is considered to be active. Activity levels are defined by Sport England as follows:

- ✦ Inactive - <30 minutes per week.
- ✦ Fairly Active – 30-149 minutes per week.
- ✦ Active – 150+ minutes per week.

Table 2.7: Active Lives Survey results: November 2023/24.

	Inactive #	Inactive %	Fairly active #	Fairly active %	Active #	Active %
England	11,826,300	25.1%	5,252,800	11.2%	29,962,800	63.7%
East	1,246,200	23.7%	650,900	12.4%	3,355,100	63.9%
Southend-on-Sea	31,700	21.5%	20,200	13.7%	95,900	64.9%

Rate/population totals for sport and physical activity levels (excluding gardening) of adults (16+) in English local authority areas.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

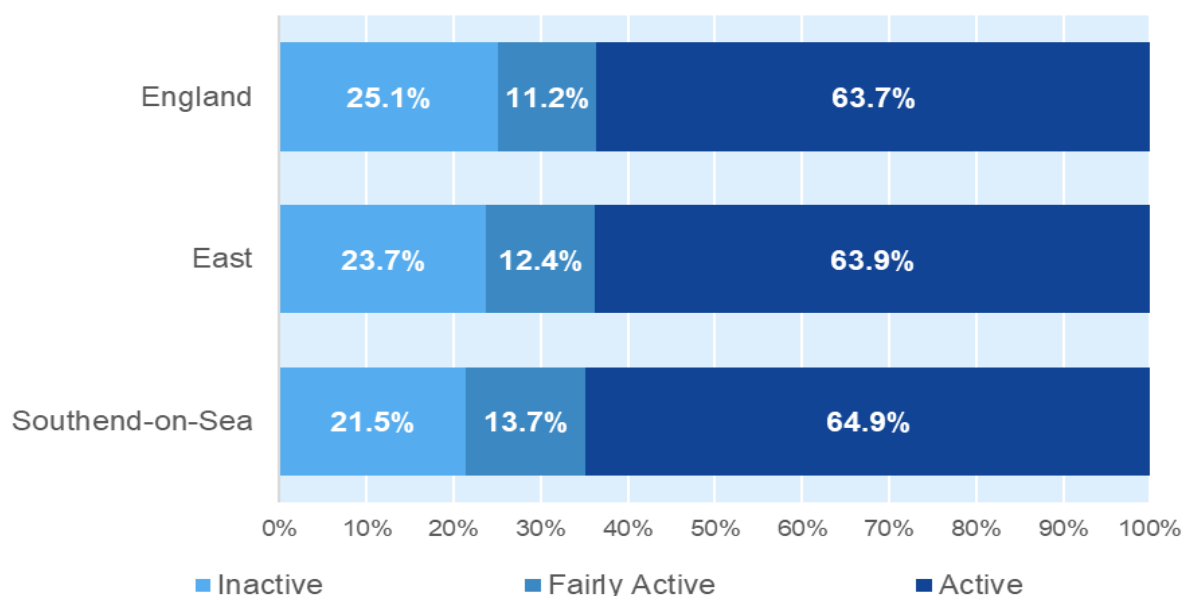


Figure 2.14: Levels of activity (Active Lives)

Popular sports (Data Source: Sport England Active Lives Survey November 2020/21)

This enables identification of the top five sports within Southend-on-Sea. As with many other areas, fitness and athletics are among the most popular activities and are known to cut across age groups and gender; in Southend-on-Sea around one quarter (25.2%) of adults take part in fitness activities, on average, at least twice a month. The next most popular activity is athletics which 12.3% of adults participate in on a relatively regular basis, which accounts for those taking part in informal athletics related activities such as running as well as club-related activity.

Table 2.8: Most popular sports in Southend-on-Sea

Sport	S-o-S #	S-o-S %	East #	East %	England #	England %
Fitness	37,000	25.2%	1,264,600	25.0%	11,374,600	24.9%
Athletics	18,000	12.3%	694,100	13.7%	6,252,000	13.7%
Cycling	15,800	10.8%	916,500	18.1%	7,472,900	16.4%
Swimming	4,700	3.2%	231,200	4.6%	2,001,600	4.4%
Football	3,800	2.6%	135,700	2.7%	1,451,700	3.2%

Social value of sport and physical activity (Data Source: Sport England October 2024)

This shows both the direct benefit and value to individuals of improved wellbeing and the wider value to society, including the state. The value is determined by using Active Lives data and values derived from regularity of participation¹¹. The below figures are calculated using the November 2023/24 Active Lives data.

In Southend-on-Sea the total social value is £298,844,500 (£263,990,000 primary and £34,854,500 secondary¹²).

Table 2.9: Social value of sport and physical activity.

¹¹ Primary values (active £2,500, fairly active £1,200, inactive £0) and secondary values (active £315, fairly active £230, inactive £0).

¹² Secondary value: the wider value to society, including the state.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Area	Primary Value	Secondary Value	Total
Southend-on-Sea	£263,990,000	£34,854,500	£298,844,500
East	£9,168,830,000	£1,206,563,500	£10,375,393,500
England	£81,210,360,000	£10,646,426,000	£91,856,786,000

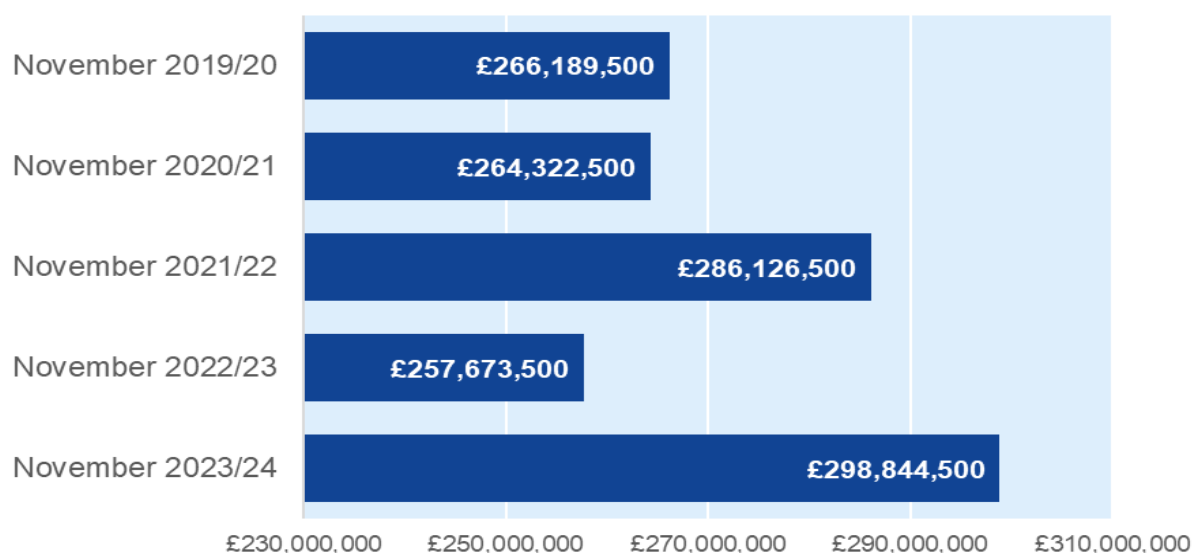


Figure 2.15: Social value of sport and physical activity in Southend-on-Sea: November 2019/20 to November 2023/24.

Mosaic (Data source: 2024 Mosaic analysis, Experian)

Mosaic 2024 is a similar consumer segmentation product. It classifies all 28.6 million households into 15 groups, 66 household types and 238 segments. This data is then used to paint a picture of UK consumers in terms of their social-demographics, lifestyles, culture and behaviour and tends to be used to draw out population characteristics for the backdrop to library usage and other non-sporting activities. The following table shows the top five Mosaic classifications in Southend-on-Sea compared to the country as a whole. The dominance of these five can be seen inasmuch as they represent almost two thirds (63.6%) of the population compared to a national equivalent rate of just over 4 in 10 (42.0%).

Table 2.9: Mosaic – main population segments in Southend-on-Sea

Mosaic group description	Southend-on-Sea #	Southend-on-Sea %	National %
1 - Senior Security	28,917	15.8%	7.5%
2 - Rental Hubs	26,226	14.3%	8.0%
3 - Domestic Success	24,747	13.5%	9.1%
4 - Aspiring Homemakers	19,072	10.4%	10.9%
5 - Urban Cohesion	17,511	9.6%	6.5%

The largest segment profiled for Southend-on-Sea is the Senior Security group, making up 15.8% of the adult population in the area, this is double the England rate (7.5%). This group is defined as elderly singles and couples who are still living independently in comfortable homes that they own. Property equity gives them a reassuring level of financial security. This group

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

includes people who have remained in family homes after their children have left, and those who have chosen to downsize to live among others of similar ages and lifestyles.

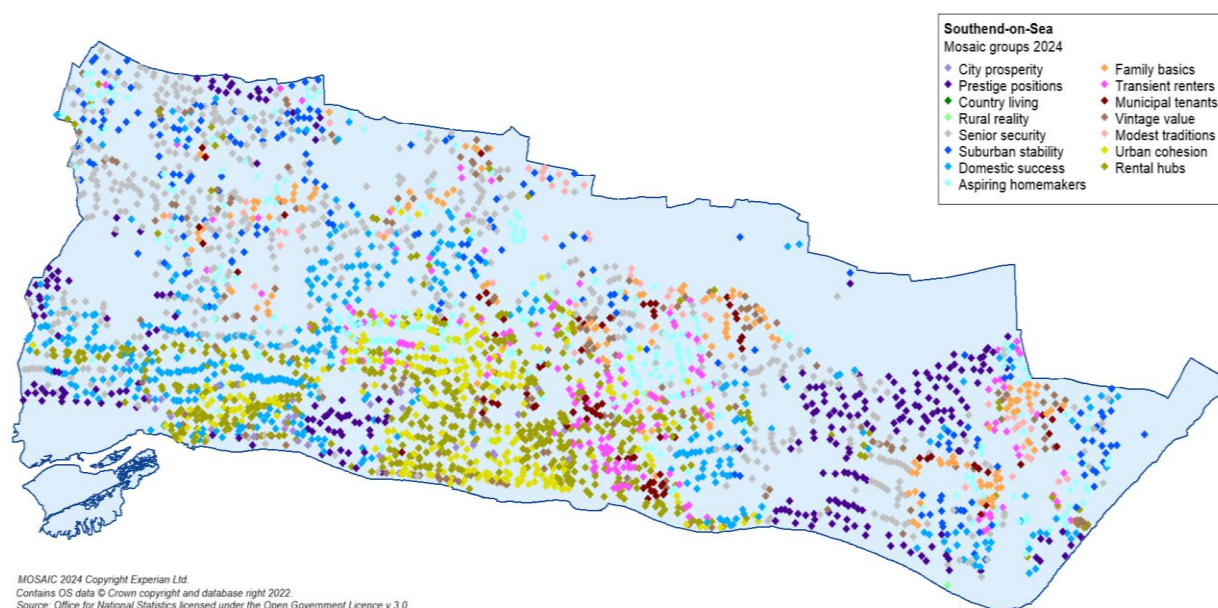


Figure 2.17: Distribution of Mosaic segments in Southend-on-Sea

Table 2.10: Dominant Mosaic profiles in Southend-on-Sea

Mosaic group	Description
Senior Security	Elderly singles and couples who are still living independently in comfortable homes that they own. Property equity gives them a reassuring level of financial security. This group includes people who have remained in family homes after their children have left, and those who have chosen to downsize to live among others of similar ages and lifestyles.
Rental Hubs	Predominantly young, single people in their 20s and 30s who live in urban locations and rent their homes from private landlords while in the early stages of their careers or pursuing studies.
Domestic Success	High-earning families who live affluent lifestyles in upmarket homes situated in sought after residential neighbourhoods. Their busy lives revolve around their children and successful careers in higher managerial and professional roles.
Aspiring Homemakers	Younger households settling down in housing priced within their means.
Urban Cohesion	Residents of settled urban communities with a strong sense of identity.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

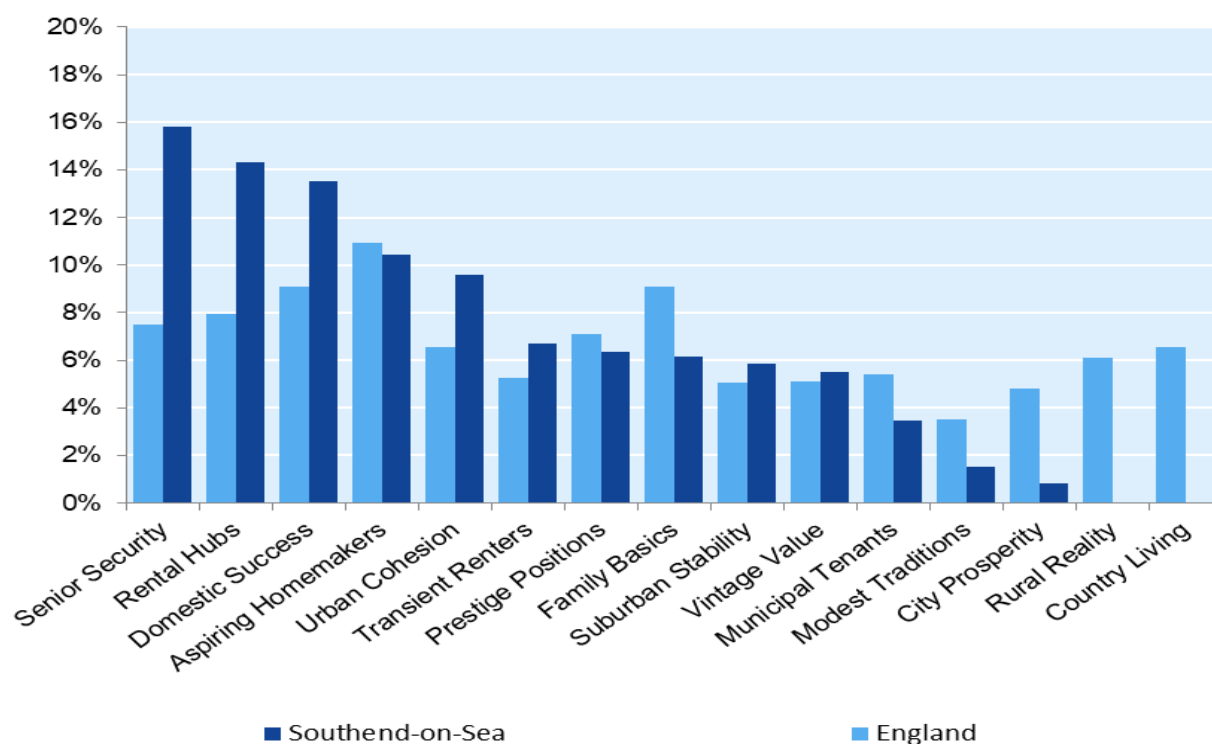


Figure 2.18: Mosaic groups segmentation (2023): Southend-on-Sea compared to national

Population projections (2022-2045) (Data Source: 2022-based population projections, ONS)

The most recent ONS projections indicate a decrease of -0.1% in Southend-on-Sea's population (-146) over the 23 years from 2022 to 2045. Over this extended timeframe fluctuations are seen in rise and fall at different points across the majority of age groups. Several key points for Southend-on-Sea are outlined below:

- ♦ The number of 0-15 year olds, falls by -4,261 (-12.4%) over the first half of the projection (to 2033).
- ♦ In contrast, there is predicted to be an increase in the number of 16-24 year olds, +7.4% in the first period (+1,194) followed by a decline of -14.4% (-2,508) in the second period. Consequently, Sport England's target of 'increasing the number of 14-25 year olds playing sport once a week' may prove difficult.
- ♦ There is a continuous increase in the numbers of persons aged 65+ and a need to consider varying sports offers for this age group. This represents an increase of +18.1% (+6,320) in the first period continuing to rise to +8.9% (+3,688) in the second period. While the age group represented 19.3% of Southend-on-Sea's population in 2022 it is projected to be 24.9% of the total by 2045 - this is one quarter of the population.

Table 2.11: Southend-on-Sea – ONS projected population (2022 to 2045)

Age (years)	2022 #	2033 #	2045 #	2022 %	2033 %	2045 %	2033 Change	2045 Change
0-15	34,238	29,977	27,093	18.9%	16.3%	15.0%	87.6%	79.1%
16-24	16,238	17,432	14,924	9.0%	9.5%	8.3%	107.4%	91.9%
25-34	23,041	21,409	20,830	12.7%	11.7%	11.5%	92.9%	90.4%
35-44	24,672	25,736	23,379	13.6%	14.0%	12.9%	104.3%	94.8%
45-54	24,373	25,469	25,771	13.5%	13.9%	14.3%	104.5%	105.7%

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

55-64	23,339	22,175	23,751	12.9%	12.1%	13.1%	95.0%	101.8%
65+	34,983	41,303	44,991	19.3%	22.5%	24.9%	118.1%	128.6%
Total	180,884	183,501	180,738	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	101.4%	99.9%

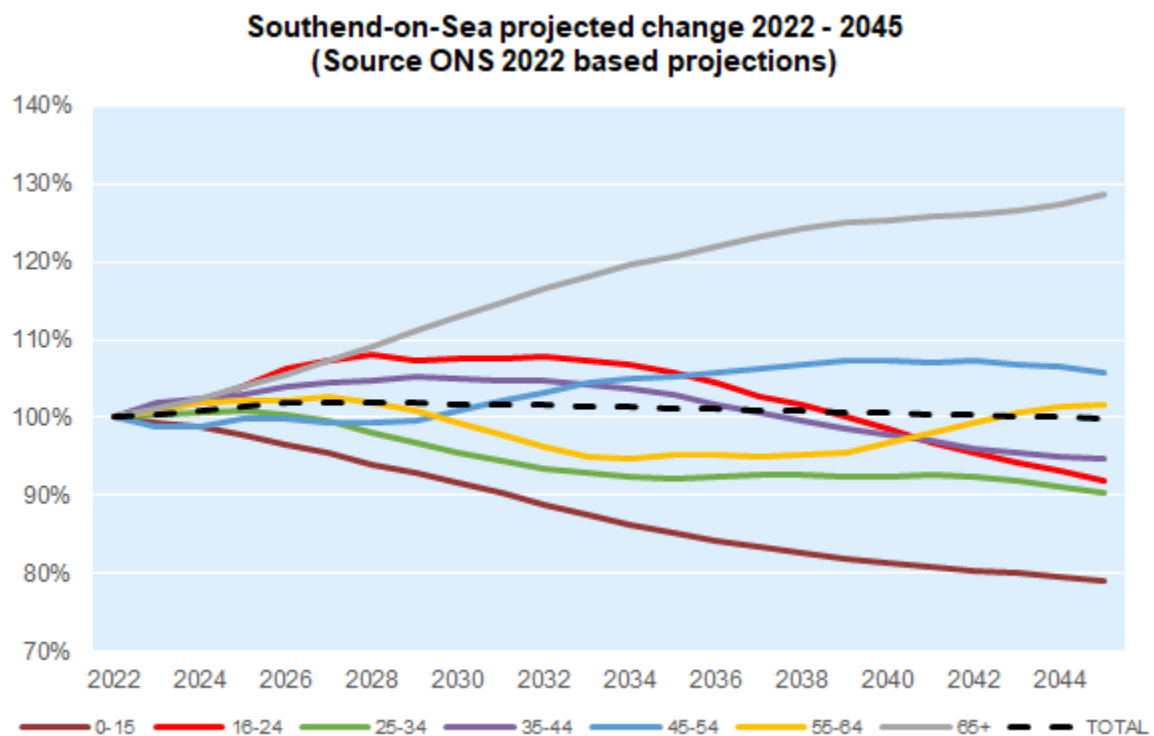


Figure 2.19: Southend-on-Sea – ONS projected population (2022-2045)

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

SECTION 3: SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT

3.1: Methodology

As noted above, the assessment of provision is based on the Sport England Sport England Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guide (ANOG) for indoor and outdoor sports facilities.

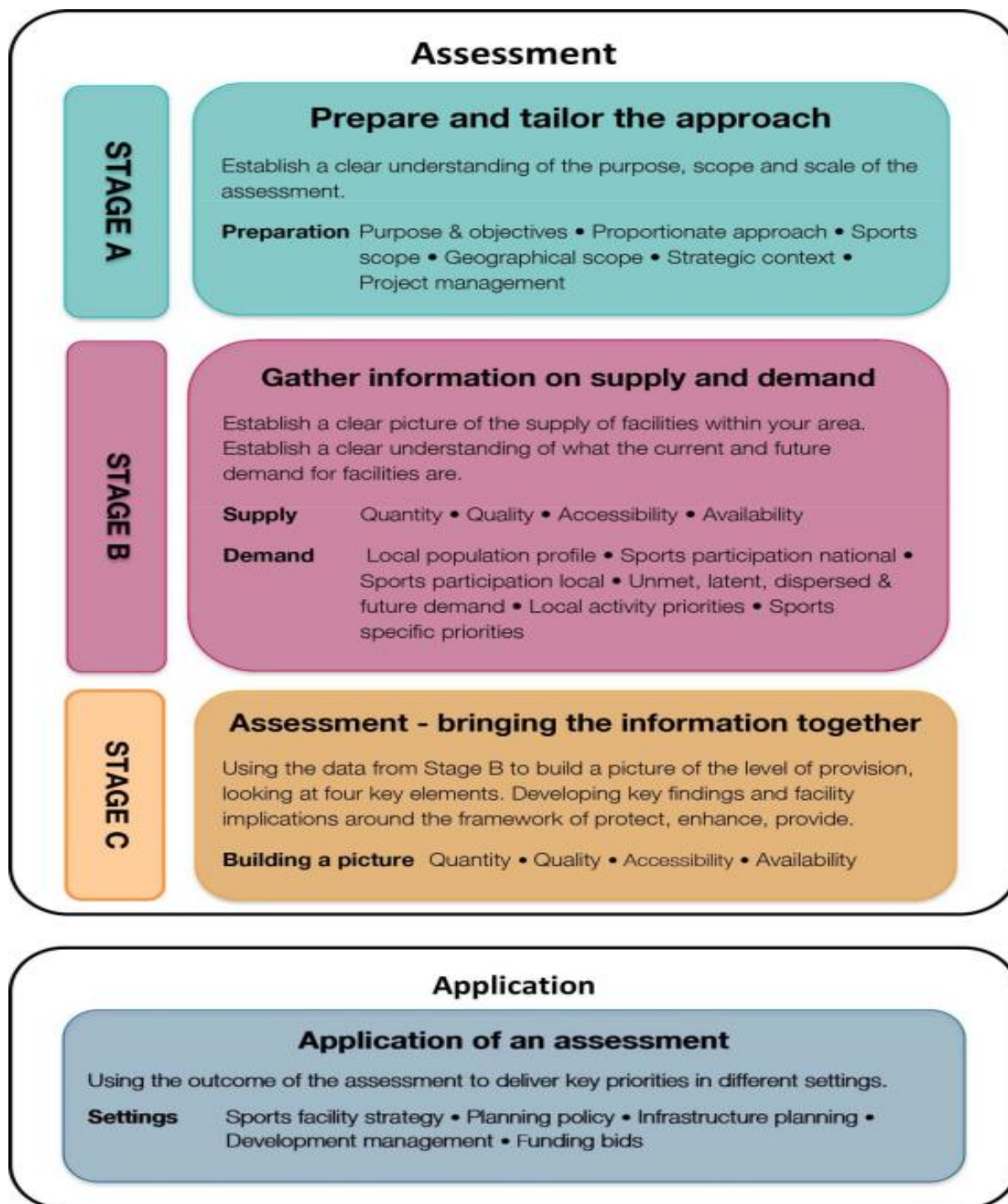


Figure 3.1: Recommended approach

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

ANOG has been produced to help (local authorities) meet the requirements of the government's NPPF, which states that: 'Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.

Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. 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.' (NPPF, Paragraph 104).

Provision assessment involves analysis of quality, quantity, accessibility and availability for the identified facility types (e.g., sports halls and swimming pools). Each venue is considered on a 'like for like' basis within its own facility type, to enable it to be assessed for adequacy.

Demand background, data and consultation is variable, depending upon levels of consultation garnered. In some instances, national data is available whilst in others, it is possible to drill down and obtain very detailed local information. This is evident within the demand section.

The report considers the distribution of and interrelationship between facility types in the Authority and provides a clear indication of areas of high demand. It will identify where there is potential to provide improved and/or additional facilities to meet this demand and to, where appropriate, protect or rationalise the current stock.

3.2: Site visits

Active Places Power (APP) provides baseline data to identify facilities in the study area. These have been assessed as part of this process. Where possible, assessments are undertaken in the presence of facility staff. This tends to enable access to be gained to more areas within venues and more detailed *in-situ* discussion of issues such as customer perspectives, quality, maintenance etc. This adds value to the audit (which is a 'snapshot' visit) enhancing the accuracy of insight gathered about the general user experience.

Site visits to key indoor facilities, those operated by other partners and the voluntary sector were undertaken. Where a physical visit was not possible a telephone consultation with the facility/site manager was delivered. Via the combination of audit and informal interviews with facility managers this report identifies 'relevance' and 'condition' and describes (e.g.):

- ◀ Facility and scale.
- ◀ Usage/local market.
- ◀ Ownership, management and access arrangements (plus, where available, facility owner aspirations).
- ◀ Management, programming, catchments, user groups, gaps.
- ◀ Location (urban/rural), access and accessibility.
- ◀ Condition, maintenance, existing improvement plans, facility 'investment status' (lifespan in the short, medium and long term).
- ◀ Existing/ planned adjacent facilities.

The assessment forms utilised capture quantity and quality data on a site-by-site basis and feeds directly into the main database allowing information to be stored and analysed. Quality assessments undertaken are rated in the categories set out in Table 3.1 overleaf. These ratings are applied throughout the report, regardless of facility type.

Ratings are based on non-technical visual assessments. These consider facility age and condition. Surfaces, tiles and walls, line markings and safety equipment are considered and problem areas such as mould, damage, leaks etc. are noted. The condition of fixtures, fittings and equipment is recorded.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Maintenance and facility 'wear and tear' is considered as is compliant with the Equality Act, although this is not studied in detail for the purposes of this report. When all data is collated, key facility elements receive an overall quality rating.

Table 3.1: Quality ratings of indoor sports facilities using ANOG.

Quality rating	Description
Good	Facility is new (less than 5 years old) or recently invested in, up to date, clean, well maintained and presented. Fixtures, fittings, equipment and sports surfaces are new or relatively new with little if any wear and tear. They are well-lit with a modern feel. Ancillary facilities are new or well maintained, fit for purpose, modern and attractive.
Above average	Facility is in reasonable condition and is well maintained and presented. May be older but it is fit for purpose and safe. Fixtures, fittings, equipment and sports surfaces are in an acceptable condition but may show some signs of wear and tear. Ancillary facilities are good quality but potentially showing signs of age and some wear and tear.
Below average	Facility is older and showing signs of age/poor quality. Fixtures, fittings, equipment and sports surfaces show signs of wear and tear. It is usable, but quality could be improved. The facility is not as attractive to customers and does not meet current expectations. Ancillary facilities are deteriorating, reasonable quality, but usable.
Poor	The facility is old and outdated. Fixtures, fittings, equipment and sports surfaces are aged, worn and/or damaged. The facility is barely usable and at times may have to be taken out of commission. The facility is unattractive to customers and does not meet basic expectations. Ancillary facilities are low quality and unattractive to use.

3.3: Catchment areas

Applying catchments areas for facility types listed in Sections 3-14 enables identification of areas currently not served. These vary from person to person, day to day, hour to hour. This problem is overcome by accepting the concept of 'effective catchment'; the distance travelled by around 75-80% of users (used in the Sport England Facilities Planning Model - FPM). Sport England data indicates that most people will travel up to 20 minutes to access sports facilities. This, coupled with KKP's experience of working in/with leisure facilities and use of local data enables identification of catchment areas for sports facilities as follows.

Table 3.2: Facility catchment areas

Facility type	Identified catchment area
Sport halls, health and fitness, swimming pools, squash courts.	20-minutes' walk/20 minutes' drive
Indoor bowls, indoor tennis, gymnastics and trampolining, combat sports, table tennis, water sports.	30-minutes' drive
Village halls	10-minute walk (800m radial)

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

SECTION 4: SPORTS HALLS

Indoor multi-purpose sports halls are prime venues for community sport enabling a range of sport and recreational activities to be played. The standard methodology for measuring sports halls is the number of badminton courts contained within the floor area.

They are generally considered to be of greatest value if of at least 3+ badminton courts in size with sufficient height to allow games such as badminton to be played. However, 4+ court sports halls provide greater flexibility as they can accommodate major indoor team sports such as football (5-a-side and training), basketball and netball. They also tend to have sufficient length to accommodate indoor cricket nets and indoor athletics and, thus, offer more sports development flexibility than their 3-court counterpart. There is often variance in the dimensions of 4-court halls, and only those which meet current Sport England Design Guidance of 34.5m x 20m can accommodate the full range of indoor sports, especially competition/league activities.

Larger halls, for example those with six or eight courts, can accommodate higher level training pitch/court increasing flexibility for training and competition and hosting of indoor central venue leagues for sports such as netball. This assessment considers all 3+ court facilities in Southend-on-Sea. Halls that function as specialist sports venues (e.g., dance studios) are excluded.

4.1: Supply

Quantity

Southend-on-Sea has 34 sports halls accommodating 86 badminton courts. A large proportion of these are located in close proximity to areas of higher population density. Sports halls are evenly distributed between the east and west of Southend-on-Sea.

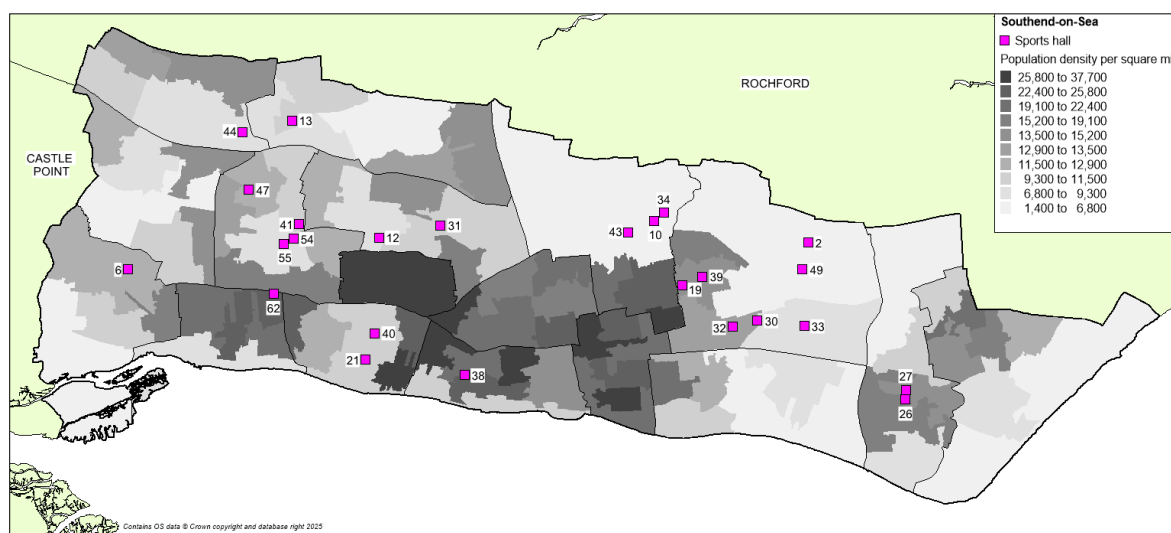


Figure 4.1: All sports / activity halls in Southend-on-Sea – regardless of size.

18 of the sports/activity halls have two or fewer badminton courts marked out. While often appropriate for mat sports, exercise to music and similar provision, their size can limit the range and scale of recreational/sporting activity that can be accommodated. Several sites have more than one activity/sports hall.

Table 4.1: All sports/activity halls in Southend-on-Sea.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

ID	Site	Courts
2	Alleyn Court School	2
6	Belfairs Academy	1
6	Belfairs Academy	2
6	Belfairs Academy	4
10	Cecil Jones Academy	4
12	Chase High School	4
12	Chase High School	2
13	David Lloyd (Southend)	4
19	Hamstel Junior School	2
21	Invicta Tennis and Table Tennis Club	0
26	Shoeburyness High School	1
27	Shoeburyness Leisure Centre	0
27	Shoeburyness Leisure Centre	4
30	Southchurch High School	1
30	Southchurch High School	4
31	Southend High School for Boys	5
32	Southend High School for Girls	4
33	Southend Lawn Tennis Club	0
34	Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre	8
34	Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre	2
38	St Bernards High School	4
38	St Bernards High School	0
39	St Nicholas School	1
40	St Saviours Church Hall	0
41	St Thomas More High School	4
43	Temple Sutton Primary School	0
44	The Eastwood Academy	4
44	The Eastwood Academy	1
47	The St Christopher's School	3
49	Thorpe Hall School	4
49	Thorpe Hall School	2
54	Westcliff High School for Boys	1
54	Westcliff High School for Boys	4
55	Westcliff High School for Girls	4
62	Chalkwell Badminton Centre	2

(0 court halls identified in Active Places but not large enough to accommodate 1 badminton court)

Only sites with sports halls which have three or more marked badminton courts were subject to assessment for the purpose of the needs assessment as these can accommodate a range of sports and be potentially used by the community depending on the access policy. There are 16 sports halls in Southend-on-Sea with three or more courts (68 badminton courts).

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 4.2: Sports halls with 3+ badminton courts

ID	Site	Courts
6	Belfairs Academy	4
10	Cecil Jones Academy	4
12	Chase High School	4
13	David Lloyd (Southend)	4
27	Shoeburyness Leisure Centre	4
30	Southchurch High School	4
31	Southend High School for Boys	5
32	Southend High School for Girls	4
34	Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre	8
38	St Bernards High School	4
41	St Thomas More High School	4
44	The Eastwood Academy	4
47	The St Christopher's School	3
49	Thorpe Hall School	4
54	Westcliff High School for Boys	4
55	Westcliff High School for Girls	4

As is the case in most local authorities the 4-court sports hall is the most common size. A larger sports hall (one of 4+ courts in size) can cater for sports that require more floor space such as netball, basketball, futsal and handball or can offer multiple courts for events and competitions. The largest sports hall is located at Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre; this has eight marked badminton courts.

Facility quality

All 3+ court sports halls were subject to non-technical assessment to ascertain quality. Assessments took place between July and August 2025. Any investment made after this date is not accounted for. Known or planned investment is mentioned in the site notes.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

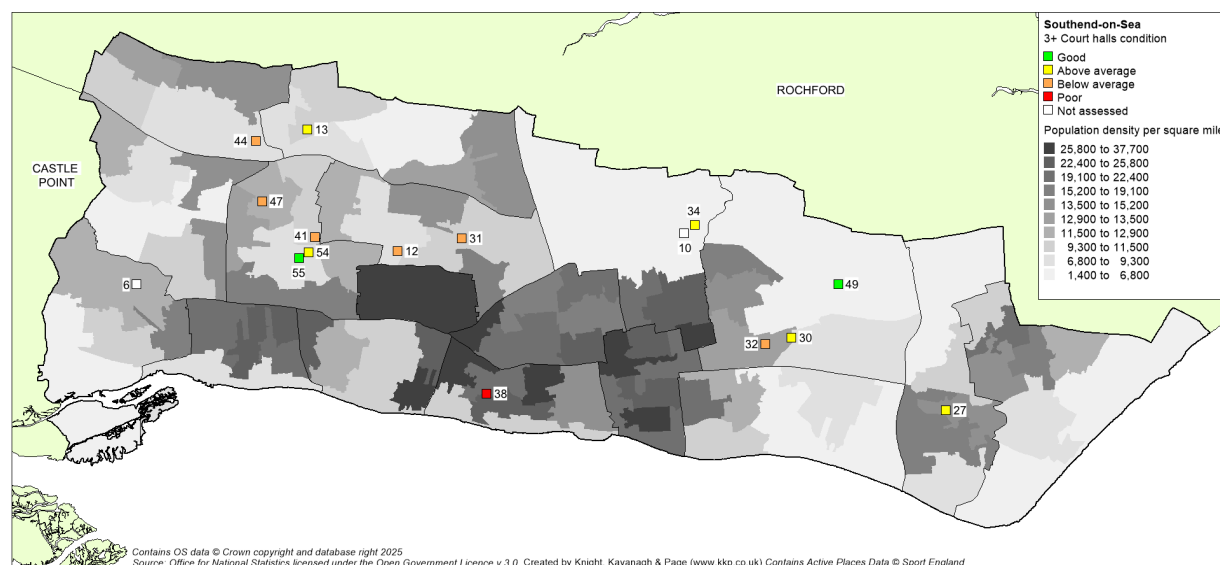


Figure 4.2: Quality of 3+ sports halls on population density

Access was not obtained to Belfairs Academy and Cicil Jones Academy. Despite numerous attempts to contact the facility, no response was received:

A higher proportion of the 3+ court sports halls in Southend-on-Sea is located to the west of the Authority. This reflects the larger population in towns such as Chalkwell, Leigh-on-Sea and Eastwood. Larger settlements to the west such as Shoeburyness, Southchurch and Thorpe Bay also have adequate levels of provision.

Table 4.3: Quality of 3+ sports halls

ID	Site	Courts	Condition
6	Belfairs Academy	4	Not assessed
10	Cecil Jones Academy	4	Not assessed
12	Chase High School	4	Below average
13	David Lloyd (Southend)	4	Above average
27	Shoeburyness Leisure Centre	4	Above average
30	Southchurch High School	4	Above average
31	Southend High School for Boys	5	Below average
32	Southend High School for Girls	4	Below average
34	Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre	8	Above average
38	St Bernards High School	4	Poor
41	St Thomas More High School	4	Below average
44	The Eastwood Academy	4	Below average
47	The St Christopher's School	3	Below average
49	Thorpe Hall School	4	Good
54	Westcliff High School for Boys	4	Above average
55	Westcliff High School for Girls	4	Good

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

There are two good quality sports halls (eight courts), five above average (24 courts), six below average (24 courts) and one poor quality hall (four courts). As noted above, two sports halls (eight courts) were not assessed.

Two public leisure centres feature a sports hall with three or more badminton courts, both of which are above average in quality. Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre has eight courts, the largest sports hall in Southend-on-Sea, and Shoeburyness Leisure Centre has four courts.

Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre is well located centrally to attract users from across the Authority. It is located near the city centre, providing good transport links via train and bus. Shoeburyness Leisure Centre serves residents in the east of the Authority. Sports halls are sparser in this area, making it a key facility for serving this part of the Authority. Residents located to the south of central Southend-on-Sea, where population density is high, have to travel further than residents in other parts of the Authority to access above average or good quality provision given the quality of St Bernards High School.

In general, changing room quality is commensurate with sports hall quality, and those at school sites tend to be less modern than changing facilities at public leisure sites. Assessing changing provision quality at school sites can be difficult due to them being inaccessible due to pupil use during the site visit. Where relevant information with regard to changing room quality was collected, it is detailed below.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 4.5: Reported quality issues at below average-quality sports halls.

Site name	Rating	Audit findings
The St Christopher's School	Below average	The hall is dated having been built over 20 years ago with little refurbishment since. The floor surface is in reasonable condition despite its age, with clear line markings. The lighting and heating systems are old and need to be upgraded.
Chase High School	Below average	The 4-court hall is in need of modernisation. Floor line markings have become faint through use and it needs to be relacquered. The lighting is good however the hall lacks appeal in comparison to modern sports halls. (This hall was assessed virtually using information available online and via club consultation).
Southend High School for Boys	Below average	This 4-court hall has had little refurbishment since it was built in 2005. It has a green a sprung polymer flooring which is still in reasonable condition but is starting to become heavily marked.
The Eastwood Academy	Below average	The 4-court hall has had LED lighting implemented and the surface has been maintained. The general décor and structure of the building lacks modernisation since it opened in 1985.
Southend High School for Girls	Below average	Despite being built in 2008, the hall décor is unattractive when compared to other provision. The polymer flooring is worn in patches. The hall has good run off space.
St Thomas More High School	Below average	This sports hall opened in 1970 and still has a lot of the original features. The polymer flooring is in good condition; however, the general décor is unattractive.
St Bernards High School	Poor	The sports hall is 25 years old and little refurbishment is reported to have taken place over this period. Sections of the lighting has been upgraded at different times which has led to a combination of LED and halogen lighting. The flooring is heavily marked.

The Westcliff High School for Girls had a new sports hall floor installed in 2024. The hall is modern with a good heating and cooling system and green walls suitable for traditional sports hall sports. The roof is good with no structural issues. The facility is good quality.

Thorpe Hall High School also has a good quality sports hall. It opened in 2018 and remains a modern and attractive facility. It features good LED lighting and a purple polymer flooring with good line markings.

Southchurch High School is of above average in quality. Its 4-court sports hall has a sprung wooden floor with some level of wear and tear; however, the line markings are clear. It has good LED lighting and a significant amount of run off space surrounding the courts.

Westcliff High School for Boys also has an above average quality 4-court sports hall. It opened in 2002 and has been regularly maintained. It has also been modernised in terms of décor. Floor line markings are clear but upgrades to the lighting (not yet changed to LED) and heating systems are required to make it more energy efficient. The changing rooms are more dated than the hall - and require modernisation. It has white walls which is not conducive for all sports and is unattractive for sports such as badminton and table tennis. Any future refurbishment should consider changing the wall colour to make it more attractive to an increased number of sports.

The 4-court sports hall at Shoeburyness Leisure Centre is shared with Shoeburyness High School. It is used for educational purposes between the hours of 09:00-18:00 and available to the community during evenings and weekends. As a result, it is subject to heavy usage. Despite this it is in above average condition. It has a sprung wooden floor, which has been subject to a patch

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

repair in 2023, and good clear line markings. The lights have been converted to LED and there are no structural issues with the building or the roof. The run off space is good and the walls are a suitable colour to accommodate traditional sports hall sports.

The 8-court sports hall at Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre is also of above average quality. The flooring, which is not sprung, was replaced in 2021 and is in good condition. The runoff space surrounding the badminton courts is reasonable, the lighting has been converted to LED and the décor is reasonably attractive.

The sports hall at David Lloyd Southend is of above average quality due to regular maintenance being carried out since it opened in 2005. The hall only features badminton markings.

Table 4.6: Date of opening and refurbishment of sports halls according to Sport England's Active Places Power database and audit findings.

Site	Year built / opened	Last refurbished	Age since opened/refurbished
Westcliff High School for Girls	2003	-	22
The St Christopher's School	2003	-	22
St Bernards High School	2000	-	25
Belfairs Academy	2004	-	21
David Lloyd (Southend)	2005	2016	9
Southend High School for Boys	2005	-	20
The Eastwood Academy	1985	-	40
Southend High School for Girls	2008	-	17
St Thomas More High School	1970	2010	15
Thorpe Hall School	2018	-	7
Southchurch High School	2018	-	7
Cecil Jones Academy	1975	2006	19
Westcliff High School for Boys	2002	-	23
Chase High School	1994	-	31
Shoeburyness Leisure Centre	1997	2023	2
Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre	1996	2021	4

Half of the sports halls were built between 2000-2010. These have reached a point where refurbishment (where it has not already been carried out) is required to modernise and improve facility quality. At sites where access could not be gained, refurbishment may have taken place more recently than suggested, for example, at Belfairs Academy. Eastwood Academy has reportedly had limited refurbishment since being built.

Accessibility

Sports hall accessibility is influenced by how far people are willing and able to travel to and from them. Walk and drive-time catchments are applied to determine facility accessibility to different communities. The normal (industry) standard is a 20-minute walk time (one-mile radial catchment) for urban areas and a 20-minute drive time for rural areas. Three sports halls in Southend-on-Sea currently offer no community use. The following do not currently offer community use:

- ❖ Westcliff High School for Girls (Map Id 55).
- ❖ The Eastwood Academy. (Map Id 44).

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

◀ Cecil Jones Academy. (Map Id 10).

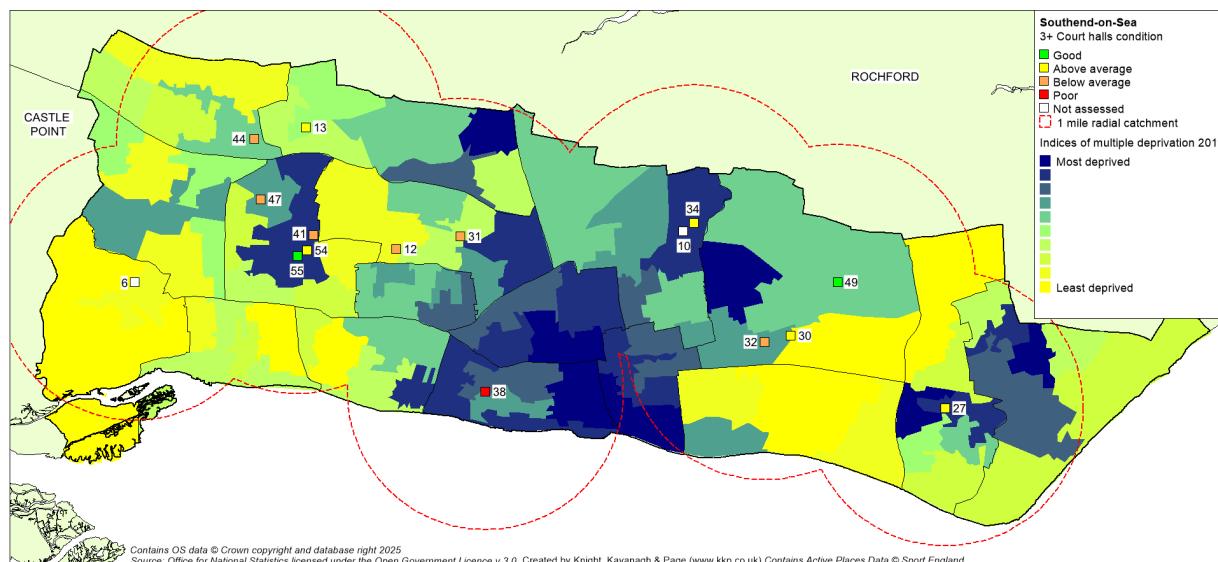


Figure 4.4: Accessibility of all sports halls in Southend-on-Sea (including private use sites)

Table 4.7: Accessibility of all sports halls in Southend-on-Sea (including private use sites)

IMD 10% bands	Persons	Population %	Persons inside catchment	Population inside (%)	Persons outside catchment	Population outside (%)
0 - 10	15,823	8.8%	13,930	7.8%	1,893	1.1%
10.1 - 20	24,953	13.9%	24,382	13.6%	571	0.3%
20.1 - 30	21,619	12.1%	21,602	12.1%	17	0.0%
30.1 - 40	16,578	9.2%	16,578	9.2%	0	0.0%
40.1 - 50	21,465	12.0%	21,431	12.0%	34	0.0%
50.1 - 60	8,492	4.7%	7,834	4.4%	658	0.4%
60.1 - 70	15,692	8.8%	13,572	7.6%	2,120	1.2%
70.1 - 80	13,494	7.5%	12,080	6.7%	1,414	0.8%
80.1 - 90	20,882	11.7%	20,151	11.2%	731	0.4%
90.1 - 100	20,236	11.3%	19,408	10.8%	828	0.5%
Total	179,234	100.0%	170,968	95.4%	8,266	4.6%

Community use halls provide good accessibility levels for Southend-on-Sea residents.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 4.8: Community use sports hall accessibility (3+ courts with 1-mile radial)

IMD 10% bands	Persons	Population %	Persons inside catchment	Population inside (%)	Persons outside catchment	Population outside (%)
0 - 10	15,823	8.8%	13,930	7.8%	1,893	1.1%
10.1 - 20	24,953	13.9%	24,174	13.5%	779	0.4%
20.1 - 30	21,619	12.1%	21,587	12.0%	32	0.0%
30.1 - 40	16,578	9.2%	16,578	9.2%	0	0.0%
40.1 - 50	21,465	12.0%	21,387	11.9%	78	0.0%
50.1 - 60	8,492	4.7%	7,533	4.2%	959	0.5%
60.1 - 70	15,692	8.8%	12,761	7.1%	2,931	1.6%
70.1 - 80	13,494	7.5%	11,791	6.6%	1,703	1.0%
80.1 - 90	20,882	11.7%	19,208	10.7%	1,674	0.9%
90.1 - 100	20,236	11.3%	19,387	10.8%	849	0.5%
Total	179,234	100.0%	168,336	93.9%	10,898	6.1%

Virtually all people in the authority (95.4%) live within a 1-mile walk of a 3+ court sports hall. However, when the three halls which do not currently offer community use are taken out of the equation, the number of residents living within a 1-mile walk of a 3+ court sports hall decreases slightly to 93.9%.

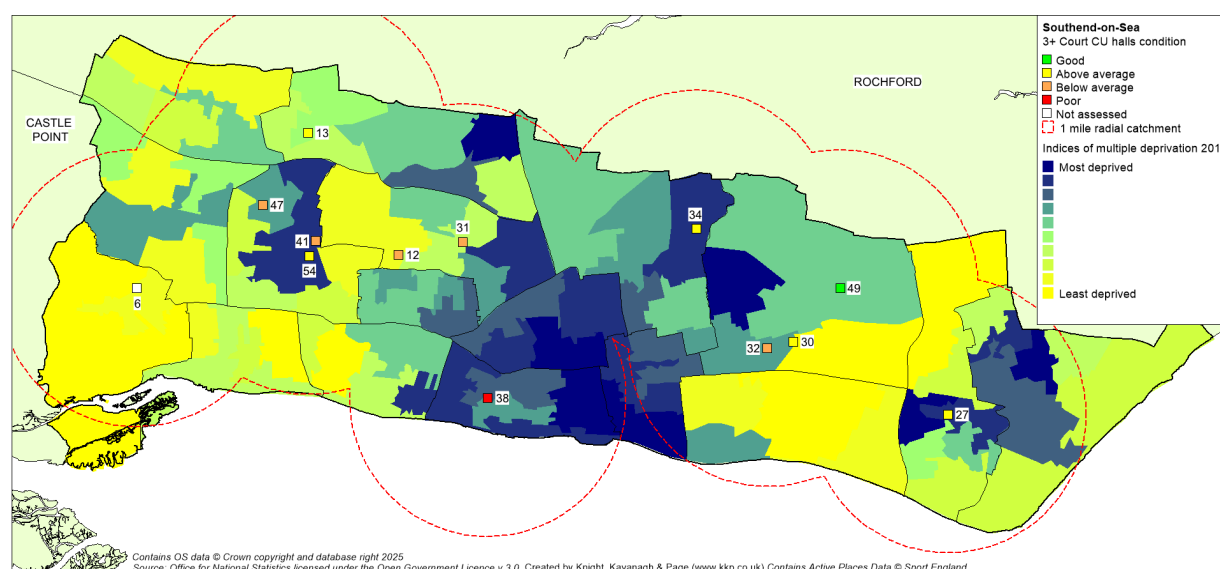


Figure 4.5: Community use sports halls (3+ courts with 1-mile radial)

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

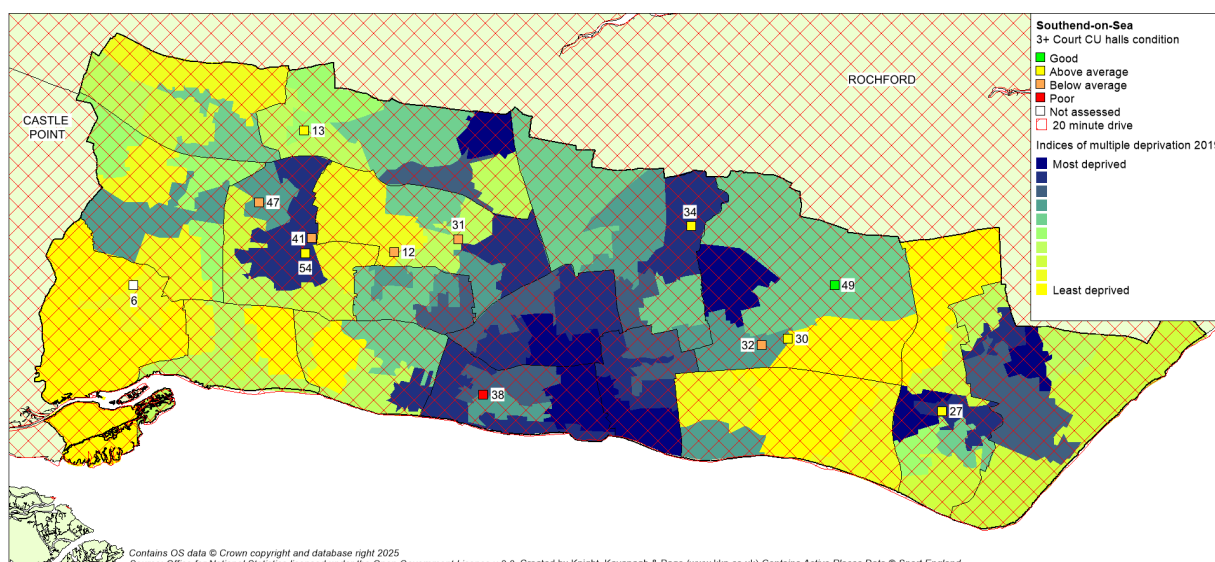


Figure 4.6: Community use sports halls with a 20-minute drivetime catchment.

All Southend-on-Sea residents live within a 20-minute drive of a sports hall of three or more courts with community use.

Facilities in neighbouring authorities

Accessibility is influenced by facilities located outside the authority, seven sports halls with 3+ courts are located within two miles (indicative of how far people may travel) of the Southend-on-Sea boundary. They offer 27 courts, 12 of these are in Castle Point and 15 in Rochford.

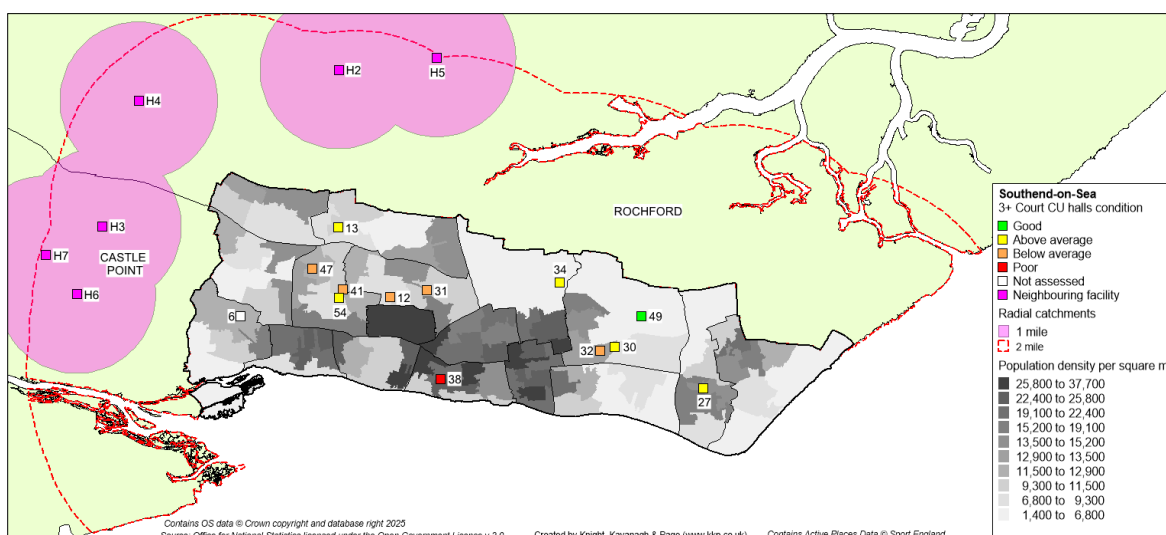


Figure 4.7: Community available sports halls (3 court+) within two miles of the SoS boundary

Table 4.8: Sports halls (3+ courts) located in neighbouring local authorities (2-mile catchment).

ID	Site	Courts	Access	District
H2	Clements Hall Leisure Centre	6	Pay and play	Rochford
H3	Deanes School Sports Centre	4	Sports club / CA	Castle Point
H4	Fitzwimarc School	5	Sports club / CA	Rochford
H5	King Edmund Business & Enterprise School	4	Sports club / CA	Rochford
H6	The King John School	4	Sports club / CA	Castle Point

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

H7	USP College (Seevic Campus)	4	Registered membership use	Castle Point
----	-----------------------------	---	---------------------------	--------------

Availability and facility management

Management and ownership vary. Southend-on-Sea City Council owns two 3+ courts sports halls, both of which are managed by Freedom Leisure. In general, school sports halls are owned and managed in-house, however, some opt for third party letting organisations manage the booking and staffing of facilities available for hire such as Southchurch High School.

Availability during the day and relevant programming can be important (and attractive) for residents who wish to use facilities at such times (e.g., older people and shift workers).

Of the 13 sites which offer community use, only two provide weekday daytime accessibility (Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre and David Lloyd Southend). Given the nature of school sites, their availability is limited to evenings and weekends. This affects the number of hours that Shoeburyness Leisure Centre provides to the local community because it is located in the grounds of Shoeburyness High School.

Given that the number of older people in the authority is increasing, providing adequate daytime available sports hall space is essential. David Lloyd Southend requires an (expensive) registered membership to gain access, which may not be affordable to many residents meaning only one sports hall is accessible via pay and play during weekday daytimes.

Table 4.9: Ownership and management of 3+ court sports hall facilities

Site name	Ownership	Management
Westcliff High School for Girls	Academy	In house
The St Christopher's School	Academy	In house
St Bernards High School	Academy	In house
Belfairs Academy	Academy	In house
David Lloyd (Southend)	Commercial	In house
Southend High School for Boys	Academy	In house
The Eastwood Academy	Academy	In house
Southend High School for Girls	Academy	In house
St Thomas More High School	Academy	In house
Thorpe Hall School	Academy	In house
Southchurch High School	Academy	School Plus
Cecil Jones Academy	Academy	In house
Westcliff High School for Boys	Academy	In house
Chase High School	Academy	In house
Shoeburyness Leisure Centre	Council	Freedom Leisure
Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre	Council	Freedom Leisure

As noted earlier, the following venues do not currently offer community use:

Westcliff High School for Girls has not provided community use in the sports hall since the new floor was installed in 2024. Management took the decision to stop this to prolong the life of the floor. Other facilities on site are made available to the community.

Similarly, in 2024, The Eastwood Academy discontinued community access to its sports hall.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

This decision was made due to concerns over cost-effectiveness, staffing challenges, and the increased wear and tear on the facilities. The school also report experienced repeated instances of property damage during community use. To preserve the quality of the sports hall for student activities, the Academy chose to prioritise pupil access and suspend external bookings.

Cecil Jones Academy did not respond to consultation request; however, no evidence could be found of community use taking place in the sports hall.

Table 4.10 overleaf details the total community use hours available for each sports hall. Figures are calculated using intelligence gathered via the audit and desk research. Table 4.11 details the used capacity at each site. The percentages have been determined based on booking information provided by the site information gained through consultation. It is not possible to exactly gauge used capacity due to the changing nature of bookings on a week-by-week basis, the seasonality of sports and the varied use of sports halls for school exams.

Table 4.10: Opening hours and activities in sports halls 3+ courts in Southend-on-Sea.

Total CU hours	Peak CU hours	Site	Courts	Main sports played
0	0	Westcliff High School for Girls	4	N/A
0	0	The Eastwood Academy	4	N/A
0	0	Cecil Jones Academy	4	N/A
20	20	Belfairs Academy	4	Football.
24	24	The St Christopher's School	3	Karate, cricket, basketball.
25	25	Southend High School for Girls	4	Football, athletics, dance.
31	31	St Bernards High School	4	Basketball.
32	32	Southend High School for Boys	5	Football, cricket.
35	35	Shoeburyness Leisure Centre	4	Badminton, basketball, table tennis.
45	41	St Thomas More High School	4	Football, futsal, badminton, cricket, basketball.
45	41	Thorpe Hall School	4	Badminton, basketball, archery.
45	41	Westcliff High School for Boys	4	Badminton, football, cricket.
49	41	Chase High School	4	Badminton, netball, combat sports.
53	41	Southchurch High School	4	Badminton, football.
102	46	Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre	8	Badminton, basketball, futsal, Pickleball, table tennis.
108	46	David Lloyd (Southend)	4	Badminton.

Desk research suggests that Belfairs Academy does provide limited community use despite it not responding to consultation requests. It is not available at weekends. St Bernards High School also does not provide access on Sundays. All other sites provide some level of community use seven days per week.

Used capacity

Non-technical site audits identify the used capacity of each sports hall. This is the percentage of available community use hours used. Sport England identifies 80% as a 'comfortably full' benchmark. For example, the 31 hours available at St Bernards High School are used for 30% of the time whereas the 41 hours at Southchurch High School are used 50% of the time.

Table 4.11: Known used capacity of sports halls with community use

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Used capacity (%)	Peak community use hours	Site
30	31	St Bernards High School
50	41	Southchurch High School
55	24	The St Christopher's School
60	25	Southend High School for Girls
60	41	Chase High School
65	32	Southend High School for Boys
75	41	St Thomas More High School
80	41	Westcliff High School for Boys
85	35	Shoeburyness Leisure Centre
85	46	Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre

(80% -Sport England's guidance threshold which is considered to be a "comfortably full" sports hall)

Representatives from Belfairs Academy, Thorpe Hall School and David Lloyd Southend did not confirm sports hall usage rates so an accurate used capacity could not be generated. It is estimated, based on timetabling on the David Lloyd website and the commercial nature of the business, that the used capacity rate of the sports hall at David Lloyd Southend is high.

St Bernards High School has the lowest levels of community use of all 3+court halls in Southend-on-Sea. It does not actively advertise and only has limited availability on weekends. It is likely that the poor quality of the sports hall has an adverse effect on demand levels. The school did not note any intent to significantly increase community use despite low usage.

The majority of schools operate at between 50-75% used capacity. Southend High School for Girls provides an option to extend community use hours, as it is currently only available for 25 hours a week during the peak period. This comprises three hours on weekday evenings and five hours on Saturday and Sundays. The St Christopher's School has similar opening hours and usage rates.

Southend High School for Girls has high demand for sports all space Monday to Saturday; however, it struggles to attract users to the site on Sundays. If Sunday was to be discounted, the hall would be operating closer to 80% used capacity. Similarly, Southchurch High School is close to fully booked Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, but receives fewer bookings later in the week. On a general note, schools report lower demand for facility hire at weekends than on weekday evenings.

Of the three facilities operating above Sport England's 80% threshold, two (Westcliff High School for Boys and Shoeburyness Leisure Centre) have scope to increase the number of community use hours for which they are available during the peak period. Shoeburyness Leisure Centre, in collaboration with the school, could look to reassess the current community use agreement to understand where further availability could be given to the general public.

Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre is operating at the maximum of 46 hours per week during the peak period and is well used at these times, evidencing its significance as a key strategic facility for the residents of Southend-on-Sea.

Three schools report struggling to attract users to hire the sports hall space due to the amount of time for which the facility is not available during exam season. This can be as many as 12 weeks per year, mostly in the build up to summer and post-Christmas. As a result, clubs often choose to access other facilities to ensure greater access. Schools which report this issue include:

- ◀ St Thomas More School.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

- ◀ Southend High School for Girls.
- ◀ St Bernards High School.

There is a need to seek solutions to this, to ensure continuity for clubs when they are at the peak playing season and to maximise income for school and long-term sustainability. An example of a solution could be lightweight foldaway desks and trolleys to make the manual tasks related to setting up/demounting desk and chairs for exams much easier.

Future developments

The audit did not identify any developments in which sports hall provision would likely increase or decrease.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

4.2: FPM

An FPM report was commissioned by Southend-on-Sea City Council in 2026 to better understand the impact of future population growth on sports hall provision across the City. To do this, three scenarios or 'runs' were carried out:

- ◀ Run 1 – A baseline assessment of provision in 2026.
- ◀ Run 2 – Forward assessment of demand for sports halls and its distribution, based on projected changes in population between 2026 and 2045, including 9,800 dwellings identified in the Local Plan (low growth scenario).
- ◀ Run 3 – Forward assessment of demand for sports halls and its distribution, based on projected changes in population between 2026 and 2045, including a further 14,700 dwellings identified in the Local Plan (high growth scenario).

The assessment considers how existing sports hall provision will respond to future population growth and associated increases in demand. No additional sports halls were included within the modelling scenarios, meaning that the ability of the existing network of facilities to accommodate future demand was tested under both low and high growth assumptions.

Headline strategic overview

Southend-on-Sea benefits from a strong supply of sports hall provision and is well placed to accommodate both current and future demand. The existing network of public, educational and commercial facilities is capable of meeting almost all demand in 2026 and remains resilient under both future growth scenarios to 2045.

The modelling indicates that the City maintains sufficient overall capacity even under the high growth scenario. Demand is projected to increase modestly despite significant planned housing development, and the existing supply is able to accommodate these changes without requiring additional sports hall provision. Consequently, unmet demand remains low across all scenarios and the vast majority of demand continues to be satisfied within the City.

While overall provision is sufficient, several facilities are already operating at uncomfortably high levels of utilisation during peak periods. Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre, together with a number of educational sports halls, experiences particularly high demand and is projected to remain heavily used throughout the assessment period. This highlights the importance of maximising community access to educational facilities and improving the balance of demand across the sports hall network.

A key strategic issue for Southend-on-Sea is the ageing nature of its sports hall stock. Although the current network performs well, many facilities will require refurbishment and modernisation over the plan period to maintain their attractiveness, efficiency and ability to retain participation. Protecting and enhancing educational provision will therefore be essential to sustaining the City's overall sports hall offer.

Key findings

The supply of sports hall provision in Southend-on-Sea remains consistent across all modelling scenarios, with 69.6 badminton court equivalents available in total and 57.5 courts available for community use during the weekly peak period. Approximately 17% of total provision is unavailable for community use, reflecting restrictions on access at some facilities. Educational sports halls form the backbone of provision, accounting for 72% of all available capacity, while Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre provides a further 21% and commercial facilities contribute the remaining 7%.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Population growth is projected to vary depending on the development scenario. Under the low growth scenario, the population increases by 4% between 2026 and 2045, whilst the high growth scenario results in a 10% increase. Despite this population growth, demand is projected to fall slightly under the low growth scenario and increase modestly under the high growth scenario. Overall demand equates to 63% of available supply in 2026, 62% under the low growth scenario and 66% under the high growth scenario, indicating that the City retains comfortable overall capacity throughout the study period.

Southend-on-Sea performs strongly in meeting demand, with 96% of all demand satisfied in every modelling scenario. The number of visits accommodated during the weekly peak period remains consistently high, with 12,799 visits met in 2026, 12,527 under the low growth scenario and 13,386 under the high growth scenario. Retention rates are particularly strong, with 94% of satisfied demand being met within the City boundary in all scenarios. This equates to 12,003 retained visits in 2026, increasing to 12,601 visits under the high growth scenario.

Unmet demand remains very low throughout the assessment period, representing only 4% of total demand. This equates to 1.7 badminton courts in 2026 and 1.9 courts in both future scenarios. Importantly, all unmet demand results from residents being located beyond reasonable travel distances from facilities, rather than as a consequence of insufficient capacity within the sports hall network.

Overall utilisation levels are moderate across the City, with facilities operating at 67% of capacity in 2026, 66% under the low growth scenario and 70% under the high growth scenario. However, these district-wide figures mask localised pressure at key venues. Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre is estimated to be uncomfortably full during peak periods in both the baseline and high growth scenarios. In addition, two educational sports halls are projected to operate at uncomfortably high utilisation levels across all scenarios, highlighting the importance of maintaining and potentially expanding community access at these sites.

Interventions and next steps

The strategic focus for Southend-on-Sea should be on maximising the effectiveness of the existing sports hall network rather than providing additional facilities. The modelling demonstrates that current provision is sufficient to meet demand under both projected growth scenarios to 2045. However, achieving this outcome depends upon maintaining and, where possible, increasing community access to educational sports halls.

Given that educational facilities provide almost three-quarters of all available capacity, securing long-term community use is essential. Community Use Agreements (CUAs) should be maintained or established where they do not already exist, providing a formal mechanism to protect public access and ensure that educational facilities continue to play their vital role within the wider sports hall network. Sport England will continue to advise on requirements for any new or replacement provision and the Council should actively monitor the delivery of agreed community access arrangements.

Particular attention should be given to Southend High School for Boys and Belfairs Academy. Both sites operate at high utilisation levels but retain significant scope to increase community availability. Southend High School for Boys is the second largest sports hall in the City and serves an area of consistently high demand within Westcliff-on-Sea. The hall is currently available for 32 hours during the weekly peak period and could potentially increase availability by up to nine additional hours. Belfairs Academy is the only sports hall serving Leigh-on-Sea and currently offers just 20 hours of peak-time availability despite strong local demand. Expanding access at both sites would help redistribute demand, reduce pressure on heavily used facilities and strengthen overall network resilience.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

No additional capacity can be created at Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre through extended opening hours, as the facility is already available for the maximum 46 hours during the weekly peak period. Consequently, reducing pressure on the centre will depend upon improving utilisation and accessibility elsewhere within the network.

Modernisation of the existing sports hall stock should also be a priority. While several older sports halls have already been refurbished, many educational facilities constructed during the early 2000s have yet to be modernised. As usage increases under future growth scenarios, refurbishment will become increasingly important to maintain quality, attract participation and sustain community use. The Council may therefore wish to consider investment in educational facilities in return for secured long-term community access.

Thorpe Hall School warrants particular consideration given its location within the proposed Land North of Southend development area. As the only sports hall serving this major growth location, utilisation is projected to increase significantly under the high growth scenario. By 2045 the facility will be approaching 30 years old and is likely to require modernisation to continue meeting the needs of existing and future residents effectively.

Overall, the FPM modelling demonstrates that Southend-on-Sea has a robust sports hall network capable of accommodating future growth. The key priorities are protecting community access, increasing utilisation of educational facilities where appropriate, and implementing a programme of refurbishment and modernisation to ensure the network remains fit for purpose over the long term. This is supported by KKP audit findings, which indicate a need to protect existing facilities whilst improving the quality of facilities on offer prior to considering opportunities to develop new provision.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

4.3: Demand

NGB consultation

National governing bodies of sport (NGBs) and active clubs were consulted to ascertain current use, participation trends and the needs/challenges facing sports halls in the area.

Badminton England (BE)

BE is the national governing body of sport (NGB) for badminton. Its Discover Badminton 2017-2025 strategy presents a vision for the sport to become one of the nation's most popular and to consistently win medals at world, Olympic and Paralympic levels. To achieve this, it has identified three key objectives:

- ❖ Grow grassroots participation.
- ❖ Create a system that identifies and develops player potential to deliver consistent world class performers.
- ❖ Built financial resilience to become a well governed organisation and demonstrate compliance with the UK governance code.

It applies a specific strategy model to assess court quality and sufficiency by local authority. the statistics for Southend-on-Sea are presented below.

Table 4.11: Overall statistics for Southend-on-Sea

Description	Number
Number of sites	21
Number of courts	76
Private use courts	22
Supply and demand balance (2019)	-1.3 courts
Supply and demand balance (2030)	-2.4 courts

Badminton England facilities modelling indicates a small current and future shortfall of badminton courts. It should be noted, however, that KKP's needs assessment differs from the findings of the BE model.

While BE's model assumes that there are 54 available courts, KKP's assessment only identifies 30. The reason for this is that the KKP audit only covers 3+ court sports hall facilities, whereas BE's figures include facilities with one and two courts. The facility database used by Badminton England is taken from 2019, which does not accurately reflect the current picture.

In terms of workforce, Badminton England reports having fewer registered qualified coaches in Southend-on-Sea than the national average per district. It has three coaches (average; four), two 'No Strings coordinators' (average; four), three 'SmashUp! Activators' (average; three) and two 'The Racket Pack Endorsed' (average; three).

Consultation with BE suggests that there is strong demand for badminton in Southend-on-Sea. It has eight affiliated clubs plus five unaffiliated (five more than the national average per local authority).

Club consultation

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Only one of the 13 badminton clubs responded: Leighway Badminton Club. It owns and manages a dedicated 2-court badminton facility; Chalkwell Badminton Centre which is located in Southend-on-Sea. It is available for hire to other badminton clubs in the area when it is not in use by the Leighway club itself.

Leighway Badminton Club has approximately 450 members, a high proportion of whom are casual players with club membership to access the facility. It previously accommodated casual pay-and-play users; however, this became problematic due to users damaging the court and compromising the security of the facility. Now, members access the facility on a keyholder basis and book the courts they require online.

The facility itself is beginning to require some investment. A new sprung floor was installed in 2015, which is now starting to lift and shift. The line markings were refreshed in 2021, and the roof has been repaired to stop a couple of leaks that developed due to the age of the building. LED lights have been installed, but the heating system is dated, and the boiler will need to be replaced within the next couple of years.

It has considered whether to develop a third court on-site. This would involve an extension to the current building, resulting in the loss of some parking spaces. This raised concerns with the Council as roadside parking in the area is already heavily congested. The clubs based in the authority that hire Leighway's facility include:

- ◀ UK Changra Badminton Club.
- ◀ Westcliff Badminton Club.
- ◀ Southend Badminton Club.
- ◀ Eastwood Badminton Club.
- ◀ Mandeville Badminton Club.
- ◀ Eastwave Badminton Club.

The facility also attracts club users from outside of Southend-on-Sea. These include Chelmsford Casuals which hires it on Thursday evenings.

While all other clubs were invited to take part in the consultation because of the poor response rate additional desk research was undertaken to gauge badminton supply and demand in the authority. Table 4.12 outlines each club's home venue.

Table 4.12: A schedule of the venues currently used by badminton clubs in Southend-on-Sea

Club	Venue
Highlands Badminton Academy	Belfairs Academy
Eastwood Badminton Club	Eastwood Academy Chalkwell Badminton Centre
Westcliff Badminton Club	Westcliff High School for Boys Chalkwell Badminton Centre
S.M.A.S.H. Junior Badminton Club	Southend High School for Girls.
Chase Badminton Club	Chase High School
Pheonix Flames	Southend High School for Girls
Southend Badminton Club	Southend High School for Boys.
Southend & District Badminton Club.	Southend High School for Boys.
Eastwave Badminton Club	Chalkwell Badminton Centre
UK Changra Badminton Club	Chalkwell Badminton Centre
Mandeville Badminton Club	Chalkwell Badminton Centre
Southwold Badminton Club.	Chalkwell Badminton Centre

The seven clubs utilising Chalkwell Badminton Centre for some or all of their access to provision highlights the importance of Leighway Badminton Club as a strategic facility for the

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

sport in the area and the need to ensure that the club is able to manage the centre's ongoing upkeep.

Netball

The England Netball (EN) ten-year 'Adventure Strategy' for the game along with a new organisation brand identity was launched in 2021. This shares a purpose-led ambition for the game, to build on the momentum the sport has seen in recent years and to take it to new heights for the decade ahead. The strategy outlines its intention to:

- ▶ Accelerate the development and growth of the game to every level, from grassroots to the elite.
- ▶ Elevate the visibility of the sport, and;
- ▶ Lead a movement to impact lives on and beyond the court.

At the heart of its purpose, EN commits to remaining dedicated to increasing opportunities for women and girls to play the game as a priority and to work to address the gender participation gap in the sport which has widened since the Covid -19 Pandemic. Underpinned by years of engaging with and delivering netball for female communities, EN pledges to understand, support and nurture women and girls more deeply at every life stage, at every age.

It is committed to opening the sport to new audiences in every community, so netball better represents the rich diversity of England and continues to evolve, adapt and thrive in the future, helping to create a truly inclusive sport for all where everyone can belong, flourish and soar. A recent partnership announcement with England Men's and Mixed Netball Association to help develop and grow male participation in the game, supports this commitment as EN pledges to promote difference and embrace the opportunity to make the sport available to all.

Transforming netball for children and young people is a strategic priority to help protect the future of the sport. EN is working with schools and policy makers to extend physical literacy within, and after the school day with a focus on netball specific provision. It is committed to accelerating the expansion of its Bee Netball programme for young children, whilst supporting teens and young women to stay in the game.

The elite game is also a focus. EN's ambition is that the Vitality Roses will be the best female sports team in the world. It thus has to support the national team to win consistently on the world stage and to have an outstanding talent pathway in place to fuel sustainable successes on court and set new standards. Professionalisation of the game over the next decade is a priority – with a specific focus on growing world-leading international and domestic competitions and events and creating more careers in the sport.

The Adventure Strategy was developed on the back of feedback from the Netball Family, with over 3,000 members and stakeholders consulted as part of the strategic process to understand what they wanted netball to 'look like' in 2031, the plan is aspirational and ambitious and sees EN pledge to continue as a trailblazer for women's sport.

Facility development

Facility development aspirations stated within EN's Strategy are to:

- ▶ Take a fresh look at the spaces required to support the sport, creating accessible places in every community to allow netball to be incorporated into how and where women and girls live their lives.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

- ◆ Protect, enhance, and extend the network of homes that house the sport at a local and regional level.
- ◆ Develop an elite domestic professional competition that supports full-time athletes underpinned by a world-class infrastructure and environments.

EN encourages local authorities to adopt policies for indoor sports facilities strategies that:

- ◆ Facilitate informal netball activity within neighbourhood multi-use games areas. neighbourhood equipped areas for play (NEAPs).
- ◆ Incorporates the cultural and health needs of women and girls within any designs for improved or new facilities.
- ◆ Protects and enhances netball facilities within all primary and secondary school environments so they offer a positive first experience of the sport for students and the wider community during out-of-school hours.
- ◆ Supports the installation of floodlights on outdoor courts to increase all-year-round use.
- ◆ Facilitates the development of netball growth programmes, club training and competition within public leisure centres.
- ◆ Where appropriate, supports development of netball homes and performance environments to enable local women and girls to pursue a career in netball as an elite athlete, official, coach or administrator.

EN reports that the sport is growing fast nationally. Its YouGov¹³ report indicated that the 2019 World Cup inspired 160,000 adult women to take up the sport. In addition, at the time when the report research was undertaken, 71% of clubs reported that more people had shown an interest in playing netball than before the tournament started.

Netball is played both indoors and outdoors. For outdoor provision please refer to the 2026 Southend-on-Sea Playing Pitch Strategy.

Most affiliated netball in Southend-on-Sea is taking place on outdoor courts. No walking or Back to Netball sessions are currently being delivered in the authority. England Netball was contacted to discuss the lack of NGB led netball session in the Authority, however, no response was received.

Only one club was identified during the audit: Pink Spirit Netball Club. It did acknowledge KKP's consultation request but stated it had no need for indoor facilities as it competes in the Southend and District Netball League, a central venue league currently operating out of The Deanes in South Benfleet, Castle Point.

Commercial netball leagues are present in Southend-on-Sea. Play Netball operates a league on Monday evenings at Westcliff High School for Girls, predominantly on the outdoor courts.

Basketball (BBE)

BBE is the NGB for the sport in England. Its latest strategy, Transforming Basketball in Britain Together (2016 - 2028) aims to improve basketball from grassroots to GB teams, by adopting a whole sport approach and working closely with the basketball community. To achieve this, a series of key objectives have been identified:

- ◆ Develop successful GB teams.
- ◆ Build high-quality men's and women's leagues and teams.
- ◆ Support talented players, officials and coaches and coach development pathways.
- ◆ Drive increased awareness and profile of the sport.

¹³ <https://www.uksport.gov.uk/news/2019/10/02/netball-world-cup>

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

- ◀ Increase opportunities to play the game at every level.
- ◀ Transform the leadership and culture of the sport.

To increase opportunity to play the game at every level, BBE has produced a facilities strategy which aims to create community hubs including, where appropriate, arenas that sit at the heart of communities and are homes for the leading British Basketball League (BBL), Women's British Basketball League (WBBL) and community clubs. The stated intent is that as part of its facilities strategy implementation, BBE will regularly monitor provision in schools, colleges, universities, clubs and at local authority sites and identify any gaps, looking to improve connections between these organisations to increase the availability and affordability of facilities of the right quality.

BBE reports having one affiliated club in the authority; Southend Scorpions.

Club consultation

Scorpions Basketball Club makes use of several sites across Southend-on-Sea. These include both public leisure sites, St Bernards High School and the outdoor courts at Chalkwell Park.

It has accessed Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre for several years. It previously had use of council-provided portable baskets that supported national-level competition. The baskets were becoming worn due to general wear and tear. Whilst the club was in the process of sourcing a contractor to repair the baskets, a leak occurred in the storage cupboard which caused the baskets to rust. The previous leisure operator disposed of the baskets before they could be repaired. Scorpions is currently fundraising to invest in new portable baskets.

The current court is only capable of accommodating junior level basketball as the run off space is insufficient to cater for the adult game. Also, the changing rooms are a shared space with other users, which is problematic for delivering junior basketball matches. Ideally, the club would like to be able to access a facility with larger run off space and either a changing village or separate changing rooms during junior sessions.

Its sessions at Shoeburyness Leisure Centre are well attended. It has previously had issues with the quality of the floor at this site; however, recent repairs have remedied this. It reports the condition of the changing facilities at Shoeburyness Leisure Centre to be poor.

Scorpions has invested in improving the equipment at St Bernards High School. It is unable to access the changing provision at this site as they are on a different alarm system from the sports hall. It delivers most of its younger age group basketball sessions at this site, sometimes hiring the facility for five hours per evening.

It delivers free to attend sessions at Chalkwell Park, particularly during the summer months. However, several baskets have been lost due to an incident which took place in the park in summer 2025. This has substantially reduced the number of courts available. Being unable to deliver as many sessions at this facility has stunted club growth as this is a key recruitment tactic. It currently has approximately 290 active members. It is awaiting confirmation from the council with regard to the replacement or relocation of the courts currently out of use.

Overall, Scorpions is content with its current levels of access to facilities in Southend but requires access to club changing spaces, better run off space and more access to outdoor courts to deliver free sessions in the community.

Indoor cricket

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

The Essex Cricket Board is the NGB for cricket in Southend-on-Sea. Working closely with the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), it is responsible for the management and development of every form of recreational cricket for men, women and children in the county. Indoor cricket primarily takes place in two forms: winter training and indoor competitions.

Indoor training primarily takes place throughout the winter months in the build up to the cricket season. Clubs seek indoor facilities to prepare for the start of the season, making use of dedicated indoor cricket facilities or sports halls with sufficient space. Clubs will also hire these spaces at short notice during the summer when weather conditions do not allow the use of outdoor training facilities.

Where clubs use 4-court sports halls for winter nets, there tends to be insufficient space for pace bowlers to complete a full length run up. In addition, floor quality at education sites is often problematic due to a lack of bounce in comparison to dedicated indoor cricket facilities. As a result, many clubs travel further afield to access good quality facilities. Indoor cricket nets were found to be available at the following education sites based on desk research and consultation with Essex Cricket.

- ✦ St Christopher School – No known current use.
- ✦ Southend High School for Boys – Used by Eastwood Cricket Club.
- ✦ Westcliff High School for Boys – Westcliff-on-Sea Cricket Club.
- ✦ Thorpe Hall School – Old Southendian and Southchurch Cricket Club.
- ✦ St Thomas More High School – No known current use.

Indoor cricket competitions are most often played between two teams of six or eight players. It can take place in any suitably sized multi-purpose sports hall, offering amateur and professional cricketers an option to play the game competitively during winter months.

No indoor cricket competition takes place in Southend-on-Sea, however, four clubs based in the authority compete in the South Essex Cricket Participation Group Senior Indoor League. The Southend-on-Sea clubs which competed in the 2024 winter season were:

- ✦ Westcliff-on-Sea CC.
- ✦ Mount CC.
- ✦ Leigh on Sea CC.
- ✦ Eastwood CC.

The 2025 South Essex Cricket Participation Group Senior Indoor League is due to begin in October 2025. It previously took place at Westcliff High School for Boys.

Volleyball

The audit identified six halls capable of accommodating volleyball in Southend-on-Sea. These are located at:

- ✦ Hamstel Junior School - A 2 badminton court hall with volleyball lines, used solely for educational purposes.
- ✦ The Eastwood Academy – This facility does not currently receive any club use.
- ✦ Shoeburyness Leisure Centre – Used by Southend Volleyball Club.
- ✦ Southend High School for Girls – This facility does not currently receive any club use.
- ✦ Westcliff High School for Boys - This facility does not currently receive any club use.
- ✦ Belfairs Academy - This facility does not currently receive any club use.

The audit identified one club – Southend Volleyball Club. Consultation with the Club indicates growing local demand for the sport. Its membership has doubled since 2023 and is now c. 25

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

players. It currently uses the facilities at Shoeburyness Youth Centre, which is located on the same site at Shoeburyness LC; however, it recognises the need to secure additional court space if growth continues at the current rate.

Ideally, the Club would like to access the Shoeburyness Leisure Centre on weekday evenings, but high current other demand for the sports hall prevents this. As a result, sessions are held on Saturdays. It is keen to introduce additional weekday sessions to support continued growth.

Futsal

Futsal is recognised within Essex FA's #MovingForward 2028 strategy as an important development format that can broaden participation and strengthen technical skills, particularly for young players. The County FA highlights the value of offering diverse and flexible forms of the game, and futsal is identified as a format that supports player development, provides safe indoor opportunities, and helps clubs engage participants during winter months or where outdoor pitch access is limited.

Essex FA's priorities emphasise improving access to appropriate facilities, including indoor sports halls that can accommodate futsal programming. The strategy also identifies the need to support clubs to diversify their offer, with futsal positioned as a format that can help clubs grow participation among children, female players and under-represented groups.

Workforce development is also a strategic focus. Essex FA aims to strengthen coaching and refereeing pathways across all formats, including futsal, where specialist training is required. Increasing the availability of qualified futsal coaches and referees will be important to sustaining and expanding provision.

The audit identified two futsal groups currently participating in activity in Southend-on-Sea. Futsal on Sea delivers sessions in the sports hall at St Thomas More High School on Friday evenings. Sporting Club Southend is a competitive club based at Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre.

A national operator, AF Futsal, has added a Southend site to its website and is currently taking registrations of interest, however, no detail with regard to facility usage has been released.

All clubs were approached as part of the consultation; however, no responses were received.

Archery

The audit identified one archery club; however, its current activities do not take place in Southend-on-Sea. The summary (below) outlines the reasons for this.

Southend Archery Club has experienced steady growth over the years and now has 65 members. While it has access to a large outdoor field within Southend-on-Sea (suitable for up to 100 archers during the summer months; May-September) indoor provision remains a significant challenge.

It requires a minimum of 30 yards of uninterrupted space for safe shooting, including overshoot and standing room. It currently uses the projectile room at Clements Hall (Rochford) which can only accommodate 32 people and is often overcrowded. Storage here is also an issue, as archery equipment is bulky and not easily transported. Moving to another venue would probably necessitate the purchase of a storage container.

Due to the lack of suitable affordable indoor facilities in Southend-on-Sea, the club has had to rely on venues outside the authority including King Edmund School in Rochford. However, this

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

space is frequently unavailable due to school exams. Other potential venues, like Thorpe Hall School, have become financially unviable due to high hire costs, and Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre cannot accommodate archery due to the safety restrictions that prevent hall sharing.

The club currently operates on Wednesday evenings and Sunday mornings but would ideally like to expand to three sessions per week. However, this is limited by both venue availability and the capacity of its small volunteer team. Despite having a balanced and inclusive membership, including six members under 21 years of age, it is unable to accept new members and has a waiting list of around 200 people.

4.4: Future demand and the Sport England Sports Facilities Calculator (SFC)

The SFC helps quantify additional demand for community sports facilities generated by new growth populations, development and regeneration areas. It is used to estimate facility needs for whole area populations but should not be applied for strategic gap analysis as it has no spatial dimension and does not take account of:

- ✦ Facility location compared to demand.
- ✦ Capacity and availability of facilities – opening hours.
- ✦ Cross boundary movement of demand.
- ✦ Travel networks and topography.
- ✦ Attractiveness of facilities.

Table 4.13: Sport England: SFC

Factor	Current (2022)	Future (2045)
ONS population projections	180,884	180,738
Population decrease	-	146
Facilities to meet change in demand	-	No change
Estimated Cost	-	-

(Build costs as of Q3 2024)

Utilising ONS population projections, Southend-on-Sea's population is set to decrease slightly by 2045 due to a decrease in those aged 0-15 and 25-54. As such, SFC calculations assume that no additional sports hall space will be required by this date – presuming that the current sports hall stock remains available for community use.

ONS population growth does not account for growth generated through housing growth (shown in Table 4.14). It is, thus, useful to show the demand generated via both SFC and housing growth. Given the significant housing growth expected in Southend-on-Sea, it is calculated that there will be a need for c.8.67 additional courts by 2045.

Table 4.14: Strategic housing impact- proposed allocations

Housing growth increases from strategic sites (500+ houses to 2045)	Average number of people per owner occupying household (England)	Population increase due to proposed housing	Additional sports hall space required	Estimated cost (£)
14,724	2.4	35,338	8.67 / 2.17 halls	£6,901,999

(Build costs as of Q3 2024)

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

The largest growth area is that of Southend-on-Sea city centre. Current demand rates within this and the wider Southend-on-Sea area are low enough to accommodate the growth in demand, however, this should be continually monitored, particularly where the quality of sports hall provision improves. In the meantime, prioritising the improvement of existing sports hall space should be at the forefront of planning decisions.

Cross border housing growth with Rochford would likely lead to an increase in demand for sites with Southend-on-Sea due to the transport links favouring travel into Southend. This should be monitored to better understand the extent of demand from potential housing growth sites in this area.

4.5: Summary of key facts and issues

Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	Southend-on-Sea has 34 sports halls containing 86 badminton courts. 16 sports halls have 3+ courts equating to 68 badminton courts.	Sports halls are generally well located in line with the areas of higher population density. The increase in population in the central Southend area due to housing growth will require further provision to be developed.
Quality	Two sports halls are rated good quality, five are above average, six are below average and one is poor. Two could not be assessed.	Investment is needed in the below average/ poor-quality sports halls. This is particularly relevant at sports halls with lower used capacities as this could be hindering demand levels. The two public leisure halls are both above average in quality, however, the age of both means that regular refurbishment is needed to retain quality.
Accessibility	93.9% of the population lives within one mile of a community available sports hall. 94% of residents live within a 20-minute drive of a sports hall with community use.	Accessibility levels are strong in Southend-on-Sea. The audit identified some evidence of imported demand from neighbouring authorities.
Availability (Management and usage)	Thirteen 3+ court halls provide some level of community use, all have some level of spare capacity. Three facilities are operating at Sport England's 'comfortably full' threshold of 80%+ used capacity. Both public leisure centre halls are well used.	Ensure schools continue to offer peak time availability to local clubs. Consider options to extend school community use hours where used capacity is high, yet peak period availability (number of hours) is low e.g. Southend High School for Girls. Consider (with Freedom Leisure and Shoeburyness High School) options to extend community use hours in the sports hall at Shoeburyness Leisure Centre during quieter school access periods. Several clubs report that across the schools-based stock the volume of sports hall time lost to exams is having a negative impact on facility hire. A solution is required to improve access to provision for clubs.

Strategic summary

- ♦ Improve the quality of below average and poor sports halls. This is particularly important at sites where poor facility quality is adversely affecting facility hire (such as St Bernards High School).
- ♦ Education sites provide a significant volume of sports hall space during peak times. Relationships between clubs, NGBs and schools should be maintained to ensure accessibility remains high. The number of weeks for which these halls are unavailable

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

during exam season is an active disincentive to clubs from using the facilities. Work should be undertaken with schools to determine whether more flexibility could be applied during these periods and to investigating alternatives to simply closing the whole space off for exams at these times.

- ◀ Daytime access to sports hall space is limited. Only one public sports hall (Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre) is available in the daytime. Policy related to sports hall use at Shoeburyness Leisure Centre should be reassessed to determine whether there are any options/slots for public access on weekday mornings and afternoons.
- ◀ There is scope to better support clubs and the participation of traditional sports hall sports. This needs to be in collaboration with NGBs. This could include:
 - Supporting Leighway Badminton Club to maintain (and potentially extend) Chalkwell Badminton Centre. A future application to develop a third court on site should be considered if peak-period demand remains high.
 - Supporting Southend Scorpions to replace the portable basketball hoops which allow its teams to play national level basketball. In the long-term, should new provision be developed, ensure that the design includes adequate run off space for basketball.
- ◀ Utilising sports hall space for introductory netball sessions (such as back to netball and walking netball). This requires England Netball involvement to generate increased interest. Volleyball and archery also require access to further provision.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

SECTION 5: SWIMMING POOLS

A swimming pool is defined as an “enclosed area of water, specifically maintained for all forms of water-based sport and recreation”. It includes indoor and outdoor pools, freeform leisure pools and specific diving tanks used for general swimming, teaching, training and diving. Many small pools are used solely for recreational swimming and will not necessarily need to strictly follow the NGB recommendations. It is, however, generally recommended that standard dimensions are used to allow appropriate levels of competition and training and to help meet safety standards. Relatively few pools need to be designed to full competition standards or include spectator facilities.

Training for competition, low-level synchronised swimming, and water polo can all take place in a 25m pool. With modest spectator seating, pools can also accommodate competitive events in these activities. Diving from boards, advanced synchronised swimming and more advanced sub-aqua training require deeper water. These can all be accommodated in one pool tank, which ideally should be in addition to the main pool.

The NGB responsible for administering diving, swimming, synchronised swimming and water polo in England is Swim England.

Swim England’s report ‘A Decade of Decline: The Future of Swimming Pools in England’ provides a national analysis of the current swimming pool stock across England. It notes that the average age of a pool built from 1960 onwards is 43 years. On this basis it suggests that many of these pools are now coming to the end of their lifespan.

Many pool operators were placed in a serious financial situation during the pandemic, when many local authorities provided emergency financial support through direct grants, deferred payments or loans to subsidise pool operators who had suffered loss of income due to pool closures.

UK Government’s £100 million National Leisure Recovery Fund also provided assistance to enable pools to re-open once restrictions had been lifted. Despite this, Swim England reports that 206 pools (including 68 public pools) closed, either permanently or temporarily over the period of the Pandemic.

In preparing for the future, Swim England recommend that local authorities conduct analysis of their pool stock to understand if they have the right pools in the right places to meet the needs of the local community. In the light of leisure facilities accounting for over 40% of some councils’ direct carbon emissions it advocates capital investment into renewal of pool stock in order to support efforts to reach net zero targets, alongside combating the predicted overall future deficit of water space nationally.

Locally, Southend has lower levels of children in school years 7 and 8 who can tread water compared to the national average. For the same age group, 72% can swim 25 metres unaided, which is in line with the national average but still leaves room for improvement. This is the only age group not currently performing above the national average for swimming unaided.

5.1: Supply

This assessment is mostly concerned with larger pools available for community use (no restrictions to accessing the pool as a result of membership criteria). As such, those less than 160m² (e.g., 20m x 4 lanes) water space and/or located at private member clubs are deemed to offer limited value in relation to community use and delivery of outcomes related to health and deprivation. It is recognised that smaller pools can accommodate learning/ teaching sessions, but they are, for modelling/needs assessment purposes, deemed unable to offer a full swim

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

programme and, thus, eliminated from the supply evaluation, when considering accessibility and availability later in this section.

Quantity

The audit (including all pools irrespective of size and access) identifies 21 at 14 sites including seven main pools, one diving pool, six learner/teaching pools, six lidos and one leisure pool. Most pools are located in areas of lower population density.

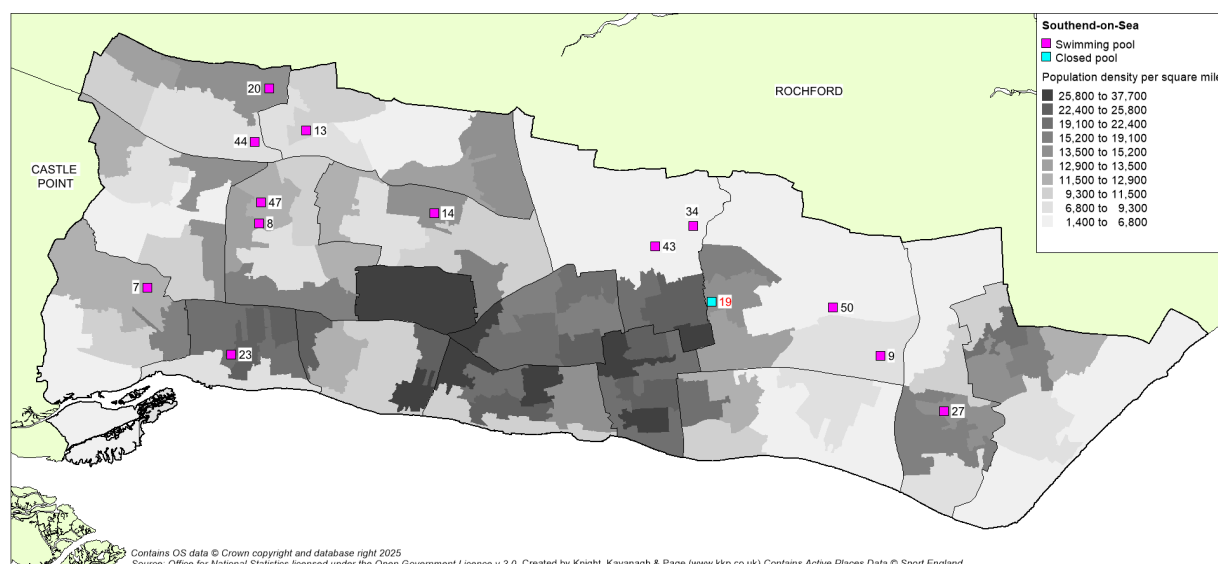


Figure 5.1: All swimming pools in Southend-on-Sea

Table 5.1: All swimming pools in Southend-on-Sea

ID	Site	Type	Lanes	Length	Area
7	Belfairs Swim Centre	Main/general	4	25	200
7	Belfairs Swim Centre	Learner/teaching/training	0	10	80
8	Blenheim Primary School and Children's Centre	Lido	4	6	60
9	Bournes Green Junior School	Lido	0	15	90
13	David Lloyd (Southend)	Main/general	3	25	300
13	David Lloyd (Southend)	Learner/teaching/training	1	13	39
13	David Lloyd (Southend)	Lido	5	20	200
13	David Lloyd (Southend)	Lido	0	10	50
14	Earls Hall Primary School	Learner/teaching/training	0	16	112
19	Hamstel Junior School	Main/general	6	20	220
20	Heycroft Primary School	Lido	0	14	98
23	Leigh North Street Primary School	Learner/teaching/training	0	15	105
27	Shoeburyness Leisure Centre	Main/general	4	20	140
27	Shoeburyness Leisure Centre	Learner/teaching/training	0	10	70
34	Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre	Main/general	8	25	400
34	Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre	Diving	0	20	340
34	Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre	Leisure pool	0	10	80
43	Temple Sutton Primary School	Lido	0	15	120
44	The Eastwood Academy	Main/general	4	18	144
47	The St Christopher's School	Learner/teaching/training	0	7	25
50	TruGym (Thorpe Bay)	Main/general	2	17	119

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

The largest pool is located at Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre. It also has a 340m² diving pool (which is the second largest pool in the authority) and a learner/teaching pool. Its site has a total of 820m² of water space (27% of the city's water provision) and is a key strategic site for swimming.

Lidos are not included from this point in the assessment. It is recognised that they can offer a flexible programme of learn to swim, casual swimming and competitive club swimming, however their availability is limited normally to spring/summer opening hours - which is the case in Southend-on-Sea. Stand-alone smaller/learner teaching pools smaller than 20m in length or 160m² total area are also discounted. They are, however important particularly where they accommodate swimming lessons or, as is the case at the public leisure sites, underpin flexible programming and income generation.

Once lidos and smaller pools are removed from the analysis, six pools across five sites remain.

Quality

Of these, three are above average in quality, two are below average, and one is currently closed. KKP's non-technical visual assessments include a review of changing provision, as this plays a significant role in influencing and attracting users. In general, changing facilities are of a similar standard to the pool quality.

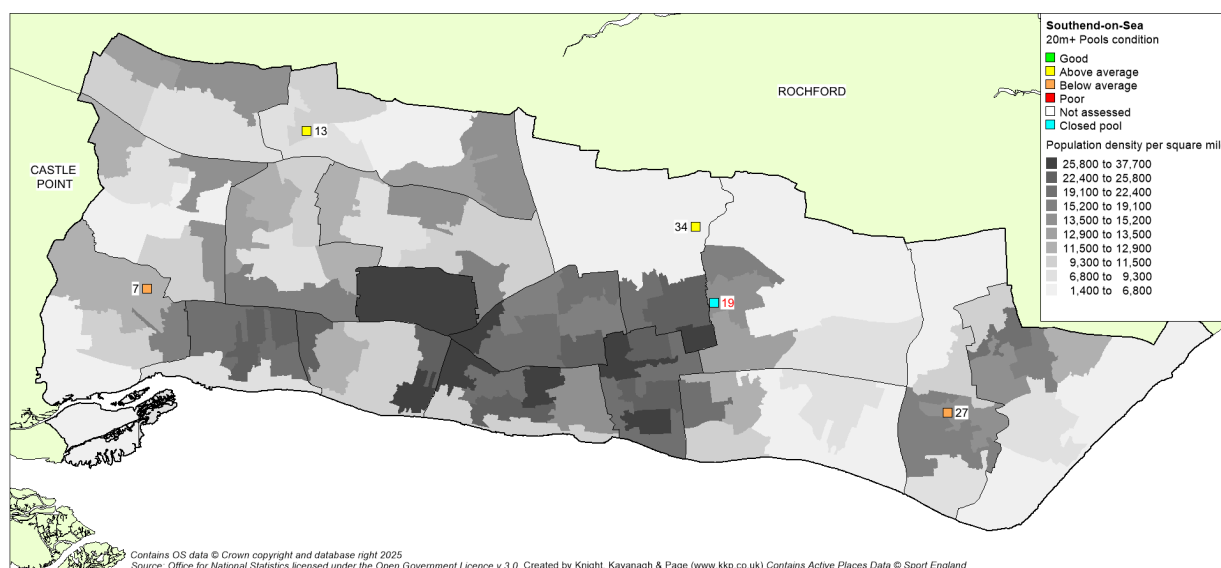


Figure 5.2: Swimming pools larger than 20m length/160m² area with quality ratings.

Swimming provision of 20+m length/160m² total area is generally located closer to the edge of the Authority boundary, away from the more densely populated central parts of the Authority.

The 220m² pool at Hamstel Junior School has been closed since July 2024. Demand for it was reportedly high; however, upkeep costs were becoming too expensive for the school to justify keeping it open. Significant investment is required to bring it back into use due to work required to the roof, ventilation system and in the plant room. The school estimates that the cost of the work required would be in excess of £500,000. It is exploring funding opportunities to re-open the pool as it was a surplus generating enterprise, however, the likelihood of, and potential timescales for this are unknown.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 5.2: Quality of 160m²+ swimming pools in Southend-on-Sea

ID	Site name	Facility type	Lanes/length	Pool condition	Changing condition
7	Belfairs Swim Centre	Main/general	4 lanes x 25m	Below average	Below average
13	David Lloyd (Southend)	Main/general	3 lanes x 25m	Above average	Above average
19	Hamstel Junior School	Main/general	6 lanes x 20m	Closed	Closed
27	Shoeburyness Leisure Centre	Main/general	4 lanes x 20m	Below average	Below average
34	Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre	Main/general	8 lanes x 25m	Above average	Below average
34	Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre	Diving	0 lanes x 20m	Above average	Below average

Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre has two above average swimming pools. Both were opened in 2010 and have been kept in reasonable condition. The diving pool has several diving boards, a moveable floor and is capable of hosting county level competitions. Work has been carried out in the plant room; a new dosing panel and control panel have been installed. At the time of KKP audit, the learner pool was currently closed due to a faulty boiler, however, this has since been fixed and the pool has reopened.

The changing rooms are below average in quality, have dated lockers and feature substantial unused space. Freedom Leisure has commenced investing in this area, which has a changing village layout. Some parts of the village have already been retiled as part of the new leisure contract.

Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre also features a dry-diving facility with harness and trampolines. It is used to train competitive divers and beginners enabling them to practise technique in a safe environment.

The pool at Shoeburyness Leisure Centre is of below average quality. It has very dated poolside décor with some cracked windows and the roof leaks. The lighting system is also need of modernisation. Some work is required in the plant room; this includes replacement of both the filtration pumps and the dosing system.

Belfairs Swim Centre is also below average in quality. The pool temperature is fixed at 31 degrees (four degrees higher than it should be) and cannot be adjusted due to an issue in the plant room. Several lights directly above the pool are not working. The poolside has been subject to tile replacement, however, this work was not correctly completed leaving large patches of grout on poolside. There are no issues with the poolside itself.

The learner pool at Belfairs Swim Centre was not operational at the time of the visit. This was due to a new pump awaiting installation; work which has since been carried out. The pool is now open again. During the closure some maintenance was carried out to the pool tank, with several tiles replaced, and some improvement to the lighting was made.

Both pools at Belfairs Swim Centre are currently running from one boiler and have been doing for a number of years due to a fault with the second boiler. Issues in the plant room have raised the temperature of the centre itself, leading to several complaints from visitors using the waiting and changing areas.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 5.3: Age of swimming pools (160m²+) and refurbishment dates (where applicable)

Site name	Year built/opened	Year last refurbished	Age (years) since built/refurbished
Belfairs Swim Centre	1971	1985	40
David Lloyd (Southend)	2005	-	20
Hamstel Junior School	1945	1986	39
Shoeburyness Leisure Centre	1967	2012	13
Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre	2010	-	15
Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre	2010	-	15

Hamstel Junior School has been omitted from further analysis due to the unknown timescale for facility reopening.

Accessibility

Swimming pool accessibility is influenced by physical factors (i.e., built environment). Appropriate walk and drive-time catchments are applied to determine accessibility to communities. The normal acceptable standard is 20-minutes' walk time (1-mile radial catchment) for an urban area and a 20-minutes' drive time for a rural area. This enables analysis of the adequacy of coverage and helps identify areas currently not serviced by existing provision.

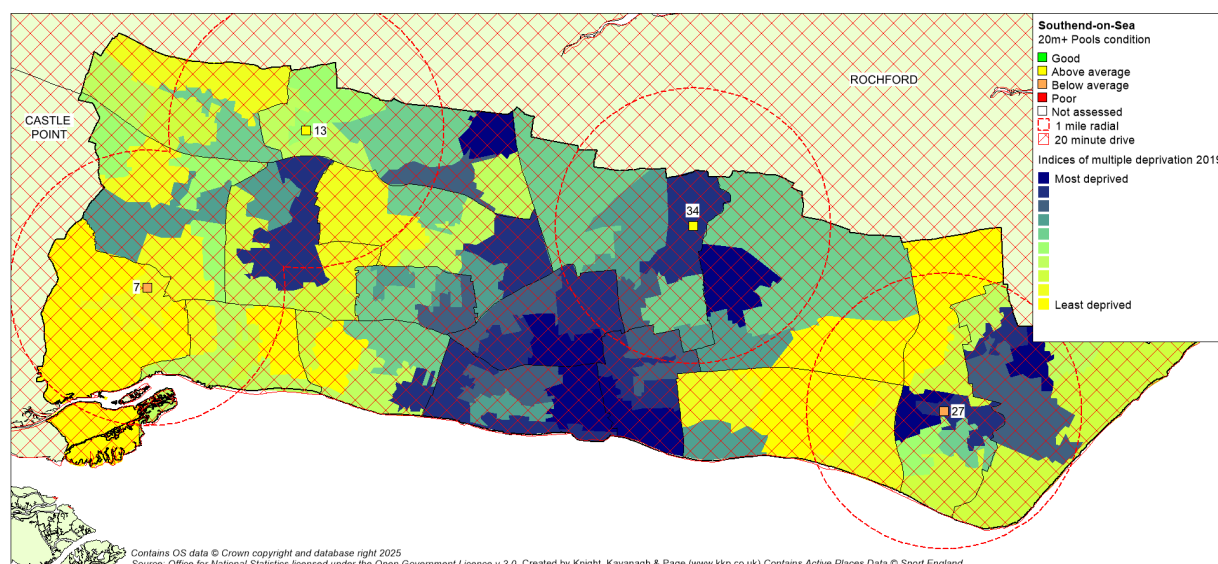


Figure 5.3: Accessibility of swimming pools in Southend-on-Sea

Over half, 52.2% of the population lives within one mile of a 20m/160m²+ swimming pool with some level of community use. The whole Southend-on-Sea population lives within a 20-minute drive of a 20m/160m²+ swimming pool facility – in the authority.

Of the 62,395 people in its areas of high deprivation, 24,904 (39.9%) live within one mile of a pool. Both Shoeburyness Leisure Centre and Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre are well placed to accommodate people living in these areas, however, people who reside in the south of Southend may require access to a car to access pool provision – a factor which can increase the cost of participation.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 5.4: Accessibility of swimming pools in Southend-on-Sea.

IMD 10% bands	Persons	Population %	Persons inside catchment	Population inside (%)	Persons outside catchment	Population outside (%)
0 - 10	15,823	8.8%	6,241	3.5%	9,582	5.3%
10.1 - 20	24,953	13.9%	10,351	5.8%	14,602	8.1%
20.1 - 30	21,619	12.1%	8,312	4.6%	13,307	7.4%
30.1 - 40	16,578	9.2%	7,394	4.1%	9,184	5.1%
40.1 - 50	21,465	12.0%	10,365	5.8%	11,100	6.2%
50.1 - 60	8,492	4.7%	7,384	4.1%	1,108	0.6%
60.1 - 70	15,692	8.8%	7,727	4.3%	7,965	4.4%
70.1 - 80	13,494	7.5%	8,322	4.6%	5,172	2.9%
80.1 - 90	20,882	11.7%	14,533	8.1%	6,349	3.5%
90.1 - 100	20,236	11.3%	12,954	7.2%	7,282	4.1%
Total	179,234	100.0%	93,583	52.2%	85,651	47.8%

Availability of swimming pools

Swimming pool availability differs dependent upon ownership and/or management. All facilities audited offer some form of public access. The access policy for each site is detailed below.

Four pools (across three sites) can be accessed on a pay and play basis – all are public leisure centres. These also have membership options which are (for regular users) more cost-effective than pay and play. As evidenced in Figure 5.4 (below), 41.2% of the population live within one mile of a pay and play accessible swimming pool.

David Lloyd is a commercial health and fitness operator which provide pools offer access via registered membership only. While acknowledging that commercially managed facilities can cater for specific market segments, they are not always available to all sections of the community and may not necessarily be affordable to all households.

Table 5.5: Access policy of swimming pools

Site name	Access policy
Belfairs Swim Centre	Pay & play
David Lloyd (Southend)	Registered membership
Shoeburyness Leisure Centre	Pay & play
Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre	Pay & play
Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre	Pay & play

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

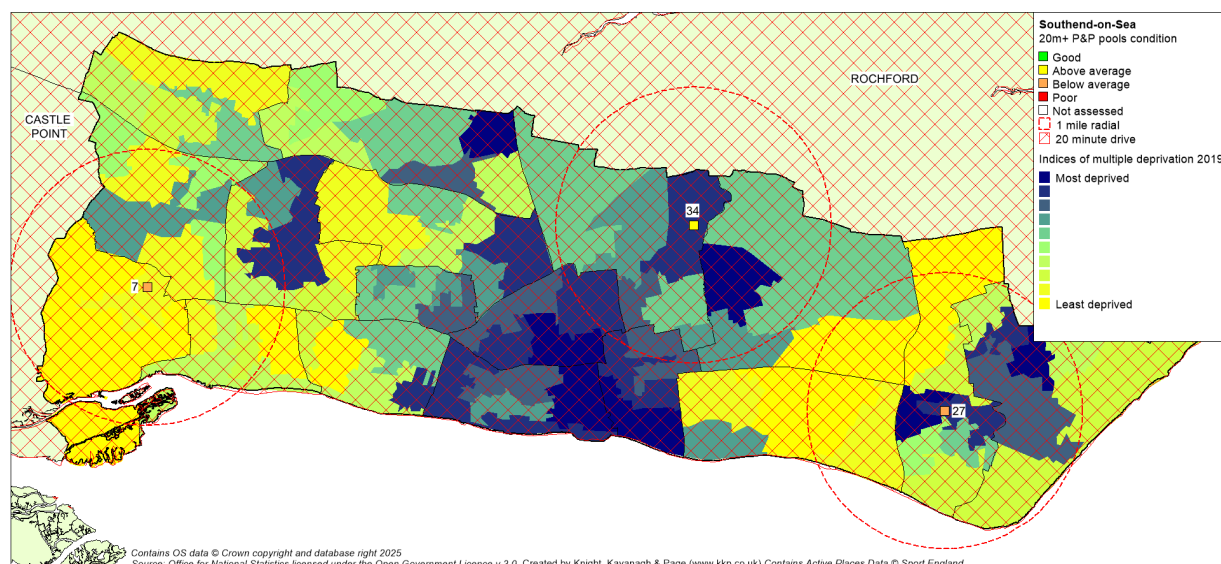


Figure 5.5: One mile radial catchment-based accessibility of pay and play provision

Table 5.6: Accessibility of pay and play swimming provision

IMD 10% bands	Persons	Population %	Persons inside catchment	Population inside (%)	Persons outside catchment	Population outside (%)
0 - 10	15,823	8.8%	6,241	3.5%	9,582	5.3%
10.1 - 20	24,953	13.9%	8,302	4.6%	16,651	9.3%
20.1 - 30	21,619	12.1%	7,643	4.3%	13,976	7.8%
30.1 - 40	16,578	9.2%	5,876	3.3%	10,702	6.0%
40.1 - 50	21,465	12.0%	6,726	3.8%	14,739	8.2%
50.1 - 60	8,492	4.7%	4,314	2.4%	4,178	2.3%
60.1 - 70	15,692	8.8%	6,308	3.5%	9,384	5.2%
70.1 - 80	13,494	7.5%	7,395	4.1%	6,099	3.4%
80.1 - 90	20,882	11.7%	8,076	4.5%	12,806	7.1%
90.1 - 100	20,236	11.3%	12,954	7.2%	7,282	4.1%
Total	179,234	100.0%	73,835	41.2%	105,399	58.8%

Facilities in neighbouring authorities

Accessibility is influenced by facilities located outside an authority. Four pools (160m²+) are located within two miles of the Southend-on-Sea boundary; two in Rochford and two in Castle Point. Two are available via pay and play and two are accessible via registered membership.

Table 5.7: Community available pools within 2-miles of Southend-on-Sea boundary.

ID	Site	Type	Lanes	Access	District
P1	Athenaeum Club Ltd	Main/general	0	Reg. membership	Rochford
P2	Clements Hall Leisure Centre	Main/general	8	Pay and play	Rochford
P3	Runnymede Leisure Centre	Main/general	6	Pay and play	Castle Point
P4	Virgin Active (Thundersley)	Main/general	5	Reg. membership	Castle Point

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

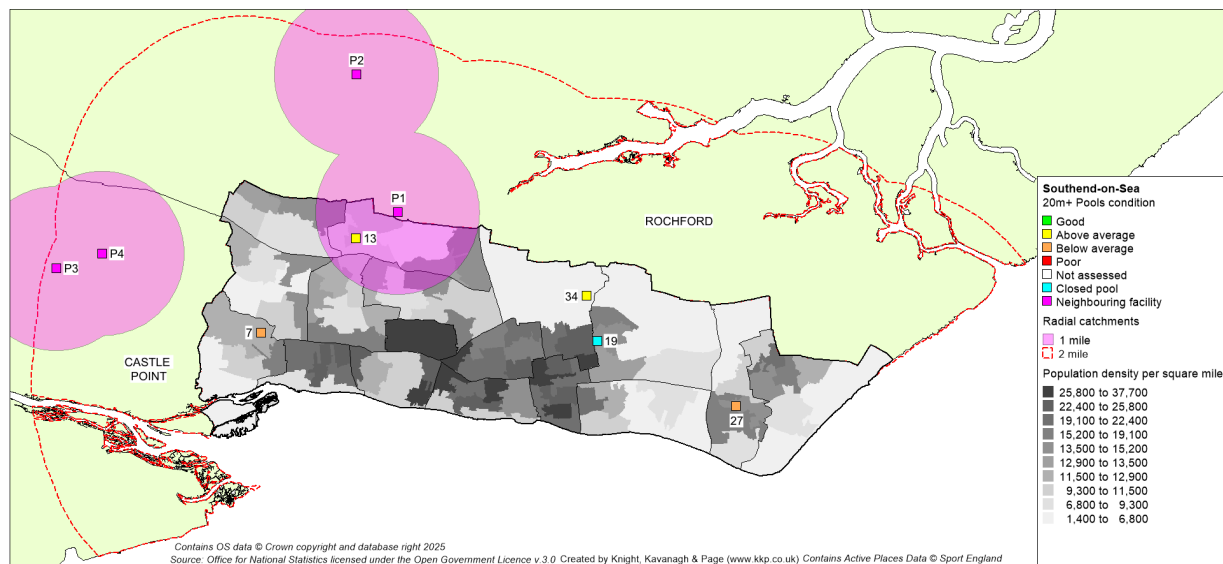


Figure 5.7: Swimming pools located within 2 miles of the Southend-on-Sea boundary

Future enhancements / new developments

The swimming pool at Hamstel Junior School could potentially be brought back into use if the school can secure the necessary funding. It previously accommodated commercial learn to swim programmes and some club swimming.

5.2: FPM

An FPM report was commissioned by Southend-on-Sea City Council in 2026 to better understand the ability of the City's swimming pool network to meet current and future demand and to assess the impact of planned housing growth to 2045. To do this, three scenarios or 'runs' were carried out:

- Run 1 – A baseline assessment of provision in 2026.
- Run 2 – Forward assessment of demand for swimming pools and its distribution, based on projected changes in population between 2026 and 2045, including 9,800 dwellings identified in the Local Plan.
- Run 3 – Forward assessment of demand for swimming pools and its distribution, based on projected changes in population between 2026 and 2045, including a further 14,700 dwellings identified in the Local Plan (high growth scenario).

The assessment tests the ability of the existing swimming pool stock to accommodate future demand generated by planned housing growth. No additional swimming pool provision was included within the modelling scenarios, allowing the resilience of the current network to be assessed under both moderate and higher growth assumptions.

Headline overview

Southend-on-Sea benefits from a good supply of swimming pool provision and is able to meet nearly all current and future demand across all three modelling scenarios. Despite significant planned housing growth and associated increases in population, the existing network of pools continues to accommodate the vast majority of demand to 2045, with only a small proportion of demand remaining unmet.

Most swimming demand is satisfied within the City boundary in all scenarios, demonstrating that residents generally have good access to local facilities. While demand increases under the high growth scenario, the overall network remains capable of accommodating this growth without

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

requiring additional swimming pool provision. Unmet demand remains low and is primarily driven by residents living beyond reasonable travel distances from a facility rather than a lack of available capacity.

Public leisure centres provide the majority of swimming pool capacity and play a critical role in meeting demand across the City. Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre is the principal facility within the network and is estimated to operate at full capacity during weekly peak periods in all scenarios. Belfairs Swim Centre also becomes uncomfortably busy under future growth scenarios, highlighting increasing pressure on the public sector offer.

Although overall provision is sufficient, increasing levels of utilisation indicate that there is limited spare capacity within the network. As demand grows, maintaining the quality and attractiveness of existing facilities will become increasingly important. The swimming pool stock is ageing, particularly within the public sector, and future refurbishment and modernisation will be essential to ensure facilities remain capable of meeting demand and retaining participation.

Key findings

Supply

The supply of swimming pool provision remains unchanged across all three modelling scenarios, with a total of 1,649 sqm of water space available across the City. Of this, 1,628 sqm is available for community use during the weekly peak period, meaning that only 1% of total water space is unavailable.

Public leisure centres dominate provision, contributing 66% of all available capacity in each scenario. Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre is the largest facility in the City and provides almost double the capacity of Belfairs Swim Centre. Together, these facilities form the foundation of Southend-on-Sea's swimming pool network.

Facility Availability

Swimming pool availability is already high across the network, meaning opportunities to create additional capacity are limited. Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre operates throughout the maximum peak period and therefore has no scope to increase opening hours. However, some opportunities exist at Belfairs Swim Centre, where additional availability could be created through extending access to both the main pool and teaching pool, subject to operational requirements and demand.

Population

Southend-on-Sea's population is projected to increase by 4% between Runs 1 and 2 and by 10% between Runs 1 and 3. Despite this increase, demand remains effectively unchanged under the lower growth scenario. Under the high growth scenario, demand is projected to increase by 6%, placing additional pressure on the existing swimming pool network.

Demand equates to 85% of available supply in Runs 1 and 2 and rises to 90% in Run 3, indicating that although overall provision is sufficient, there is relatively little spare capacity available to absorb further growth beyond that modelled.

Met and Unmet Demand

Southend-on-Sea performs strongly in meeting swimming pool demand, with 93% of all demand satisfied in each modelling scenario. The number of visits accommodated during the

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

weekly peak period remains consistently high, increasing from 11,332 visits in Run 1 to 11,920 visits under the high growth scenario.

Retention levels are also strong, with between 84% and 85% of satisfied demand being met within the City boundary. This demonstrates that residents are able to access swimming opportunities locally rather than relying on neighbouring authority areas.

Unmet demand remains low throughout the assessment period, increasing only slightly from 130 sqm of water in Run 1 to 157 sqm in Run 3. The overwhelming majority of this unmet demand is caused by residents living too far from a pool facility. Capacity-related unmet demand is negligible, increasing from only 1 sqm of water in Run 1 to 16 sqm in Run 3. This confirms that accessibility, rather than insufficient provision, is the primary factor behind unmet demand.

Used Capacity

Overall utilised capacity increases gradually across the assessment period, rising from 80% in Run 1 to 84% in Run 3. These figures indicate a relatively busy network, although overall capacity remains sufficient to accommodate demand.

However, pressure is concentrated at a number of key facilities. Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre is projected to operate at full capacity during peak periods in all scenarios, making it the most heavily used facility in the City. Belfairs Swim Centre becomes uncomfortably busy under both future growth scenarios, while Shoeburyness Leisure Centre is projected to become uncomfortably busy under the high growth scenario.

Despite these localised pressures, the overall level of unmet demand attributable to capacity constraints remains extremely low, demonstrating that the network continues to function effectively even under the high growth scenario.

Interventions and next steps

The strategic priority for Southend-on-Sea should be to maximise the effectiveness and longevity of the existing swimming pool network rather than provide additional water space. The FPM assessment demonstrates that current provision is capable of accommodating projected demand growth to 2045, including under the high growth scenario.

Opportunities should be explored to increase capacity at Belfairs Swim Centre through extending the availability of both the main pool and teaching pool during peak periods. This would help absorb future demand and reduce pressure on the wider network. At Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre, a review of programming within the diving pool may identify opportunities to accommodate additional swimming activity where operationally feasible and safe.

The modelling does not support the provision of an additional swimming pool. Capacity-related unmet demand is extremely low and falls substantially below the threshold that would normally justify new provision. Furthermore, additional water space would likely attract further imported demand from neighbouring authorities, particularly Rochford, where a large proportion of Southend-on-Sea's imported swimming demand originates.

A key strategic issue is the ageing nature of the swimming pool stock. By 2045, the average age of facilities will reach approximately 54 years, with public leisure centres averaging 48 years old. Belfairs Swim Centre, which opened in 1985, has not been modernised and is likely to require significant investment to maintain its attractiveness and operational effectiveness.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

As demand continues to grow, pressures on facilities and maintenance costs will increase. The Council should therefore prioritise a programme of refurbishment and modernisation across the public swimming pool estate to ensure facilities remain attractive, efficient and capable of retaining existing users. Investment in the quality of the offer will be essential to sustaining participation and maintaining the City's strong performance in meeting swimming demand.

Overall, the FPM modelling demonstrates that Southend-on-Sea has a robust swimming pool network capable of accommodating forecast growth to 2045. The key priorities are to optimise availability at existing facilities, manage utilisation at the busiest sites, and implement a long-term programme of modernisation to ensure the network remains fit for purpose and continues to meet the needs of residents over the plan period. This is supported by KKP audit findings, which indicate a need to protect existing facilities whilst improving the quality of facilities on offer prior to considering opportunities to develop new provision.

5.3: Demand

Swim England was consulted to inform the audit. Based on the Southend-on-Sea population, the authority should have a target water supply of 1,270m² at public leisure sites. When accounting for Belfairs Swim Centre, Shoeburyness Leisure Centre and Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre there is currently a deficit of 653m². This is based on its recommendation of 12m² water space per '000 population. It also notes that the average build year of existing sites is 1989, showing the age of the existing stock.

Swim England highlights the need to consider developing additional water space which offers high levels of community access to meet the needs of the communities of Southend-on-Sea. Any future provision should incorporate versatile water space and the use of movable floor/boom systems. It is keen to involve its business Engagement team to support and maximise the effectiveness of local pool operators moving forwards.

Club consultation

There are four swimming clubs in Southend-on-Sea, all of which were invited to take part in consultation.

City of Southend Swimming Club currently makes use of all three public leisure sites in Southend across multiple days of the week. It has approximately 300 members half of whom are younger 'academy' swimmers focusing more on basic skills and less on competitive swimming. Younger swimmers are generally recruited via leisure operator swimming lessons. The club has developed a good relationship with Freedom Leisure since it took over the contract to manage the three sites and expects this cycle of recruitment to continue.

Whilst generally happy with the access to pool provision it currently has, the club could make use of additional pool time at Shoeburyness Leisure Centre for its younger swimmers, as these sessions are currently operating at capacity.

A possible option for this would be Sunday afternoons as, in the club's view, the pool is generally quiet then, however, it recognises the need for Freedom Leisure to provide a schedule capable of accommodating other clubs, general swim sessions and its own programme of lessons.

The club reports that Belfairs Swim Centre has had to close at short notice on several occasions over the last few years. This disrupts its training programmes. Under the previous leisure operator, several galas were held at Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre, however,

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

the timing system no longer works. It is keen to work with Freedom Leisure moving forward to fix or replace this equipment to enable the site to host competitions. It is currently using a facility in Braintree, however, Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre is considered to be a much more suitable option.

Borough of Southend Swimming Club did not respond to consultation request. It is affiliated with Swim England which confirmed that it currently has 156 members and uses Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre and Belfairs Swim Centre. Swim England is not aware of the club having any capacity issues or urgent needs for increased pool time.

Southend Diving Club and Southend-on-Sea Sub Aqua Club also did not respond to consultation request. Swim England was unable to provide membership information as neither is currently affiliated with the NGB. Desk research shows that Southend Diving Club offers diving lessons for 6-12 years olds at Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre. Desk based research indicates that in 2022, it had more than 50 members aged 6-80 years. It is actively recruiting additional members. It accommodates divers of all abilities and has a number of GB athletes. Southend-on-Sea Sub Aqua Club primarily utilises the Thames Estuary Yacht Club but occasionally uses indoor provision for training purposes.

Swimming lessons

Children's swimming lessons are delivered at all three publicly accessible pools in Southend-on-Sea. Current lesson volumes are as follows:

- ◀ Belfairs Swim Centre – 239 (100% full based on current capabilities).
- ◀ Southend Tennis and Leisure Centre – 1,300 (c.75% full).
- ◀ Shoeburyness Leisure Centre – 224 (100% full based on current capabilities).

Shoeburyness Leisure Centre formerly had more than 300 young people on its learn to swim programme, however, due to a swim teacher shortage, Freedom Leisure has had to reduce the number of weekly sessions it offers. It is currently in the process of conducting a pay review for its swim teachers, as most leave to take jobs elsewhere which offer higher wages. It currently has a significant waiting list of over one hundred young people.

The number of young people attending sessions at Belfairs Swim Centre is at capacity based on workforce issues. If an adequate number of teachers was available Freedom Leisure noted that it would be able to accommodate up to 500 young people on swimming lessons. It is considering upskilling its own front of house staff as part of the solution.

Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre does have spare capacity on its swim scheme and is not currently experiencing workforce issues. It is actively encouraging those on waiting lists for other public leisure sites to attend swim classes.

The number of people on the learn to swim programme at Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre was not confirmed, however, consultation with the operator outlined that workforce issues comparable to those faced at other public leisure sites are forcing it to combine classes and reduce the number of sessions delivered.

At present, discounted or free swimming sessions for senior residents are not provided in Southend-on-Sea. This is offered in some local authorities by operators as an effective way to encourage older residents to stay active and engaged, which aligns with local authority objectives. Other initiatives being delivered elsewhere include sensory swimming, women and girls swimming and quiet swims.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

5.4: Sport England's Facilities Calculator (SFC)

As noted earlier, this assists local planning authorities to quantify additional demand for community sports facilities generated by new growth populations, development and regeneration areas. It is used to estimate facility needs for whole area populations but should not be applied for strategic gap analysis as it has no spatial dimension and does not take account of:

- ✦ Facility location compared to demand.
- ✦ Capacity and availability of facilities – opening hours.
- ✦ Cross boundary movement of demand.
- ✦ Travel networks and topography.
- ✦ Attractiveness of facilities.

Table 5.8: Sports facilities calculator

Factor	Current (2022)	Future (2045)
ONS population projections	180,884	180,738
Population decrease	-	146
Facilities to meet change in demand	-	No change
Estimated Cost	-	-

(Build costs as of Q3 2024)

Utilising ONS population projections, Southend-on-Sea's population is set to decrease slightly by 2045 due to a decrease in those aged 0-15 and 25-54. As such, SFC calculations assume that no additional pool space will be required by this date – presuming that the current swimming pool stock remains available for community use.

Population projections do not account for growth generated by housing development (see below). Calculating demand generated via housing growth illustrates a need for c.7.29 additional pool lanes by 2045.

Table 5.9: Strategic housing impact- proposed allocations

Housing growth increases from strategic sites (500+ houses to 204)	Average number of people per owner occupying household (England)	Population increase due to proposed housing	Additional sports hall space required	Estimated cost (£)
14,724	2.4	35,338	7.29 lanes / 1.82 pools	£8,870,675

(Build costs as of Q3 2024)

The largest growth area is Southend-on-Sea city centre. Bringing the pool at Hamstel Junior School back into use would help to tackle the need to develop further pool provision by 2045 to meet the needs of the population. In addition, short term focus should be placed on the upkeep of existing facilities, which have become dated, and the recruitment (and retention) of swim teachers.

Cross border housing growth with Rochford would likely lead to an increase in demand for sites with Southend-on-Sea due to the transport links favouring travel into Southend. This should be monitored to better understand the extent of demand from potential housing growth sites in this area.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

It should be noted that the SFC is a theoretical model. It does not account for other factors such as spare capacity at existing swimming pool sites unlike other modelling tools such as the FPM – which contrasts these SFC findings based on the amount of demand that can be accommodated at existing sites with spare capacity.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

5.5: Summary of key facts and issues

Table 5.10 – a summary of key facts and issues

Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	There are 21 pools at 14 sites. Six pools (not including lidos) are larger than 20m length/160m ² .	Despite Swim England's findings of a water space shortage, KKP's audit finds pool supply to be reasonable. Re-opening the pool at Hamstel Junior School would go some way to reducing the Swim England defined deficit.
Quality	Three pools are above average, two are below average and one is currently closed.	Improvement is required at Belfairs Swim Centre and Shoeburyness Leisure Centre (both below average) to improve the condition of public leisure stock.
Accessibility	Over half (52.2%) of authority residents live within a one-mile walk of a pool available for community use. 42.1% live within a one-mile walk of a pool providing pay and play access. Two fifths (39.9%) of people in areas of higher deprivation live within a one-mile walk of a pool with community access. All residents live within a 20-minute drive of a pool with community access.	Swimming pool accessibility is reasonably good but increasing opportunities for learn to swim programmes (adults and children) is a priority.
Availability (Management and usage)	All three public leisure sites provide a pay and play option to residents. David Lloyd provides a relatively high cost membership option.	There is a need for regular review of programming at public pools to ensure a balanced programme. There is a need to increase the number of (and then retain) swim teachers to deliver lessons.

Strategic summary

- ✦ Improving pool quality at Belfairs Swim Centre and Shoeburyness Leisure Centre is necessary to maintain public leisure pool stock in appropriate condition. This should be carried out before considering new pool provision.
- ✦ Bringing the pool at Hamstel Junior School back into use would benefit commercial swim groups (and possibly club run swimming lessons) although club consultation (from those that responded) did not outline significant need for further club pool time.
- ✦ If brought back into use, this pool could provide an opportunity to bring those in year groups seven and eight in line with other age groups in their ability to tread water and confidently swim 25 metres unaided. This should also be a Freedom leisure priority at public leisure sites.
- ✦ Investment in refurbishing/replacing timing equipment at Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre to enable it to host regional competitions and galas would benefit local clubs and be operationally lucrative.
- ✦ Increasing the number of swim teachers available to Freedom Leisure is essential to increasing the capacity of learn to swim programmes at two of the three public leisure sites.
- ✦ Freedom Leisure, with the city council, should consider options to develop initiatives to encourage people from key target demographics to swim. This could include sessions such as:
 - Free swimming for older people.
 - Women and girls only sessions.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

- SEN swimming.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

SECTION 6: HEALTH AND FITNESS SUITES

According to the most recent Active Lives Survey data¹⁴, around 9.8 million adults regularly engage in some form of fitness type activity (i.e., using gym equipment, a weights session, fitness class, or interval session). The popularity of fitness is reflective of it taking place across wide range of facilities including larger gyms (run by local authorities or for them by commercial leisure operators and/or trusts plus other smaller activity spaces such as village and community halls.

Fitness studios also vary in their size and function, from relatively large rooms within leisure centres often containing a sprung floor, to smaller spaces (often within community and village halls) which may serve as dedicated spinning (indoor cycling) studios or to hold virtual fitness classes. Studio based timetabled classes such as Pilates, yoga, dance, step, boxercise and Zumba usually generate a significant amount of activity within publicly operated provision and comprise a core benefit of a health and fitness membership.

The State of the Fitness Industry Report UK (2024) noted that the number of gym and leisure facility members in the UK reached **11.5 million** in 2024, an increase from previous years (e.g., 9.9 million in 2022). Leisure DB reported a figure of 10.7 million, indicating a consistent upward trend.

The penetration rate (percentage of the UK population with a gym membership) reached **16.9%** in 2024, which is one of the highest in Europe and surpasses pre-Pandemic levels (15.6% in 2019). Leisure DB reported a slightly lower but still strong 15.9%. Trends noted included:

- ◀ Low-cost operators have successfully capitalised on consumers looking for more affordable options. Mid and premium market operators are also improving their value propositions, often by adding services like spa facilities and social spaces.
- ◀ There is increasing engagement across all age groups, but particularly among younger adults (16-34). This suggests a generational shift where gym membership is seen as a "must-have."
- ◀ While improving strength and fitness remains the primary reason for joining (83%), mental health support is a growing motivation, cited by 76% of members. Improving confidence and physical appearance also rank highly.
- ◀ Despite growth, the industry still faces cost pressures due to inflation and rising operating costs. Gyms are exploring innovative strategies to increase revenue per site, such as offering custom training, nutrition coaching, and more group classes, rather than solely relying on new openings.

Health and fitness facilities are a core element within the transitioning of public leisure facilities towards delivering on wider health improvement outcomes. A leisure operator's role in providing for people with long term health conditions, including via exercise referral is critical. Fitness studios may 'double up' as spaces where NHS services such as physiotherapy, health screening, and weight management can take place alongside gentle exercise classes.

Larger health and fitness gyms with a mix of flexible spaces (such as cardio, free weights and boxing equipment, (80 stations +¹⁵) remain central to the financial viability of public sector leisure centres. When combined with studio facilities and offering a good mix (and sufficient number) of classes, they are usually offer the most surplus-generating spaces in a typical leisure centre.

¹⁴ [Active Lives adult survey Nov 23-24 report](#)

¹⁵ A health and fitness 'station' is defined as a piece of static fitness equipment – KKP normally audits facilities of 20 stations or more.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

The past decade or so has also seen a growth in the prevalence of operators offering 'functional fitness' type equipment and activities. This is a type of strength training that readies your body for daily activities and includes lifting, loading, pushing, pulling, squatting and hauling. This is manifested both in terms of small private facilities, and the incorporation of functional fitness spaces within publicly operated health and fitness facilities.

6.1: Supply

Quantity

There are 26 health and fitness gyms in Southend-on-Sea, containing a total of 1,822 stations. Generally, they are located in or close to areas of higher deprivation, with fewer facilities to the east of Southend than to the west.

Figure 6.1: All health and fitness gyms on population density

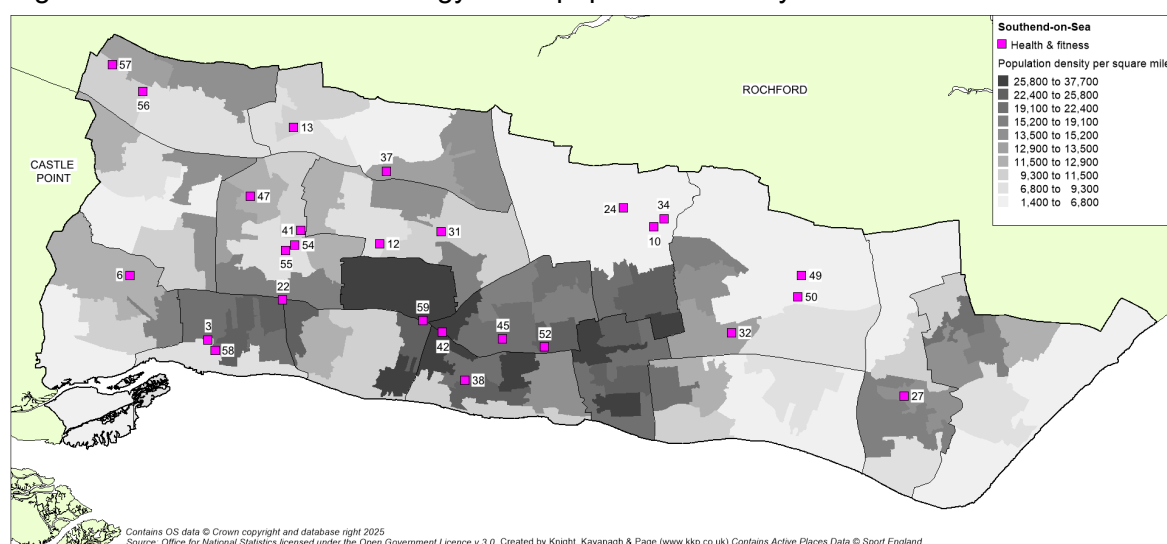


Table 6.1: All health and fitness gyms in Southend-on-Sea.

ID	Site	Stations
3	Anytime Fitness (Leigh-on-Sea)	200
6	Belfairs Academy	17
10	Cecil Jones Academy	15
12	Chase High School	21
13	David Lloyd (Southend)	77
22	Leigh Fitness Centre	21
24	Puregym (Southend Fossetts Park)	220
27	Shoeburyness Leisure Centre	30
31	Southend High School for Boys	22
32	Southend High School for Girls	16
34	Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre	150
37	SPT Fitness	50
38	St Bernards High School	13
41	St Thomas More High School	15
42	Stack House Gym (Westcliff)	100
45	The Gym Group (Southend)	220

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

ID	Site	Stations
47	The St Christopher's School	7
49	Thorpe Hall School	40
50	TruGym (Thorpe Bay)	200
52	Welcome Gym (Southend)	250
54	Westcliff High School for Boys	28
55	Westcliff High School for Girls	15
56	A.B.C Gym	20
57	Evolve Fitness	30
58	Platinum Pt Gym	45
59	Ultimate Fitness	30
-	Total	1,852

Fitness facilities with fewer than 20 stations are typically not assessed/considered large enough to be a community gym although they can service small sections of the community. When smaller facilities are removed from the supply calculation, 19 facilities with 20+ stations which offer 1,754 stations in total, remain. Seven gyms are of significant size (100+ stations). There is a considerable local competition from a number of national chain providers.

Quality

All 20+ station health and fitness sites received a non-technical quality assessment. One is rated as good quality, 11 are above average, five are below average and two are poor quality.

Figure 6.2: Health and fitness gym quality (20+ stations)

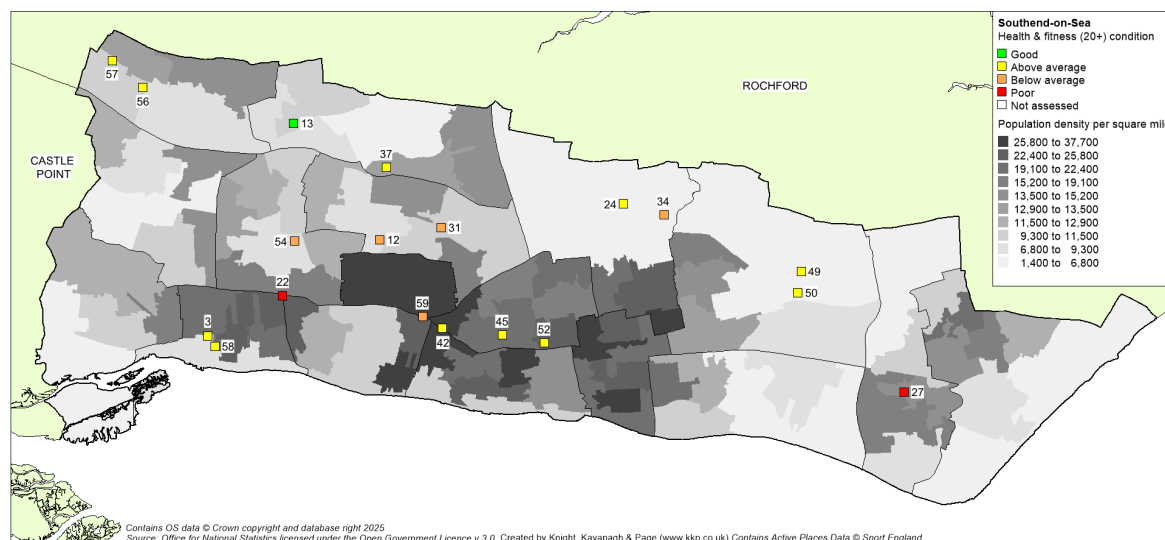


Table 6.2: Health and fitness suite (20+ stations) with quality rating.

ID	Site	Stations	Condition
3	Anytime Fitness (Leigh-on-Sea)	200	Above average
12	Chase High School	21	Below average
13	David Lloyd (Southend)	77	Good
22	Leigh Fitness Centre	21	Poor
24	Puregym (Southend Fossetts Park)	220	Above average
27	Shoeburyness Leisure Centre	30	Poor
31	Southend High School for Boys	22	Below average

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

34	Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre	150	Below average
37	SPT Fitness	50	Above average
42	Stack House Gym (Westcliff)	100	Above average
45	The Gym Group (Southend)	220	Above average
49	Thorpe Hall School	40	Above average
50	TruGym (Thorpe Bay)	200	Above average
52	Welcome Gym (Southend)	250	Above average
54	Westcliff High School for Boys	28	Below average
56	A.B.C Gym	20	Above average
57	Evolve Fitness	30	Above average
58	Platinum Pt Gym	45	Above average
59	Ultimate Fitness	30	Below average

The fitness space at Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre has 150 stations and is of below average quality. It is located over two floors; cardio equipment on the first floor and free weights on the second. This is problematic for users with mobility issues. The facility has a lift although this has been out of use for lengthy periods over the last couple of years. It is in need of investment. The ground floor air conditioning has not worked for some time and the free weights equipment on the first floor is dated. Several pieces of equipment are out of action, and due to the age of the machines, sourcing replacement parts is difficult.

The site has large volume of underutilised space. The ground floor features a set of changing rooms and a health suite, featuring a jacuzzi, steam room and sauna (all closed due to drainage issues and mould). The first floor also contains large amounts of underused space, including a (now closed) former bar and social area, a large studio more frequently used as a training room and additional changing facilities.

The 30-station fitness gym at Shoeburyness Leisure Centre is poor quality. Unlike most contemporary gyms, it does not resemble a typical modern facility, lacks natural light and has insufficient air conditioning. Several machines are broken. The limited offer reportedly discourages usage. It would be possible to extend the facility to accommodate additional stations by linking the current area with unused changing room and toilet space - both located on the opposite side of a conjoining wall. These facilities could be replaced by re-designing the current male and female changing areas into one single changing village.

Accessibility

The Sport England classification of access type defines registered membership use facilities as being publicly available. For health and fitness suites, this generally means payment of a monthly membership fee which can vary considerably. Private operators do not have a contractual obligation to, for example, offer exercise referral nor do they necessarily actively target people/communities who face barriers to participation. It is also acknowledged that some memberships are expensive while others are cheaper than those offered by public sector venues. There is little doubt that the various private operators can/do take pressure off (and customers away from) the more available public facilities.

As with pools and sports halls, appropriate walk and drive-time accessibility standards are applied to health and fitness suites to determine provision deficiencies or surpluses. The normal acceptable standard for an urban area is a 20-minutes' walk time and 20-minute drive time for a rural area.

Just under 95% of Southend-on-Sea's population lives within a 20 minutes' walk of a health and fitness facility with 20+ stations and community access. All residents live within a 20-minute drive of a community use health and fitness facility with 20 or more stations. Nearly all

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

(99.7%) of those living in areas of higher deprivation (0-30IMD bands) in Southend-on-Sea live within a 1-mile radius of a health and fitness facility with community use.

Figure 6.3: Health and fitness gyms 20+ stations+ with 1-mile radial catchment

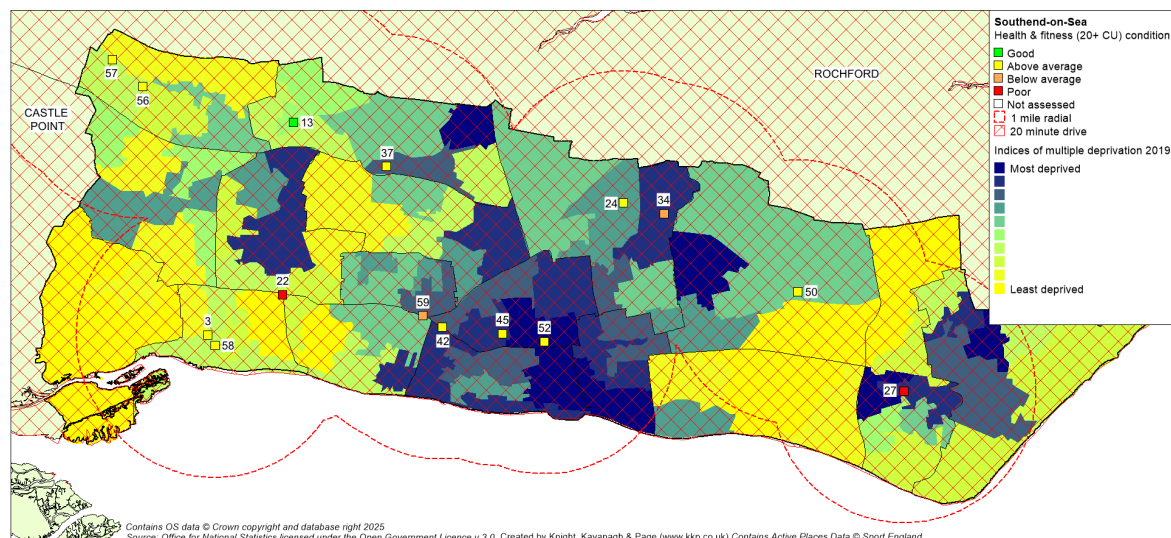


Table 6.3: Health and fitness 20+ stations with 1-mile radial catchment.

IMD 10% bands	Persons	Population %	Persons inside catchment	Population inside (%)	Persons outside catchment	Population outside (%)
0 - 10	15,823	8.8%	15,660	8.7%	163	0.1%
10.1 - 20	24,953	13.9%	24,953	13.9%	0	0.0%
20.1 - 30	21,619	12.1%	21,605	12.1%	14	0.0%
30.1 - 40	16,578	9.2%	14,775	8.2%	1,803	1.0%
40.1 - 50	21,465	12.0%	21,456	12.0%	9	0.0%
50.1 - 60	8,492	4.7%	8,492	4.7%	0	0.0%
60.1 - 70	15,692	8.8%	14,893	8.3%	799	0.4%
70.1 - 80	13,494	7.5%	12,080	6.7%	1,414	0.8%
80.1 - 90	20,882	11.7%	19,420	10.8%	1,462	0.8%
90.1 - 100	20,236	11.3%	16,524	9.2%	3,712	2.1%
Total	179,234	100.0%	169,858	94.8%	9,376	5.2%

Neighbouring facilities

Health and fitness facility users do not just use venues in their own authority. As a consequence, facilities located within two miles of the authority border are considered. There are 14 health and fitness venues in this catchment. None offer pay and play access – they all require some form of membership or are accessed via a sports club/community association. Seven are located in Rochford and the remainder in Castle Point. Four are national chains, this suggests high demand and competition for health and fitness provision in the area.

Table 6.5: Community available health/fitness (20+ stations) within 2 miles of the authority.

ID	Site	Stations	Access	District
F1	Anytime Fitness (Canvey Island)	125	Reg. membership	Castle Point
F2	Athenaeum Club Ltd	44	Reg. membership	Rochford
F3	Clements Hall Leisure Centre	30	Reg. membership	Rochford

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

ID	Site	Stations	Access	District
F4	Deanes School Sports Centre	25	Sports club / CA	Castle Point
F5	Elite Fitness 24 (Hockley)	75	Reg. membership	Rochford
F6	Hockley Gym	60	Reg. membership	Rochford
F7	JD Gyms (Southend)	250	Reg. membership	Rochford
F8	King Edmund Business & Enterprise School	20	Sports club / CA	Rochford
F9	Puregym (Rayleigh)	220	Reg. membership	Castle Point
F10	Runnymede Leisure Centre	30	Pay and play	Castle Point
F11	Stack House Gym (Rayleigh)	50	Reg. membership	Rochford
F12	The King John School	22	Sports club / CA	Castle Point
F13	USP College (Seevic Campus)	24	Reg. membership	Castle Point
F14	Virgin Active (Thundersley)	320	Reg. membership	Castle Point

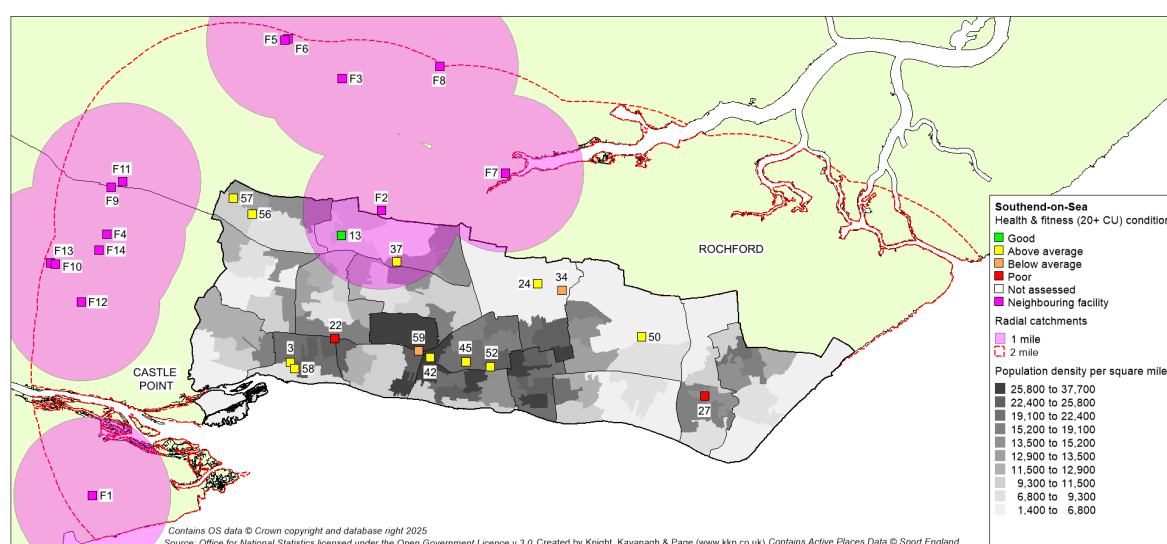


Figure 6.5: Health and fitness suites within a 2-mile Southend-on-Sea boundary.

Availability and programming

Sport England's classification of access type defines registered membership facilities as publicly available. However, the cost of monthly membership fees can vary considerably. It is acknowledged that those which may be considered expensive offer access to different market segments and can ease pressure on facilities which offer cheaper membership options.

Of the 19 health and fitness suites with 20+ stations, 15 offer some form of community use. This equates to 1,613 stations. The four sites not currently providing community use are all located at education sites. Nine of the 14 offer some element of pay and play, via the pre-purchase of a one-day pass or pay on arrival. All eight also offer a monthly membership scheme, which can be a more cost-effective option based on regular usage. Six gyms in Southend-on-Sea only offer access via registered membership.

Table 6.6: access policy of fitness gyms (20+ stations)

ID	Site	Access policy
3	Anytime Fitness (Leigh-on-Sea)	Registered membership
12	Chase High School	Private use
13	David Lloyd (Southend)	Registered membership
22	Leigh Fitness Centre	Pay and play
24	Puregym (Southend Fossetts Park)	Pay and play

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

ID	Site	Access policy
27	Shoeburyness Leisure Centre	Pay and play
31	Southend High School for Boys	Private use
34	Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre	Pay and play
37	SPT Fitness	Registered membership
42	Stack House Gym (Westcliff)	Registered membership
45	The Gym Group (Southend)	Registered membership
49	Thorpe Hall School	Private use
50	TruGym (Thorpe Bay)	Pay and play
52	Welcome Gym (Southend)	Pay and play
54	Westcliff High School for Boys	Private use
56	A.B.C Gym	Pay and play
57	Evolve Fitness	Pay and play
58	Platinum Pt Gym	Registered membership
59	Ultimate Fitness	Pay and play

The cost of health and fitness facility use varies considerably. The venues managed by Freedom Leisure offer a comprehensive membership which includes gym, swim and class use - prices varying dependent upon age. Freedom Leisure sites also technically offer pay and play use; however, access requires online registration, and places can only be guaranteed when booked via the website. The cost of a pay and play session in the city varies between £15.00 (TruGym Thorpe Bay) and £7.00 (Evolve Fitness and Leigh Fitness Centre).

It is recognised that well run health and fitness facilities with studios can offset the costs and enhance the financial viability of other venue elements such as swimming pools and in many instances are used to cross subsidise such facilities.

Table 6.7: Pricing structure of health and fitness suites with community use and 20+ stations

Site name	Pay & play	Annual	12-month DD
A.B.C Gym	£9.00	-	£24.99
Anytime Fitness (Leigh-On-Sea)	-	£649.00	£59.00
David Lloyd (Southend)	-	-	£96.00-229.00
Evolve Fitness	£7.00	-	£35.00
Leigh Fitness Centre	£7.00	£420.00	£35.00
Platinum Pt Gym	-	-	£53.00
Puregym (Southend Fossetts Park)	£8.99	-	£22.99
Shoeburyness Leisure Centre	£9.60	-	£49.99
Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre	£10.00	-	£49.99
SPT Fitness	-	-	£34.95
Stack House Gym (Westcliff)	-	£410.00	£37.99
The Gym Group (Southend)	-	£309.00	£22.99
TruGym (Thorpe Bay)	£15.00	£468.00	£57.99
Welcome Gym (Southend)	£10.00	£225.00	£31.99
Ultimate Fitness	£7.00	-	£29.99

*Pricing as advertised in August 2025

The most expensive monthly membership is David Lloyd Southend. It offers a combination of gym, swim, fitness classes and racquet sports as part of its membership structure. The cheapest monthly memberships are Puregym and The Gym Group a peak time monthly membership costs £22.99 for an adult.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Membership at Freedom Leisure operated public leisure sites is priced at £49.99 per month with concessionary rates available. However, information about concessionary membership is not readily available online, forcing potential members to submit an enquiry via the website.

This could discourage some potential users from purchasing a membership and disadvantage those who are not digitally skilled or do not readily have access to online services. Other operators within the industry promote pricing structures and enable users to sign up online with a simpler process for the user.

Freedom Leisure currently operates an exercise referral scheme in partnership with Active Southend. This is a 12-week programme designed to help individuals over the age of 16 self-manage long-term health conditions such as asthma, arthritis, high blood pressure, diabetes and obesity. GP referral data was not supplied by Freedom Leisure. It is understood that GP referral takes place at both Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre and Shoeburyness Leisure Centre, with numbers at the latter site being limited to single figures per month.

Future developments

Expansion of the health and fitness suite at Shoeburyness Leisure Centre would increase the number of health and fitness stations at the site, however no specific plans for the site were shared with KKP at the time of the audit.

The audit did not identify the development of any new health and fitness provision.

6.2: Demand

Freedom Leisure confirmed mixed demand levels for health and fitness provision at its two sites which provide 20+ station health and fitness facilities. Demand at Shoeburyness Leisure Centre has reportedly reduced in recent years due to its limited size, unattractiveness and ageing equipment. It is reported to still be popular with younger people due to its location.

As of September 2025, Shoeburyness Leisure Centre had c.300 members and 30 stations. The number of members per station is calculated based upon Freedom Leisure membership data and the number of current stations at each site. Typically, a health and fitness suite with 100 stations will have a sales target of 3,500 members (35 members per station).

Freedom Leisure confirmed that the health and fitness suite at Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre currently is busy on weekday mornings and evenings. It currently has c.2,600 members and 150 stations (17 members per station).

Health and fitness via exercising in a gym or class environment is a highly popular form of exercise, appealing to men and women across a range of age groups. To identify the adequacy of provision a demand calculation based upon the assumption that 'UK penetration rates' will increase slightly in the future is applied. Population increases are also factored in to enable a calculation of whether current supply will meet future demand.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 6.8: UK penetration rates; health/fitness in Southend-on-Sea (ONS Data)

	Current (2022)	Future (2045)
Adult population (16+ years)	146,646	153,646
UK penetration rate	16%	18%
Number of potential members	23,463	27,656
Number of visits per week (1.75/member)	41,061	48,398
% of visits in peak time	65	65
No. of visits in peak time (equated to no. of stations required i.e., no. of visits/39 weeks*65%)	684	807
Number of stations (with comfort factor applied)	1027	1210

Model applies 1.75 visits/week by members and 65% usage for 39 weeks of the year. (Figures rounded up/down)

Based upon UK penetration rates there is current need for 1,027 stations in Southend-on-Sea. This will grow to 1,210 by 2045, taking into account a comfort factor (particularly during peak times). Given that there are 1,754 stations in the authority (taking account only of those of 20+ stations) this equates to a current positive supply/demand balance of 727 stations. When factoring in population growth to 2045, there is still a positive supply of 544 stations indicating that there is existing capacity to accommodate future demand from projected population growth.

The current and future surplus of health and fitness provision in the Authority does not negate the need to modernise both public leisure centre health and fitness facilities. The additional revenue generated from an improved fitness offer at Shoeburyness Leisure Centre will help to off-set the cost of running services such as swimming pool provision and enable further delivery of the GP referral offer, which currently has a limited uptake. It should also enable the council to work with Freedom Leisure to develop an improved concessionary pricing offer for fitness (and swimming) memberships to make this more accessible to people living in poverty and in the authority's most deprived localities.

Both public leisure centres in the authority presently operate on the basis of a cashless system. The price point and the requirement to register, book and pay online in order to access 'pay and play' sport and leisure provision means that this option can be, and probably is, restrictive for some people. It is important to enable residents, in particular those which face additional barriers to access including poverty and disability, to be able to access council leisure centre-based provision with the least difficulty. Whilst Southend-on-Sea's public leisure centres are generally well used, there is a need to create more equitable opportunity for the whole community and, for example, those who are potentially digitally excluded.

It is presumed that there will be some import and export of demand whereby residents in the Authority access facilities in neighbouring authorities (especially larger sites) and vice versa. It is not uncommon for the private sector to identify niche markets and fill them with stations which make the market appear congested. The key issue is that while some of these may be budget operators this does not necessarily make them available to people/communities who face barriers to participation and people from areas of (relative) disadvantage (as cost is only one factor which may hinder usage). It could be argued that this applies particularly to those who require transport to access such facilities.

6.3: Studios

Dance studios are an important element of the wider health, fitness and conditioning market. They vary in size, shape, quality of environment, access to sprung wooden floors and quality of ancillary facilities. There has been an increase in the number of people accessing fitness classes as identified in increased UK penetration rates. Activity types offered also vary from low

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

impact classes such as Pilates and yoga to dance, step, boxercise and Zumba. It is worth noting that dance classes/clubs are key users of studio spaces throughout the country. Of the 18 studios in Southend-on-Sea across 13 sites; 13 were subject to a non-technical assessment.

Table 6.9: Table of studios in Southend-on-Sea

ID	Site	Access	Condition
6	Belfairs Academy	Private use	Not assessed
10	Cecil Jones Academy	Private use	Not assessed
12	Chase High School	Reg. membership	Not assessed
13	David Lloyd (Southend)	Reg. membership	Good
13	David Lloyd (Southend)	Reg. membership	Good
27	Shoeburyness Leisure Centre	Pay and play	Below average
32	Southend High School for Girls	Sports club / CA	Poor
34	Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre	Pay and play	Below average
34	Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre	Pay and play	Below average
38	St Bernards High School	Sports club / CA	Below average
42	Stack House Gym (Westcliff)	Reg. membership	Above average
49	Thorpe Hall School	Private use	Not assessed
50	TruGym (Thorpe Bay)	Reg. membership	Above average
50	TruGym (Thorpe Bay)	Reg. membership	Above average
50	TruGym (Thorpe Bay)	Reg. membership	Above average
52	Welcome Gym (Southend)	Reg. membership	Above average
55	Westcliff High School for Girls	Sports club / CA	Above average
59	Ultimate Fitness	Pay and play	
3	Anytime Fitness	Pay and play	Below average
63	Diversity Studio	Pay and play	Above average

(NB: Sports Club/CA= Sports club / Community association use)

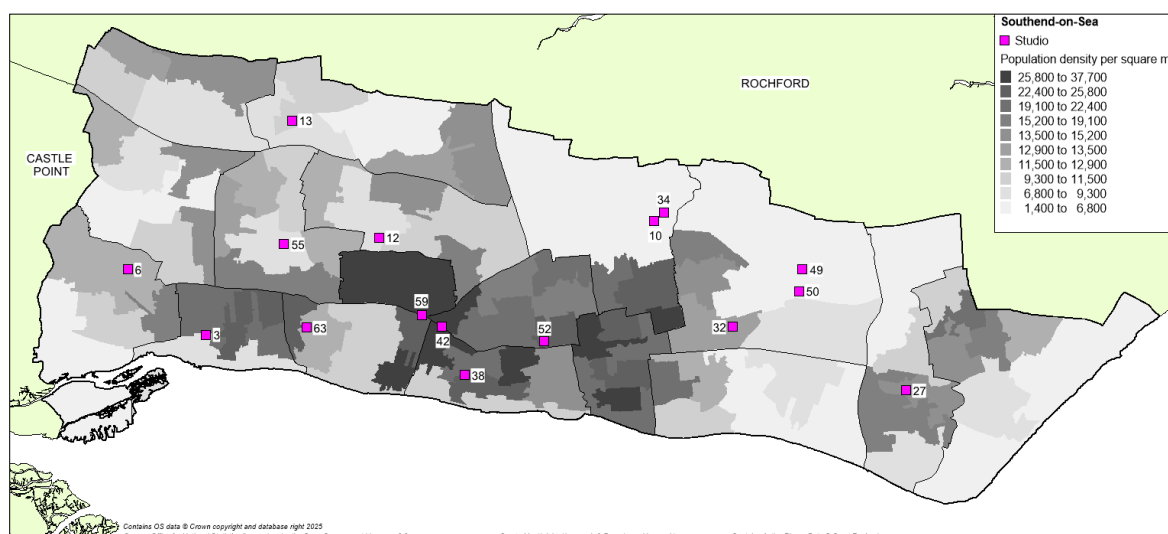


Figure 6.5: Studios in Southend-on-Sea

The spin studio at Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre lacks equipment. It currently contains 12 spin bikes; however, the site is currently storing up to 20 broken bikes. The activity is popular however the studio (below average in quality) lacks appeal in comparison to modern spin studios which are generally fitted out with dark walls and flooring and LED/neon lighting.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre also has a 2-court sports hall, however, activities in this space are predominantly those which typically take place in a studio. Group trampolining sessions have previously been popular within this facility but the trampolines have now been decommissioned. Freedom Leisure report that the large studio space on the first floor is predominantly used as a meeting room and that most group exercise classes are delivered in the 2-court hall due to it offering better accessibility and more welcoming décor.

The studio space at Shoeburyness Leisure Centre is too small to accommodate more than six people per class. It would be possible to extend this facility (making use of car park space) to allow more users to attend classes. The ceiling in this facility is also very high, which makes it costly to run the air conditioning. Lowering the ceilings and fitting modern LED lights is a priority in this area.

Freedom Leisure is currently struggling to recruit instructors to lead sessions such as yoga, pilates, and other group exercise activity. Because of this, only GP referral sessions are currently taking place. It plans to upskill front of house staff to tackle this issue moving forwards.

In terms of access policy, three studios (all located at public leisure sites) can be accessed on a pay and play basis. A further eight can be accessed via a registered membership and three via a sports club/community association. Three studios, all located at education sites, are private use only.

6.4: Summary of key facts and issues

Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	The 26 health and fitness suites contain 1,852 stations. 19 have 20+ stations (1,754 stations). 15 of the 19 are available to the community. 18 studios offer community access. There is a positive supply demand balance of facilities in the area both now and when accounting for population growth to 2045.	Extending the gym at Shoeburyness Leisure Centre will encourage further uptake of memberships. The revenue generated from this will help to off-set the cost of running the swimming pool.
Quality	12 of the 19 fitness suites with 20+ stations are good or above average in quality. Four are below average and two are poor. With high demand for facilities and a large number of national chain operators in the area and close by there is a need for the public leisure centres to have high quality facilities to enable them to compete and be financially sustainable.	Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre could house all fitness provision on one floor to make better use of underutilised space and provide a more modern amenity. There is a need to fix/replace broken equipment and improve facilities at public leisure sites.
Accessibility	Almost all (94.8%) of Southend-on-Sea residents live within one mile of a health and fitness suite. This increases to 100% for those within a 20-minute drive of a community accessible facility. 14 gyms are located within 2 miles of the Southend-on-Sea boundary.	Accessibility in the area is good; each main settlements and almost everybody living in an area of high deprivation has access to a fitness facility.
Availability (Management and usage)	There are nine publicly accessible pay and play health and fitness facilities with 20+ stations in Southend-on-Sea. A further six can be accessed via registered membership.	Ensure that information about membership options/costs is readily available without the need to submit an online enquiry.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Strategic summary

- ◀ Public leisure provision is poor in comparison to commercially operated sites. Extension/upgrading of provision at Shoeburyness Leisure Centre should be carried out to make better use of the (currently closed) toilets and changing room space - with development of a changing village alongside this. This could encourage greater uptake of the presently low membership at the site (currently c. 10 per station).
- ◀ Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre has substantial underutilised space (the closed health spa on floor one and the bar, social area and changing rooms on floor two). The new leisure contract with Freedom Leisure provides an opportunity to reconfigure the site to provide all health and fitness and changing provision one floor, with spin and group exercise studios located above/below. Spin studio modernisation should be carried out as part of this process.
- ◀ Introduce transparent membership pricing and a direct online sign-up feature on the website, removing the enquiry step, to enable direct online sign up. It is vital to ensure that options are available for those actually/potentially digitally excluded.
- ◀ The needed expansion of studio space at Shoeburyness Leisure Centre could be achieved by developing the existing building. This should be linked to recruitment (and retention) of group exercise class teachers/leaders to enable delivery of more classes.
- ◀ Trampolines in the 2-court hall at Southend Leisure & Tennis Centre should be repaired/replaced to allow popular group trampolining sessions to be re-introduced. (See gymnastics section 10).

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

SECTION 7: SQUASH

Squash is now on a new strategic path, implementing a rebrand and undergoing a major restructure. England Squash (ES) has achieved core strategic goals agreed with Sport England and is committed to supporting the traditional infrastructure of county associations, clubs, coaches and officials to grow the game via key programmes (e.g., Squash101) and campaigns (e.g., Squash Girls Can) but will be apportioning resources in a significantly different manner.

Table 7.1: England Squash strategic aims:

Element	Aim
Governance	Adhere to the highest standards of organisational governance.
Membership	Provide a membership model that caters to and provides benefits for anyone interested in playing and coaching squash irrespective of their ability.
Programmes	Enabling and supporting partners to be at the forefront of adult and player recruitment and retention.
Talent & high performance	Provide a support and development programme that identifies, develops and delivers world leading individuals and teams.
Commercial	Create a diversified and effective revenue model that minimises risk and reduces dependency on funding.

Squash In a Changing World (2021-2025) outlines the vision, principles and strategic pillars for ES. Its vision for the future of squash in England is a thriving, diverse and growing community. Its Purpose is to serve as custodians of the game's past, its present and its future. It is to serve as a catalyst for positive change across the sporting community at home and abroad. The 2021-2025 strategy sets six key objectives:

- ◆ Drive increased participation in the game, with a radical advance in equality, diversity and inclusion.
- ◆ Inspire and train a community of world class coaches, referees and volunteers at every level, who drive participation and increase engagement in the game.
- ◆ Sustain world-leading talent pathways and programmes for high performing players who achieve success on the global stage and inspire others to realise their potential.
- ◆ Empower creativity and innovation in the game and in ES's culture, using ideas and technology to support the squash community and to engage with new audiences.
- ◆ Spearhead new and creative ways to enhance the visibility and appeal of squash at local, national and international levels, including the pursuit of Olympic inclusion.
- ◆ Provide leadership for the game nationally and internationally, including addressing the Climate and Ecological Crisis.

ES has set a benchmark of one court per 10,000 people in each local authority in order for squash to thrive. It estimates that there is currently one court per 12,617 people in England. This reflects the significant number of court closures and/or non-replacements when new facilities are developed to replace older venues - seen over the past two decades.

7.1 Supply

The four (all traditional) squash courts in Southend-on-Sea are located at two sites.

Table 7.2: Squash courts in Southend-on-Sea.

ID	Site name	Normal	Glass-backed	Total	Condition
50	TruGym (Thorpe Bay)	2	0	2	Below average
54	Westcliff High School for Boys	2	0	2	Above average

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

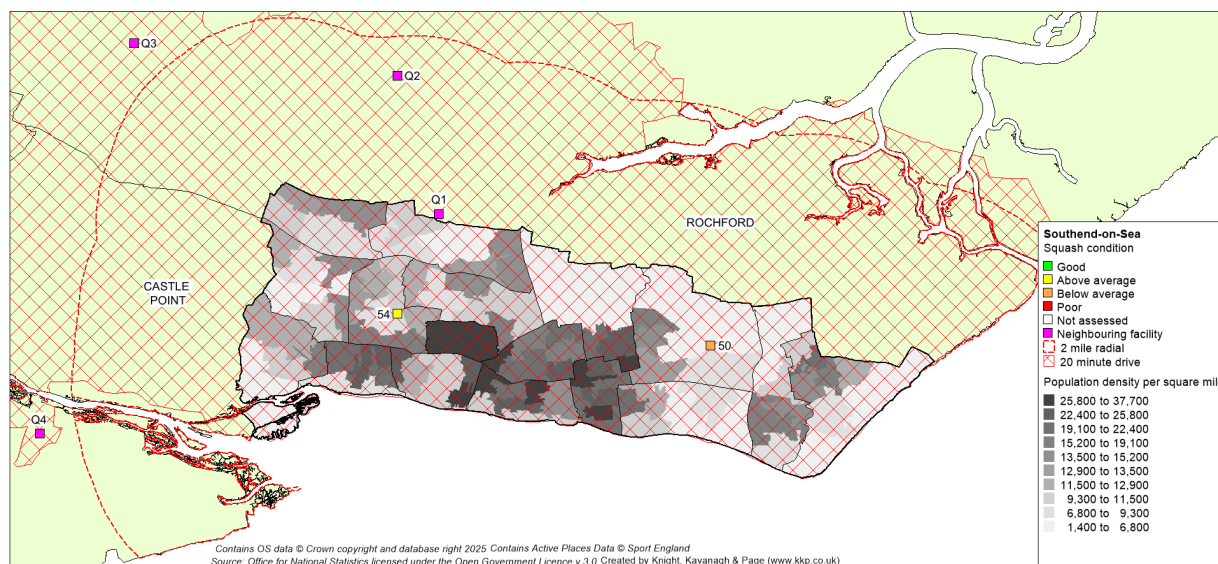


Figure 7.1: Location of squash courts in Southend-on-Sea and within a 20-minute drivetime.

Table 7.3: Squash courts in neighbouring authorities within 20 minutes' drive time

ID	Site	Type	Courts	Access	District
Q1	Athenaeum Club Ltd	Glass-backed	2	Reg. membership	Rochford
Q2	Clements Hall Leisure Centre	Normal	6	Pay and play	Rochford
Q3	Rayleigh Leisure Centre	Glass-backed	2	Pay and play	Rochford
Q4	Waterside Farm Leisure Centre	Normal	3	Pay and play	Castle Point

Quality

Squash court quality in Southend-on-Sea varies. The two above average courts at Westcliff High School for Boys were refurbished in 2017 after a period of closure. This process involved the repainting of the walls, remarking the lines and sanding and sealing the floor.

There are two squash courts at TryGym (Thorpe Bay) but only one (which is of below average quality) was available for use at the time of the audit. The other is currently being used as a storage facility. Management stated that there is demand to bring the second court back into use. Both require investment into the walls, line markings and flooring.

Accessibility and availability

Technically, All Southend-on-Sea residents live within a 20-minute drive of a squash court.

The two courts at Westcliff High School for Boys are not currently available to the public and have not been since reopening in 2017. The school did not indicate any intent to open these courts for public use, despite offering community use of its sports hall. (This would involve opening other parts of the site).

The court at TruGym (Thorpe Bay) is accessible via a registered membership. The site does not offer a 'squash only' membership, meaning those who wish to access the court must also pay for gym and swim membership (39.99 off-peak or £57.99 for unlimited access). It is considered likely that this would discourage casual squash players from utilising this venue.

Given that no pay and play squash courts within the authority are available to Southend-on-Sea residents, TruGym is willing to collaborate with the council to enable some level of pay and play access.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Future developments / changes to provision

TruGym (Thorpe Bay) has plans to bring the court currently being utilised as a storage room back into use to help meet demand levels, given that it is the only site providing accessible squash provision in the authority. To achieve the full benefit of this, a change in access policy is also required.

7.2: Demand

England Squash was invited to take part in consultation with regard to squash provision in Southend-on-Sea. Despite multiple attempts to contact, no response was received.

TruGym (Thorpe Bay) has confirmed that since the second squash court was taken out of use, demand for squash has grown. As a result, it is actively exploring alternative storage solutions to make the second court available to members once again.

Club consultation

The audit did not identify any squash clubs currently located in Southend-on-Sea.

7.3: Summary of key facts and issues

Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	There are four squash courts in Southend-on-Sea, one of which is temporarily closed.	The closed court at TruGym (Thorpe Bay) should be brought back into use to ease demand.
Quality	There are two above average courts and two below average.	TruGym (Thorpe Bay) should invest in its squash provision as part of bringing the second court back into use and making the courts more accessible.
Accessibility	All Southend-on-Sea residents live within a 20-minute drive of a squash court – only one of which is actually available for use at present.	-
Availability (Management and usage)	The one available court at TruGym is accessible via a registered membership. This membership also includes gym and swim access.	There is an opportunity to work with TruGym to bring the second squash court back into use and adopt a more accessible access model for the squash courts.

Strategic summary

- There is a severe lack of available squash courts for Southend-on-Sea residents. Of the four courts in the authority, only two are available for community use of which one is currently out of action. Currently, an expensive monthly membership, which also includes gym and swim access, is required to access this/these courts.
- Bringing back the currently closed squash court at TruGym (Thorpe Bay) could significantly boost the squash offer in Southend-on-Sea. The benefits of doing this would also be enhanced by a change in access policy to encourage casual squash players to make use of the facilities. TruGym (Thorpe Bay) is keen to explore opportunities to work with the Council to increase squash accessibility.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

SECTION 8: INDOOR BOWLS

The five forms of bowls that are played indoors (flat/level green, crown green, long mat, short mat and carpet mat) each require a different venue and each format of the game has a different technical specification for their indoor facility.

Indoor flat/level green bowls is played on a purpose-built indoor green which complies with the laws of the sport of bowls. The NGB is English Indoor Bowling Association (EIBA). It requires a standard bowling green; a flat area 31-40 metres long divided into playing areas called rinks. The number of these varies, depending on the width of the green.

Crown green bowls requires a standard crown green, artificial grass (carpeted) area of approximately 38m square which is crowned i.e. higher in the centre than round the perimeter. Indoor crown greens are relatively rare – substantially less common than those provided for flat green bowls. The NGB is the British Crown Green Bowling Association (BCGBA).

Carpet bowls is played on a rectangular carpet (45 x 6 feet) that is rolled out. It can be accommodated in any indoor space large enough to accommodate the mats which come in different lengths. It tends to be played at a recreational level. The NGB is the English Carpet Bowls Association (ECBA).

Short mat bowls is typically played in sports halls, parish council rooms, outdoor bowls club pavilions and on indoor flat green bowls club greens. The NGB is the English Short Mat Bowling Association (SMBA). Long mat bowls is played on a rolled carpet typically laid on a sports hall floor. There are no ditches in this game. It is typically found in areas of low flat-green supply and/or where crown green bowls is played outdoors. There is no NGB for this version of the game.

An indoor bowling centre typically comprises a single flat green with a number of rinks and ancillary accommodation such as changing rooms, lounge/bar, viewing area, kitchen, office/meeting rooms and stores plus designated car parking. Ancillary accommodation scale varies according to the number of rinks available. A successful indoor bowls centre requires a combination of the right location, design, and financial and general management. Sport England¹⁶ guidelines on catchment for indoor bowls centres are set out to be interpreted in the light of local circumstances:

- ◀ Assume the majority of users live locally and not travel more than 30 minutes.
- ◀ Assume that 90% of users will travel by car or public transport, with the remainder by foot.
- ◀ As a guide, calculate demand on the basis of one rink per 14,000-17,000 total population.
- ◀ The number of rinks required can be related to the estimated number of members, assume 80-100 members per rink.

EIBA stated priorities are:

- ◀ Recruitment of participants.
- ◀ Retention of participants.
- ◀ Clubs are recommended to:
 - ◀ Develop and implement a robust sports development plan
 - ◀ Actively review the Sport England 'Buddle' website.
 - ◀ Actively promote the club in the local community amongst those who are able bodied and disabled. Wheelchair users and visually impaired people are particularly keen on the sport of bowls.
- ◀ Retention and improvement of facilities.
- ◀ New indoor facilities in areas of low-supply and high-demand.

¹⁶ Sport England Design Guidance Note Indoor Bowls 2005

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

EIBA Vision 2025-2027

This plan focuses on: recruit and retain 45+ and recruit and retain 70+. Both markets require growth. The idea is that people aged 45+ need new versions/formats of the game to play and the 70+ will wish to continue with current formats. Its focus areas are:

- ◀ Recruit and Retain.
- ◀ Facilities – Build, Improve, Retain
- ◀ Inclusion
- ◀ Communications
- ◀ Commercial Activities
- ◀ Competitions
- ◀ Performance
- ◀ Governance

The EIBA “Recruit and Retain Strategy” is to concentrate on the family aspect of our Sport. This means that we are keen for all of our Clubs to avail themselves of opportunities for “increasing participation” and “improving the experience” of all able-bodied or disabled participants in Bowls across all ages and gender.

Running alongside this is the Sport England funded development work provided jointly by the Indoor NGB (EIBA); Outdoor NGB (Bowls England) and the “Bowls Development Alliance” (BDA). Each NGB has two directors on the Board of BDA.

The Sport England funding for the 2022-2025 period, focuses on the delivery of:

- ◀ **Club hubs:** ensure that all clubs remain sustainably positioned at the heart of the communities, and there are good pathways to increase membership.
- ◀ **Communities:** develop healthy bowling communities, with good quality competitions, options to increase coaches and volunteers and healthy relationships between clubs.
- ◀ **Health and wellbeing:** support clubs promote health and wellbeing of members with a range of programmes and activities.
- ◀ **Inclusion:** ensure clubs are as inclusive as possible, promoting the sport to all including females and people from diverse communities.

Alongside these core objectives the BDA works with key partners on:

- ◀ **Safeguarding:** ensuring the sport is safe for everyone to play by working across all five National Governing Bodies (NGBs) [BE, EIBA, British Crown Green BA, English Short Mat BA and English Bowling Federation] to have policies and processes in place. Training is available to support the network of club safeguarding officers.
- ◀ **Disability:** the BDA works in partnership with Disability Bowls England, Activity Alliance, BE and the EIBA to ensure everyone regardless of disability can access the sport of bowls.
- ◀ **Women can:** the BDA are driving a campaign alongside BE and the EIBA to encourage more women to play bowls, coach bowls and volunteer in bowls.
- ◀ **Equality & diversity:** the BDA, BE and the EIBA are all striving to ensure the sport of bowls is as diverse as it can be.

BDA Vision and Strategy 2022-2027

This Strategy focuses on the new era of collaboration across the bowls network.

Its vision is to place bowls at the heart of every community as an accessible sport for all. It has also outlined strategic priorities, which as follows:

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

- Build partnerships and communities:** To ensure our role in the bowls family preserves the important connection with our partners and key stakeholders through the continuation of shared goals and objectives, aligning to our organisation's vision of transforming bowls into an accessible sport for all.
- Educate and empower:** To Increase the impact we have on tackling inequalities through a more connected and educated volunteer workforce who fully support our efforts at a local level and who represent a younger, more diverse group of people, ensuring the sport has sustainability into the future.
- Diversify and innovate:** To continue to take the lead on driving inclusion with the view to improving the culture of our sport through more inclusive and innovative practices on the ground, linking into the whole sport inclusion strategy.
- Sustain and grow:** To ensure we have tried and tested sustainability plans in place to recruit and retain volunteers and grow participation at our clubs, working closely with our wider network to broaden our reach and influence.

8.1: Supply

Quantity and quality

There are two indoor bowls facilities in Southend-on-Sea: Essex County Indoor Bowls Club (six rinks) and Southend-on-Sea Bowls Club (three rinks). One indoor bowls facility is located within two miles radius of the Southend-on-Sea boundary.

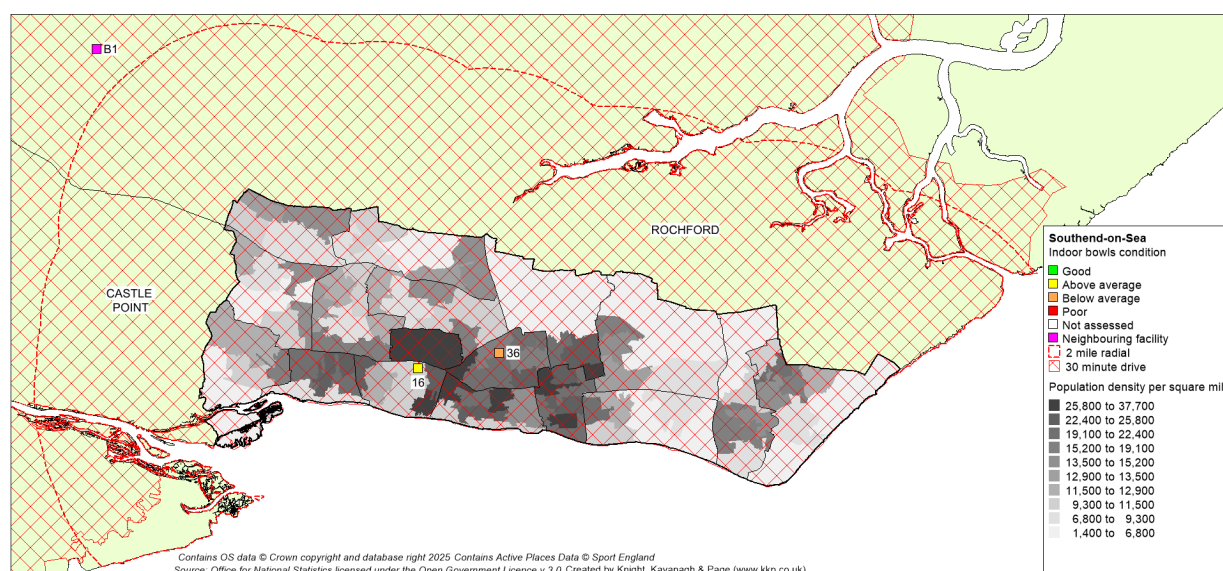


Figure 8.1: Indoor bowls facilities in Southend-on-Sea and within 30 minutes' drive time

Table 8.1: Indoor bowls facilities in Southend-on-Sea.

ID	Site name	Rinks	Access type	Condition
16	Essex County Indoor Bowls Club	6	Sports club / CA	Above average
36	Southend-on-Sea Bowls Club	3	Sports club / CA	Below average

Table 8.2: Indoor bowls facilities within a 2-mile radius of the Southend-on-Sea boundary.

ID	Site	Rinks	Access	District
B1	Rayleigh Leisure Centre	4	Pay and play	Rochford

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Essex County Indoor Bowls Club is rated as being of above average quality. Its playing carpet which was originally installed in 2014 is stretched twice per year and is in reasonable condition,. The club expects to get another nine years out of the current carpet as a minimum, with a sinking fund currently building up with a view to completing future work to this timeframe. During the refurbishment in 2014, which cost approximately £140,000, LED lights were installed, and the general décor was modernised. The facility is now capable of hosting inter-county competitions and occasionally international events.

Further investment has gone into the changing facilities (£117,000). They are now good quality, featuring modern décor (at a standard reflective of a costly members-based fitness gym) with a good supply of lockers. The car park has also been subject to significant investment. The club recently spent £12,000 on a patch repair after the initial relaying of the car park was done poorly several years ago. All work has been completed using club funds. The club generates a surplus but the rising cost of facility upkeep is a concern for the future.

Southend-on-Sea Bowls Club is of below average quality. Its playing facilities are dated and it has only made limited investment in refurbishment of the carpet over the last 15 years. It reportedly struggles financially due to a dwindling membership base. Many of its members have moved to Essex County Indoor Bowls Club, where there is more opportunity to bowl and better playing conditions.

Accessibility

Drive time catchment modelling suggests that all of Southend-on-Sea's population lives within a 30-minute drive of an indoor bowls facility within the Authority.

Availability

Both clubs require a membership and a booking fee to access provision. Essex County Indoor Bowls Club is open 7-days per week with regular roll up sessions.

8.2: Demand

Consultation with both clubs and the EIBA suggests that there is currently sufficient provision in the area as both are actively seeking additional members. Essex County Indoor Bowls Club has c.700 in part due to its 'combination offer' - it also provides two outdoor greens. Approximately 120 of its members are indoor bowls members only, however, increased interest is generated over the winter months when most bowlers move inside. It recognises that membership is generally decreasing annually although only in small increments. This is reportedly in line with the general trend among clubs in the Essex area.

In the late 1990s it accommodated up to 1,000 members, however, demand for indoor bowls no longer makes this figure a suitable ambition. The biggest reduction in membership came during the Pandemic. Prior to this, it used to organise to take short mats into local schools to generate interest among younger participants. Whilst this brought some initial success, insufficient numbers of young people were attending club nights to merit project continuation.

In attempt to increase membership the club has adopted modern marketing strategies such as utilising social media alongside more traditional options such as leaflet drops. Despite this, the most popular way of attracting new members is still via word of mouth. It is keen to work with the council and other local partners to encourage more younger people to join.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Southend-on-Sea Bowls Club has a much smaller membership base of c.100 members and offers limited opening hours. It has seen membership reduce from 150 members in 2022. It struggles to attract new members and to build/maintain sufficient volunteers to perform general management duties.

It tends to rely on the same small group of people to open and close the facility for match days, ensure the facility is fit for purpose and manage finances. The long-term sustainability of the club is in question due to limited demand and the cost of upkeep of the building.

Contrasting the findings at both clubs, the EIBA confirms that the number of affiliated members at bowls clubs in England increased in December 2024 - the first time since 2017.

8.3: Summary of key facts and issues

Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	The are two indoor bowls facilities in the authority. Essex County Indoor Bowls Club is a six-rink facility, and Southend-on-Sea Bowls Club a three-rink venue.	Retain and support existing facilities to ensure they continue to accommodate members and visitors from other clubs during the winter months when demand for indoor bowls is high.
Quality	Essex County Indoor Bowls Club is of above average in quality. Southend-on-Sea Bowls Club is below average.	Seek funding opportunities to modernise the facilities at Southend-on-Sea Bowls Club. Utilise the sinking fund to replace the carpet when required at Essex County Indoor Bowls Club.
Accessibility	All Southend-on-Sea residents live within a 30-minute drive of an indoor bowls facility.	-
Availability (Management and usage)	Both clubs provide access via a reasonably priced registered membership.	Both clubs provide daytime activity. They should continue to look to diversify their offer to a younger demographic to increase participation and remain financially viable.

Strategic summary

- There is no requirement for increased indoor bowling facilities in Southend-on-Sea. Both clubs have spare capacity and are keen to increase membership in line with EIBA findings for 2024.
- Despite this, the authority's ageing population should be considered when providing support to indoor bowls clubs. Indoor bowls provides both physical and social benefits to older people.
- Work should be carried out, when necessary, to the playing surface at Essex County Indoor Bowls Club by utilising the sinking fund. It is anticipated that this will take place in or after 2034.
- There is an opportunity for Southend-on-Sea Bowls Club to collaborate with other sports such as table tennis, where clubs seek access to facilities. This could strengthen the Club's financial position.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

SECTION 9: INDOOR TENNIS

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) governs tennis in Britain, from grassroots participation through to the professional game. The work that it does includes a focus on the following areas:

Making tennis a sport for anyone to play, through increasing participation and access— for instance, through [LTA Youth](#), its innovative junior programme created to help more children enjoy the benefits of playing and staying in tennis; through [Open Court](#), its disability tennis programme which has helped a record number of disabled people enjoy the benefits of tennis; through [SERVES](#), its programme that takes tennis right in to the heart of new communities across Britain; or through the range of national, regional and local tennis [competitions](#) that it delivers for hundreds of thousands of players throughout the year.

Transforming tennis in Britain by working with everyone in the sport— for instance, through its [Inclusion Strategy](#) for tennis in Britain that aims to see tennis to lead the way for inclusion and diversity in sport; through its [safeguarding](#), ensuring it remains safe for all; by working with Government and local authorities to deliver a multi-million pound investment programme in [parks tennis facilities](#) for local communities across the country; and through the development of [padel](#) as an exciting new form of tennis that's easy to play, fun for all ages and abilities and extremely sociable, and will help to engage new audiences.

Tennis Opened Up

The LTAs strategic vision is 'Tennis Opened Up'. This is based on an approach that anyone can play; whatever their motivation or ability, from all communities and backgrounds. At any age and for a whole lifetime, tennis provides physical, social and mental rewards both on and off the court. The LTA wants tennis and the benefits it provides to be open to as many people as possible, across the whole of Britain.

The LTAs mission is to grow tennis by making it welcoming, enjoyable and inspiring to everyone.

Volunteers, coaches, officials and tennis venues all play an essential role in the future of the sport; without them, tennis can't exist. It is committed to supporting them and working with a whole range of other organisations and individuals connected to tennis, so that together it can grow tennis and open it up to many more people.

9.1: Supply

Indoor tennis is based on specialist facilities which appeal beyond local authority boundaries. This report considers provision within with a 30-minutes' drive time catchment. There are two indoor tennis facilities in the Authority; Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre (four courts) and David Lloyd Southend (five courts).

Quality and quality

The five courts at David Lloyd Southend are good quality and have been in receipt of significant refurbishment and regular maintenance. They were built in 2005 and resurfaced in 2017. The acrylic surface is still in good condition, with good quality LED lighting, modern décor and good condition nets.

Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre has four above average acrylic tennis courts. They have good LED lighting and reasonable surface condition although court four has been subject to water damage due to a roof which leak during periods of extreme weather.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Line markings, décor and electronic scoring system are all attractive to users. With exception of addressing the roof leak, there is no plan to make significant changes in the near future.

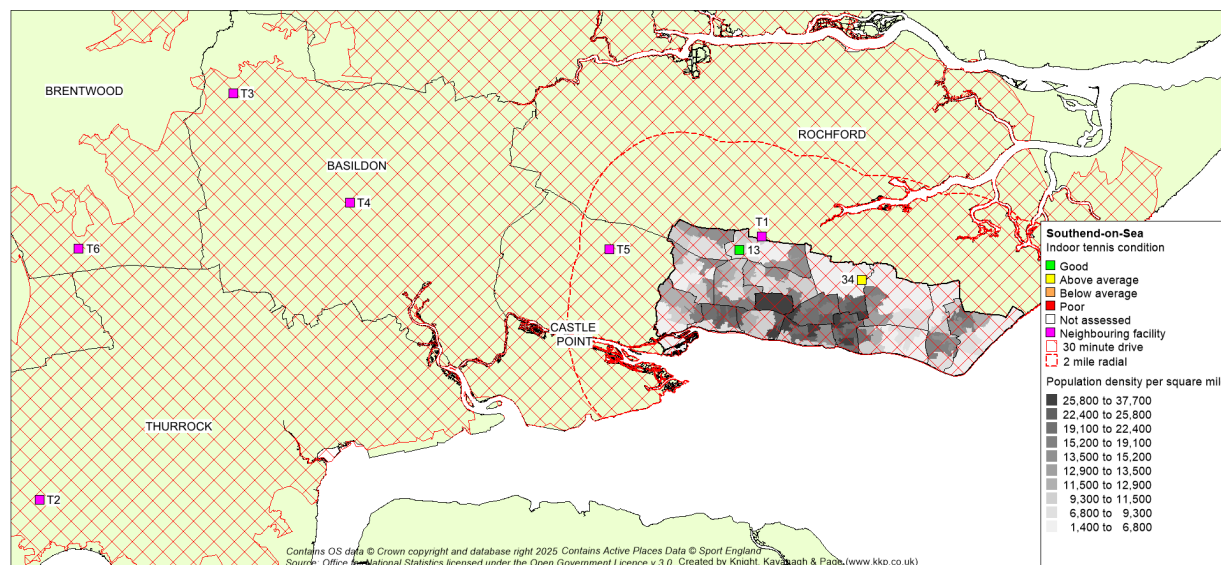


Figure 9.1 Indoor tennis facilities in Southend-on-Sea and within 30 minutes' drive time

Table 9.1: Indoor tennis sites in Southend-on-Sea

ID	Site name	Type	Courts	Access type	Condition
13	David Lloyd Southend	Acrylic	5	Reg. membership	Good
34	Southend Leisure & Tennis Centre	Acrylic	4	Pay and play	Above average

Courts at Southend Leisure & Tennis Centre can be accessed on a pay and play basis (£27.45 for a one-hour slot). There are no concessionary rates for younger people, over 65s or for court hire during quieter off-peak times. A (free) leisure membership account is required to pre book the facility online. It operates on a cashless basis, but facilities can also be booked by walking into reception and paying by digital methods.

Eight facilities are located within a 30-minute drive of the Southend-on-Sea boundary.

Table 9.2: Indoor tennis provision in neighbouring authorities

ID	Site	Type	Courts	Surface	Access	District
T1	Athenaeum Club Ltd	Traditional	3	Acrylic	Reg. membership	Rochford
T2	Bannatyne Health Club (Chafford Hundred)	Traditional	2	Acrylic	Reg. membership	Thurrock
T3	Billericay Lawn Tennis Club	Airhall (seasonal)	3	Clay	Reg. membership	Basildon
T4	David Lloyd (Basildon)	Airhall (seasonal)	2	Macadam	Reg. membership	Basildon
T4	David Lloyd (Basildon)	Traditional	6	Textile	Reg. membership	Basildon
T6	Virgin Active Clearview Health & Racquet Club	Traditional	6	Textile	Reg. membership	Brentwood
T6	Virgin Active Clearview Health & Racquet Club	Airhall (seasonal)	1	Artificial grass	Reg. membership	Brentwood
T5	Deanes School Sports Centre	Traditional	3	Acrylic	Sports club / CA	Castle Point

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Accessibility and availability

Drive time catchment modelling suggests that almost all of Southend-on-Sea's population lives within a 30-minute drive of a facility with indoor tennis courts. Pay and play opportunity is limited to the four courts at Southend Tennis and Leisure Centre.

9.2: Demand

The LTA has recently restructured its strategic approach to target key national focus areas, ultimately to grow participation. Future investment in facilities will be based on detailed analysis of potential demand throughout the UK. It has identified 72 priority target areas for development of new indoor courts in the UK of which Southend-on-Sea is not one.

Freedom Leisure confirmed that the four courts at Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre are well used despite receiving no club use. They are predominantly used for pay-and-play tennis; however, in-house cardio tennis and wheelchair tennis sessions are also delivered on a weekly basis. Whilst facility uptake on weekday mornings is generally low, at least one court is in use approximately 90% of the time during evenings and weekends. This increases further during winter months when demand for indoor tennis rises.

Demand for indoor tennis provision at David Lloyd Southend is unknown due to a lack of response to the consultation requests. It is presumed that courts are well used by members.

There is a need to monitor demand for indoor tennis courts at outdoor court venues. This will be captured in the Southend-on-Sea Playing Pitch Strategy 2025.

9.3: Padel tennis

Padel is reportedly one of the fastest growing sports in Great Britain. Significant investment has been made in the sport since the LTA became the NGB in 2019. It is played on an enclosed court that is one third the size of a tennis court, in a doubles format - by groups of mixed ages and abilities. The rules are broadly the same as tennis, although serves are under-arm and walls are part of the game - the ball being allowed to bounce off them.

The LTA recently launched an updated LTA Padel Strategy to outline its plans for 2024 – 2029. ([LTA Padel Strategy](#)). The vision and mission align to the tennis strategy and the focus is on growing the infrastructure, increasing and diversifying the coaching workforce and building on the performance pathway as well as increasing visibility and driving participation.

There are currently over one thousand courts in GB of which 60% are indoor (March 2025). A recent survey reported the following:

- ◀ An estimated 145,000 people have played padel in British venues in the past year with around half this number playing regularly/monthly.
- ◀ At present, most players are adults; juniors account for less than one in ten of the total.
- ◀ Most venues reported strong growth, with high interest in taster sessions, and players enjoying the fun/sociability offered by the sport.
- ◀ Currently demand is outstripping supply, with many venues keen to add courts, or cover existing facilities, though costs, and the complexity of local planning rules, can be prohibitive.

In terms of future supply, a variety of environments can be considered. Padel courts are often situated next to or managed by those running existing tennis facilities (tennis clubs, parks, indoor tennis centres). In addition, padel court development at leisure centre sites, golf clubs and rugby/football sites can be beneficial as provision can be tied into other sports facilities and profit from an already established operating model.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

The LTA is not encouraging clubs or local authorities to convert existing tennis courts to padel courts, unless it can be shown that they have the capacity to support this. This is to ensure that the provision of traditional courts remains sufficient.

Padel court supply and demand

To assist local authorities to strategically plan for padel provision across the authority, the LTA has established the number of courts that can be sustained – based on population density and padel demand. Figures provided form a start point for conversation and strategic planning. The suggested number is not a cap it is simply an indication that the LTA has confidence that there is sufficient demand for the number of courts identified. In areas where the sport is more established there is likely to be higher demand. The current LTA estimate of the number of courts for which there is demand in Southend-on-Sea is 15.

There are three covered padel courts (located at Garon Park) and three uncovered padel courts (one at Garon Park, two at David Lloyd Southend). Demand at Garon Park is high with few courts available from 18:00 on weekday evenings, however, weekend afternoon demand is lower. Courts at David Lloyd are only available to members, so demand levels were not obtained.

Based on LTA calculations and demand at Garon Park, there is opportunity to develop additional padel courts in the authority. While it is not uncommon for tennis clubs to develop padel provision within club grounds, the PPS 2025 did not find evidence of any clubs currently planning on developing padel provision. This should be continually monitored.

9.4: Summary of key facts and issues

Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	There are nine indoor tennis courts in Southend-on-Sea, four located at Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre and five at David Lloyd Southend.	Indoor tennis provision is in reasonable supply. The audit did not identify any planned changes to the level of provision.
Quality	Five courts are good quality and four above average.	There is a need to fix the roof at Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre to ensure no further damage occurs to the playing surface.
Accessibility	All residents live within a 30 minutes' drive time of an indoor tennis facility.	-
Availability (Management & usage)	Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre provides a pay and play option, whilst David Lloyd Southend offers access via registered membership.	Consider pricing amendments to encourage further uptake of facility hire at Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre during weekday mornings.

Strategic summary

- ✦ Undertake roof repairs at Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre to ensure that the condition of the playing surface does not worsen as a result of roof leaks.
- ✦ Consider a more dynamic pricing structure to encourage further uptake of court hire during the quieter off-peak times. Currently, users pay the same price for court hire during the busier evening periods as they do the quieter weekday morning slots. A cheaper rate may encourage greater uptake during the daytimes.
- ✦ Monitor demand levels for padel tennis at Garon Park. Consider opportunities to develop paddle courts at public leisure sites should additional courts be required.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

SECTION 10: GYMNASTICS AND TRAMPOLINING

In 2023 British Gymnastics released its new strategy – Leap Without Limits: A New Vision for a New Era. The strategy is developed as a shared vision for gymnastics across all four home nations. To help achieve the vision It focuses on five ‘leaps’:

- ◀ **The Why Leap** - Nurturing and celebrating the positive impact of gymnastics on individuals, communities and wider society.
- ◀ **The Empowerment Leap** – Supporting everyone involved in gymnastics to play their part in making a positive difference.
- ◀ **The Experience Leap** – Making positive experiences and memories central to everything we do, at every stage, in every role.
- ◀ **The Creative Leap** – Encouraging and welcoming new ideas to support meaningful change.
- ◀ **The Together Leap** – Uniting the community, existing and new partners to maximise impact, learning and growth.

To bring the vision to life, British Gymnastics are working on the following actions:

- ◀ **Membership** – Develop a new more relevant membership offer that provides value for all its members, and an improved membership system.
- ◀ **Education** - Implement a reformed and reimagined approach to supporting the learning and development of the gymnastics workforce, ensuring it feels valued and supported by British Gymnastics and the clubs and delivery environments you operate within.
- ◀ **Community** – Celebrate and recognise the contribution and stories of those in the gymnastics community on British Gymnastics channels and more widely, including further developing the British Gymnastics Awards as an annual platform for this.
- ◀ **Reform** - Deliver all of the 40 actions British Gymnastics has committed to in Reform '25 over the next two years to create safe, positive and fair experiences for all in gymnastics, including a major Safe Sport campaign.
- ◀ **Events** - Work with its Technical Committees to agree a clearly defined and sustainable long-term national event programme for each discipline and develop new competitions and events at a recreational level.
- ◀ **Disability** - Work to build international support for our ambition for gymnastics to become a Paralympic sport, with the aim of agreeing a plan and pathway for this to become a reality.

The new strategy outlines six key impacts:

- ◀ More people enjoying the sport and its benefits, across all abilities, ages, and backgrounds, and as a gymnast, coach, club owner, official or fan.
- ◀ Everyone is safe, supported and is able and confident to speak up, whatever their role or involvement in gymnastics.
- ◀ More inspirational moments that are seen, shared and enjoyed by more people.
- ◀ The NGB membership experience is a positive one, which meets your needs, is easy from start to finish. and being a member of British Gymnastics is something that provides you with both pride and value.
- ◀ Members/participants feel connected to British Gymnastics and trust it to be positive custodians of this incredible sport.
- ◀ A united sport, where everyone is working together to ensure that collectively we deliver an uplifting gymnastics experience for all.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

10.1: Supply

Five sites provide gymnastics in Southend-on-Sea, four of which are dedicated.

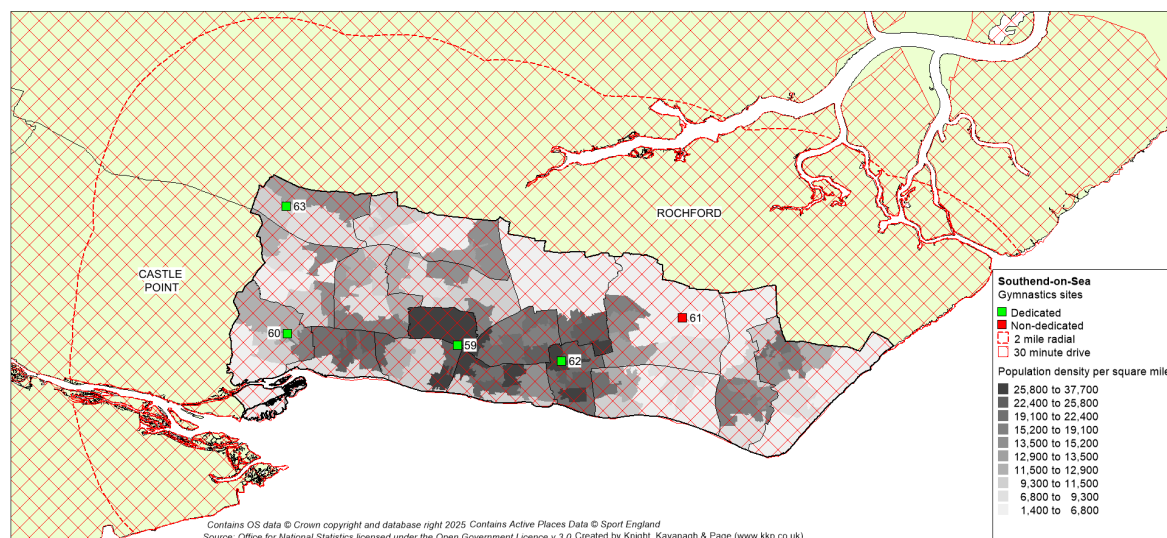


Figure 10.1: Gymnastics provision in Southend-on-Sea

Table 10.1: Gymnastics facilities in Southend-on-Sea

ID	Site	Club	Dedicated
62	Southend Gymnastics	-	Yes
61	Thorpe Hall School	Max Whitlock Gymnastics	No
60	Energize Essex	-	Yes
63	Unique Gymnastics	-	Yes
59	Ultimate Fitness		

The audit identified four clubs operating in Southend-on-Sea, three of which are currently operating out of dedicated facilities. Max Whitlock Gymnastics is the only club in Southend-on-Sea not using a dedicated site. It currently hires the sports hall at Thorpe Hall School.

Facilities are generally located on the outskirts of Southend-on-Sea which could create challenges for those utilising public transport.

Trampolining session previously took place in the 2-court sports hall at Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre. Sessions were reportedly popular but ceased due to the condition of the trampolines.

Accessibility and availability

The whole Southend-on-Sea population lives within a 30-minute drive of gymnastics provision.

10.2: Demand

British Gymnastics reports that participation in gymnastics is increasing rapidly. It also reports substantial demand and that many clubs have waiting lists - restricting access to gymnastic activity due to lack of time within dedicated and generic facilities.

A key part of the NGB's strategy to increase participation is to support clubs, leisure providers and other partners to move to their own dedicated facilities, offering more time and space for classes.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

It provides a range of products and programmes and expert assistance to support local delivery; gymnastic activities which are successfully driving membership growth and retention across the country. An example of this is 'Club Capital' - a £10 million social impact investment fund which has so far invested £5.2 million across 33 facilities.

British Gymnastics confirmed that safeguarding existing dedicated sites within Southend-on-Sea was a priority, whilst supporting clubs to increase participation and expand provision. It is aware that clubs in Southend-on-Sea (in line with the national picture) are experiencing issues recruiting and retaining qualified coaches to deliver sessions.

Club consultation

All five clubs identified in the audit were invited to take part in the consultation; however, only one response was received, from Unique Gymnastics. Consultation was also carried out with British Gymnastics to better understand each club's demand levels and facility requirements.

Unique Gymnastics is the only British Gymnastics affiliated club in Southend-on-Sea. It has worked closely with the NGB over the past ten years in its efforts to secure a dedicated facility, which it successfully achieved in 2024, located to the northwest of Southend-on-Sea. The club reports having a long struggle during this process - and receiving little support from the local authority. Club demand has grown significantly in recent months, from 21 in 2025 to 72 as of August 2026. It now has waiting list for most sessions.

Energize Essex, Southend Gymnastics, and Max Whitlock Gymnastics did not respond to the consultation request. None of these are currently affiliated with British Gymnastics, meaning limited information is available. All clubs are currently advertising sessions across all disciplines and age groups, indicating spare capacity for additional members at each site.

The audit did not identify any gymnastics activity taking place at council-owned public leisure sites.

10.3: Summary of key facts and issues

Elements	Assessment findings	Specific needs
Quantity	There are four dedicated gymnastics sites in Southend-on-Sea and one non-dedicated site, currently being used by Max Whitlock Gymnastics.	Ensure that clubs accessing dedicated provision have secure tenures and sufficient workforce capacity to futureproof continued access.
Quality	No reported quality issues.	-
Accessibility	100% of Southend-on-Sea's population lives within a 30-minute drive of gymnastics provision.	-
Availability (Management & usage)	Desk research and club consultation indicates that all clubs can currently accommodate additional members.	Continue to monitor demand levels. There is currently no gymnastics activity taking place at public leisure sites.

Strategic summary

- ◀ Nationally, high waiting lists are a barrier to participation; however, this does not appear to be the case in Southend-on-Sea; all clubs are currently in a position to accommodate additional members.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

- ◀ Consider the opportunity to host gymnastics sessions at more centrally located public leisure sites should demand increase significantly. This should involve the refurbishment/replacement of the trampolines at Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre. British Gymnastics is keen to support with this where possible.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

SECTION 11: COMBAT SPORTS

This section focuses on the supply and demand position for combat sports in Southend-on-Sea. Supporting data sets for provision of combat sports clubs and facilities are limited and as such KKP undertook a desk research exercise to identify combat sports activity present at facilities in the authority. Several operators identified in Southend-on-Sea specialise in multiple disciplines. Below is a summary outlining various forms and definitions of each martial arts discipline¹⁷:

Karate

Karate originated in Japan. It emphasises striking techniques, such as punches, kicks, knee strikes, and elbow strikes, as well as open-handed techniques like palm strikes and knife-hand strikes. Karate training also includes blocking, evading, and grappling techniques. It has both physical and mental aspects. It promotes physical fitness, strength, flexibility, and co-ordination, while also focusing on discipline, respect, self-control, and personal development.

It is often practiced as a competitive sport and has been included in the Olympic Games since 2020. Different styles exist including Shotokan, Goju-Ryu, Wado-Ryu, Shito-Ryu, and Kyokushin, each with its own unique techniques, training methods, and philosophies. Karate in England is governed by The English Karate Federation, Karate England, and the Karate Union of Great Britain.

Tai Chi

Tai Chi, also known as Tai Chi Chuan, is an ancient Chinese martial art that combines gentle physical movements, deep breathing, and mental focus. It is practiced for its health benefits, meditation, and self-defence. The philosophy behind Tai Chi is rooted in Taoism, an ancient Chinese philosophy that emphasizes harmony, balance, and the cultivation of internal energy or "qi" (pronounced "chee"). By practicing Tai Chi, individuals learn to redirect and neutralize incoming attacks using circular and yielding movements, rather than relying on brute force.

There are several different styles of Tai Chi, with the most widely practiced ones being the Yang, Chen, Wu, Sun, and Hao styles. Each style has its own distinctive characteristics, forms, and training methods, but they all share the fundamental principles and philosophy of Tai Chi. The recognised governing bodies for Tai Chi in England are The Tai Chi Union for Great Britain and the British Council for Chinese Martial Arts (BCCMA).

Taekwondo

Taekwondo is a Korean martial art which involves a combination of physical training, self-defence techniques, forms or patterns (known as "poomsae" or "hyeong"), sparring, and breaking boards or other materials to demonstrate power and precision. Taekwondo practitioners also focus on discipline, respect, and mental and physical strength. In addition to its martial arts aspects, Taekwondo is also an Olympic sport. It made its debut as a demonstration sport in the 1988 Seoul Olympics and became an official Olympic sport in 2000. Olympic Taekwondo competitions involve sparring matches between two opponents, with points awarded for kicks and punches delivered to specific target areas on the opponent's body.

Taekwondo in England is governed by the English Taekwondo Association, British Taekwondo and GB Taekwondo.

¹⁷ Descriptions were sourced via desktop research utilising world federations websites.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Judo

Judo originates in Japan and is a recognised Olympic Sport. It primarily focuses on throws and grappling techniques to overcome an opponent. The goal is to take down the opponent to the ground and immobilise them with pins or submission holds. Judo practitioners, known as judoka, aim to achieve victory through technique, leverage, and timing rather than relying solely on brute strength.

Training comprises practicing techniques, throws, grappling manoeuvres, and learning to fall safely (known as "ukemi"). It also includes the study of "katas," which are formal exercises that simulate self-defence situations. Judo places great emphasis on discipline, respect, mutual welfare, and personal development. In England, Judo is primarily governed by England Judo, which sits under the umbrella of British Judo.

Ju-Jitsu

Ju-Jitsu is a Japanese martial art and self-defence system that focuses on close combat techniques. Techniques include strikes, kicks, joint locks, throws, sweeps, grappling, and ground fighting. It involves using leverage, timing, and technique to overcome an opponent regardless of their size or strength. Practitioners learn to efficiently utilise joint manipulation, pressure points, and immobilisation techniques to control or incapacitate an adversary.

Modern Jujitsu encompasses a wide range of styles and approaches. Some styles focus more on stand-up techniques, throws, and strikes, while others emphasise ground fighting, submission holds and grappling manoeuvres. Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, a popular variant, is known for its emphasis on ground fighting and submission holds. Ju-Jitsu in England is governed by Great Britain Ju-Jitsu.

Mixed Martial Arts (MMA)

MMA is a full-contact combat sport that allows a wide range of fighting techniques from various martial arts and combat sports disciplines. MMA combines striking techniques (such as punches, kicks, knees, and elbows) with grappling techniques (such as throws, takedowns, joint locks, and submission holds) both standing and on the ground.

In modern MMA competitions, fighters compete inside an octagonal cage or a ring, and they wear gloves specifically designed for striking and grappling. Matches are typically divided into rounds, and fighters aim to win by knockout, submission, or judges' decision based on criteria such as effective striking, grappling, aggression, and control. MMA requires fighters to be well-rounded and proficient in multiple aspects of combat. Many MMA athletes train in various martial arts disciplines, such as Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, Muay Thai, boxing, wrestling, judo, and others, in order to be prepared for different situations and opponents.

It has gained global popularity primarily through the success of Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC). MMA in England is governed by the English Mixed Martial Arts Association (EMMAA).

Kickboxing

This is a combat sport that combines elements of boxing with kicking techniques. It involves both punches and kicks, making it a hybrid striking-based martial art. Kickboxing originated in the 1960s in Japan and the United States and has since gained international popularity. Participants use a combination of punches (using fists) and kicks (using legs and feet) to strike their opponents. Techniques employed are derived from various martial arts styles, including karate, boxing, and Taekwondo. The rules and regulations of kickboxing can vary depending on the organisation or governing body overseeing the sport.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Competitive kickboxing matches typically take place in a ring, similar to boxing. Participants wear protective gear, such as gloves, shin guards, and mouthguards. Matches are typically divided into rounds, with fighters aiming to score points by landing strikes on specific target areas of the opponent's body, such as the head, torso, and legs. The sport is governed by Kickboxing England.

Boxing

England Boxing is the NGB for Boxing in England. It governs the sport at national and regional level. There are currently 900+ affiliated boxing clubs containing over 21,000 formal members. EB has 11 regional boxing associations, which work with clubs across the full spectrum of development matters. It employs a team of club support officers (one per region), to help assist clubs with the day-to-day facility operation, seeking and securing funding for new projects that range from providing mental health awareness and tackling knife crime to putting on sessions for individuals with disabilities.

The vision of EB's new strategic plan¹⁸ (2022-2027) is "inspiring and transforming lives through boxing", to achieve this it has identified four key objectives which are accompanied by specific strategies. The objectives are:

- ♦ A thriving boxing community.
- ♦ An inclusive, diverse and accessible sport.
- ♦ An inspirational and aspirational competition and talent pathway.
- ♦ A respected and valued NGB.

Table 11.1: EB strategies attached to the four key objectives

Objective	Strategies
A thriving boxing community	Strong resilient clubs An enhanced and diverse workforce Engaged, supported and valued volunteers Accessible environments and facilities
An inclusive, diverse and accessible sport	Inclusive boxing opportunities Increased membership and servicing Non-contact/recreational opportunities
An inspirational and aspiration competition and talent pathway	An enhanced competition framework An inclusive and accessible pathway An enhanced and diverse talent workforce
A respected and valued NGB	Governance, leadership and integrity Partnerships and collaboration Insight, research and innovation Driving profile and income

¹⁸[Link to England-Boxing-2022-27 Strategy](#)

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

11.1: Supply

KKP's audit identified 16 combat sports/boxing venues in Southend-on-Sea. There are 11 dedicated sites which are either owned, leased or rented by clubs, and a further four non-dedicated sites where combat sports activity is currently taking place, alongside other sport and leisure activities.

Table 11.2 outlines activity across the Authority. Combat sports facilities are not included within Active Places database as a facility type, and thus this report focuses on facilities within Southend-on-Sea only.

Table 11.2: Combat sports facilities in Southend-on-Sea

ID	Club name	Dedicated?	Site
79	Southend Combat Academy	Yes	
81	Southend Street Gym	Yes	
72	Fight Fit Academy	Yes	
71	Champ Boxing Gym	Yes	
77	Okami Martial Arts Thorpe Bay	No	St. Georges RC Church Hall
76	Okami Martial Arts Southend	Yes	
80	Southend Martial Arts	Yes	
78	SAMU UK	Yes	
75	Meridian Kung Fu UK	Yes	
82	Team Sure Grip MMA	Yes	
74	Krav Maga Southend	No	Chase Sports & Fitness Centre
73	Gannon's Martial Arts	No	St. Edmunds Community Hall
83	Westwood Karate Academy (London Road)	Yes	
84	Westwood Karate Academy (Chase Sports)	No	Chase Sports & Fitness Centre
70	Brazilarte Academy	Yes	
59	Ultimate Fitness	Yes	

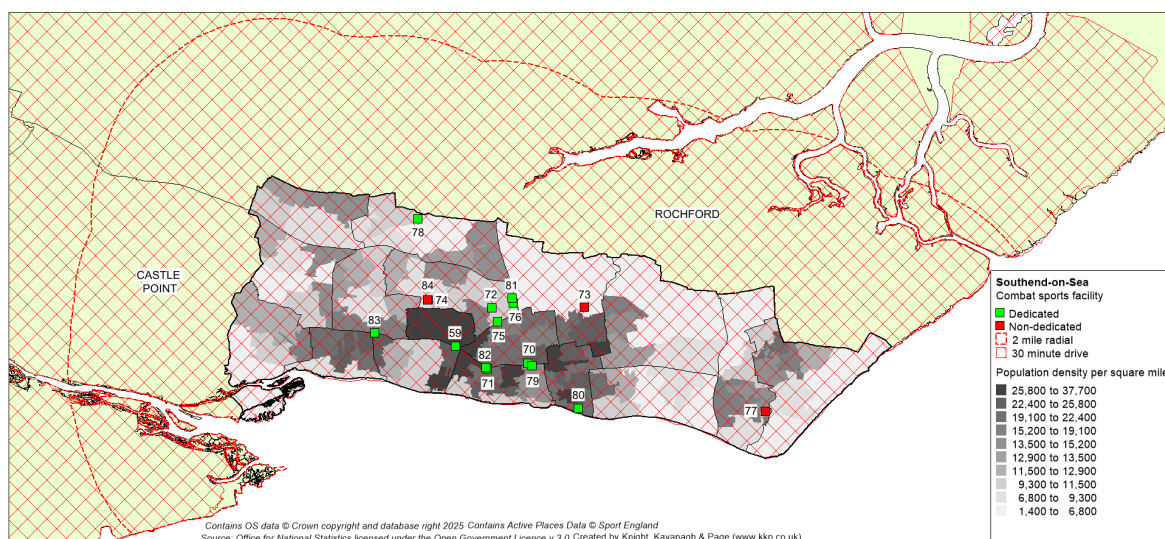


Figure 11.1: Combat sports facilities in the authority with drive time catchment (30-minutes)

This illustrates the good supply of combat sports facilities in close proximity to the city centre. The less densely populated areas of the authority, such as to the east, have poorer access.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Accessibility and availability

All residents live within a 30-minute drive of a combat sports facility. All facilities are accessible via pay and play or membership arrangements via the resident club/operator at each venue.

11.2: Demand

The audit identified 16 combat sports/boxing clubs in Southend-on-Sea. All clubs/operators were approached for consultation, one of which responded. It is not uncommon for the response rate of combat sport operators to be lower in comparison to other sports.

Brazilarte utilises a retail unit within Victoria Shopping Centre. This has helped increase visibility and attract foot traffic. By repurposing empty retail units, the space now accommodates a variety of activities including martial arts, yoga, dance, drama, and music. It runs six days a week, occasionally offering additional sessions on Sundays, and currently supports 55 monthly members alongside some pay-as-you-go participants. Staffing is limited to a small team with support from local professionals. Most sessions are delivered internally, though there is openness to expanding the team if demand increases.

It has faced significant challenges around rising rental costs. It reported that a proposed 50% rent increase by the council at the end of last year, later negotiated down to 35%, was a significant hurdle. There are also difficulties in navigating local authority support, as the club's activities span multiple sectors—arts, culture, sport, wellness, and business—making it unclear who to contact or where to seek funding.

11.3: Summary of key facts and issues

Elements	Assessment findings	Specific needs
Quantity	There are 16 facilities in which combat sports activities are currently taking place. 12 of the 16 are dedicated facilities, owned, rented or leased by the club user.	The cost of facility hire is a significant concern for clubs.
Quality	There is a high proportion of dedicated facilities in Southend-on-Sea. Dedicated sites generally provide a better offer than non-dedicated sites.	-
Accessibility	All Southend-on-Sea residents live within a 30 minutes' drive time of either a dedicated or non-dedicated combat sports facility.	None identified.
Availability (Management & usage)	Clubs/operators generally operate on the basis of pay & play access with membership systems in place for regular members.	There is a need to support clubs to continue to grow, to accommodate any additional demand.

Strategic summary

- There is a strong combat sports club presence in Southend-on-Sea. Given that clubs tend to be run by an instructor who will derive some level of income from this, scope for support is limited however, it should be recognised that combat sports providers offer alternative routes into sports and physical activity and should be supported where possible.
- There is a need to ensure that, where possible, combat sports clubs have security of tenure at good quality fit for purpose facilities and can meet the demands of the population.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

- ♦ Rising rents/rates pose a threat to the supply of dedicated sites. Operator's social return on investment should be considered when considering rental prices at council owned venues.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

SECTION 12: TABLE TENNIS

Table Tennis England (TTE) has the Mission 2025 strategy to develop table tennis during the next 10 years. This will ensure that facility investment (£750k from Sport England) enables “A network of vibrant table tennis venues, meeting the needs of social and committed participants that cater for current participants and enable an increase to 200,000 regular participants”.



Figure 12.1: A summary of TTE's purpose

Key to delivering this are schools and young people. TTE recognises that getting schools and young people to embrace table tennis is paramount to its long-term growth. TTE aims to offer table tennis for young people in 500 additional community venues and get it played in 1,000 more schools than in 2015. It has a plan to re-launch a new school-club link programme to provide a vital and sustainable partnership. A key target is that by 2025 there should be a club and/or league within 30 minutes' drive of 80% of the population.

12.1: Supply

There are two dedicated table tennis sites in Southend-on-Sea, one of which is used by two local clubs, the other is used to deliver individual and group coaching by a local professional.

Table 12.1: Table tennis facilities in Maldon

Map ID	Site name
138	Invicta Table Tennis Club
139	TT-on-Sea Coaching
60	Haven Community Centre

Accessibility

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Figure 12.1 overleaf illustrates that all Southend-on-Sea residents live within a 30-minute drivetime of a facility providing table tennis provision.

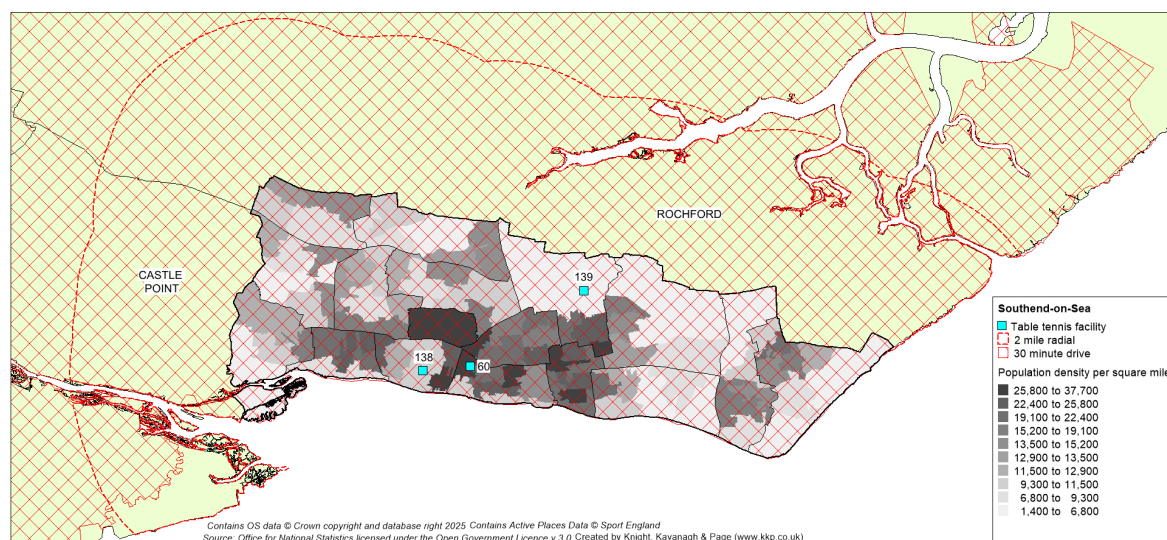


Figure 12.1: Location of dedicated table tennis facilities in Southend-on-Sea

12.2: Demand

Invicta Table Tennis Club, Hadleigh Forum Table Tennis Club, and TT-on-Sea Coaching were invited to take part in the consultation as part of the audit. In addition, the Southend & District Table Tennis League was invited. Invicta Table Tennis Club responded to the consultation request and information about the other two clubs which did not respond has been gleaned via desk-based research. Consultation with Table Tennis England was also conducted and informs the findings below.

Invicta Table Tennis Club operates out of the same facility as Invicta Tennis Club, renting half of the clubhouse to accommodate one table tennis table. It is actively seeking new members to join its three teams, with a particular focus on encouraging younger people to take up the sport. It currently has around 20 members, a handful of whom are social - who attend club nights but do not participate in competitive fixtures.

Due to limited demand, it also leases the facility to Hadleigh Forum Table Tennis Club three nights per week. Hadleigh Forum approached Invicta after struggling to find a suitable venue. The relationship between the two clubs is positive.

The building housing Invicta Table Tennis Club is dated and can be costly to maintain. Invicta TC and Invicta TTC have an agreement to share all bills, with each party responsible for maintaining its half of the building, as outlined in the original rental agreement. This agreement also gives the tennis section the right to provide written notice to Invicta Table Tennis Club. Opportunities to relocate are limited, and were the club required to vacate, it could potentially fold.

TT-on-Sea Coaching provides one-to-one and group coaching to individuals, clubs, and schools. Sessions are generally held at a dedicated facility near Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre, although some outreach delivery also takes place in local schools.

The Southend & District Table Tennis League comprises four divisions and includes clubs from Basildon, Benfleet, Canvey Island, Hadleigh, Hullbridge, Leigh-on-Sea, Rawreth, Rayleigh, Rochford, Wakering, and Westcliff. It previously operated with boundaries to reduce travel for away matches, but it now accepts teams from across south-east Essex.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

The League has been in operation since 1927 and is affiliated to both the Essex Table Tennis Association and Table Tennis England.

12.3: Summary of key facts and issues

Elements	Assessment findings	Specific needs
Quantity	There are two dedicated table tennis facilities in Southend-on-Sea at which regular table tennis takes place. One is operated by Invicta Table Tennis Club, which leases the room three nights a week to another club, whilst the other is used by a professional who offers coaching. Informal table tennis activity is also taking place at Haven Community centre.	There is a reasonable supply of teams in the Southend-on-Sea area with two teams for participants to join.
Quality	No quality issues were reported.	-
Accessibility	All Southend-on-Sea residents live within a 30 minutes' drive time of a facility providing table tennis.	None identified.
Availability (Management & usage)	Invicta Table Tennis Club is actively seeking new members, evidencing spare capacity across Southend-on-Sea. More sporadic, informal table tennis is also taking place at village/community halls in the Authority. Evidence of this can be seen in further detail in section 14.	Support Invicta Table Tennis Club to secure its tenure to continue to access a suitable facility to meet local demand.

Strategic summary

- Table tennis is currently well catered for in Southend-on-Sea. Invicta Table Tennis Club has spare capacity for increased members, and the local league has a healthy supply of teams.
- Support should be given to Invicta Table Tennis Club to secure the tenure of its existing site. Should it have to relocate, finding a suitable facility for both clubs currently using the site should be a high priority. A potential opportunity for collaboration is Southend-on-Sea Bowls Club.
- Utilise the findings in Section 14 to evidence where demand for table tennis may exist at village halls. This could assist Invicta Table tennis Club to attract additional members.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

SECTION 13: WATER SPORTS

13.1: Introduction

Water sports in England are governed by various bodies, including:

- ✦ British Canoe Union.
- ✦ British Kite Surfing Association.
- ✦ British Rowing.
- ✦ British Sub-Aqua Club.
- ✦ British Swimming.
- ✦ British Water Ski.
- ✦ Royal Yachting Association.
- ✦ Surfing Great Britain.

13.2: Supply

In Southend-on-Sea, The River Thames provides numerous opportunities to participate in water sports.

Canoeing, kayaking, kitesurfing, yachting, paddleboarding and diving are all accounted for by local clubs or organisations, with activities taking place on the River Thames. The clubs/organisations provide a range of competitive, recreational and learning opportunities.

The activity offered by each club is summarised in the following map and accompanying table.

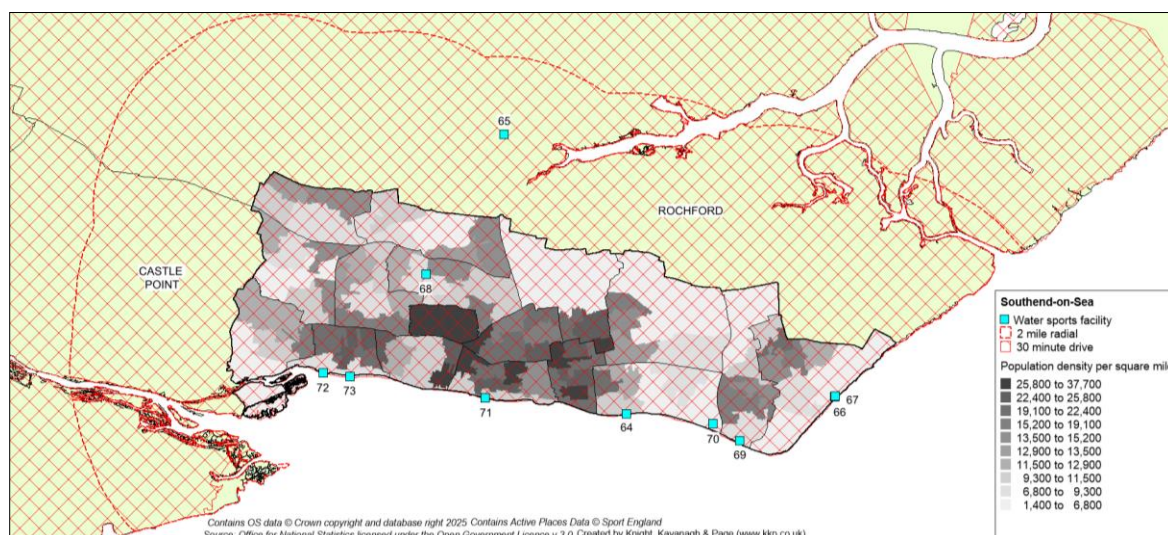


Figure 13.1: Water sport venue locations in Southend-on-Sea

Table 13.1: Water sport locations and known activities in Southend-on-Sea.

Site ID	Club / Organisation	Sports/activities offered
68	Perfect Day Water sports	Canoe, Kayaking.
69	Southend Kitesurfing	Kitesurfing.
67	Essex SUP	Stand up paddleboarding.
66	Essex Kitesurf	Kitesurfing.
64	Blue Therapy Active	Kayaking, paddleboarding.
70	Thorpe Bay Yacht Club	Sailing
71	Thames Estuary Yacht Club	Sailing.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site ID	Club / Organisation	Sports/activities offered
72	Leigh-on-Sea Sailing Club	Sailing
73	Essex Yacht Club	Sailing

One club diving club is located in the neighbouring Rochford. This is Dive Odyssey (site ID 65). The quality of the provision for water sports cannot be assessed in the same way as it is for other sports as natural spaces and features are generally used for activity where little can be done for enhancement. Instead, it is considered that the ancillary provision available to providers is of more importance in terms of the facilities offered, the quality of the facilities and the size of the space available.

Southend Kitesurfing Club accesses private toilet and changing facilities and has a good supply of car parking. It is able to store equipment on site in close proximity to the beach. It has no development plans or requirement to make significant changes to existing provision in the near future.

Essex SUP also has capacity to store equipment on site and is able to offer equipment hire to members and visitors. It has adequate changing facilities, toilets and lockers. It does not report any issues with the ancillary provision.

The remaining three clubs/organisations did not respond to consultation requests so specific detail is unknown.

Future changes to supply

The Marine Activities Centre has been vacant for several years. However, the Council is exploring lease options to bring the facility back into use via an operator with the opportunity for various water sport uses.

13.3: Demand

All clubs/organisations deliver courses ranging from 1-3 days for those new to water sport activities. These develop basic skills in participants to allow them to take part in independent water sport activity or as part of group activities with other members of each club/organisation.

Consultation did not outline any capacity issues with potential participants accessing courses. Given the high demand for water sport activity in Southend-on-Sea, there is a strong supply of teachers and course leaders.

13.3: Summary of key facts and issues

Elements	Assessment findings	Specific needs
Quantity	Nine clubs/organisations offer a range of water sport activities in Southend-on-Sea. One in Rochford is also accessible to Southend-on-Sea residents.	-
Quality	No quality issues were reported.	-
Accessibility	All Southend-on-Sea residents live within a 30 minutes' drive time of an operator providing water sports activities.	None identified.
Availability (Management & usage)	All clubs and organisations have capacity to take on additional members and deliver introductory courses.	Operators should continue to invest in ancillary provision where necessary and ensure that the number of qualified teachers/

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Elements	Assessment findings	Specific needs
		course leaders remains in line with demand levels for courses.

Strategic summary

Water sports are well catered for in Southend-on-Sea. Clubs and organisations generally operate on a commercial basis, maintaining ancillary provision and providing teachers and course leaders to increase participation. The courses provided, in a range of water sport activities, develop the skills required to take part in group activities or an individual basis.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

SECTION 14: COMMUNITY HALLS

14.1: Introduction

Community halls often fulfil an important role providing informal physical activity opportunity for residents who are unable or lack the confidence/means to access larger more formal leisure facilities. They are usually multi-functional, providing places for meetings, socialising and for sports and recreational clubs and activities. In more isolated areas, a church hall or a sports pavilion can also serve a range of functions depending on its size.

14.2: Supply

The 54 community halls in the Authority are well spread, many serving less densely populated areas. Sites were subject to physical or virtual assessment, and consultation was undertaken to assess community use. Where this was not feasible, desk research informed the audit.

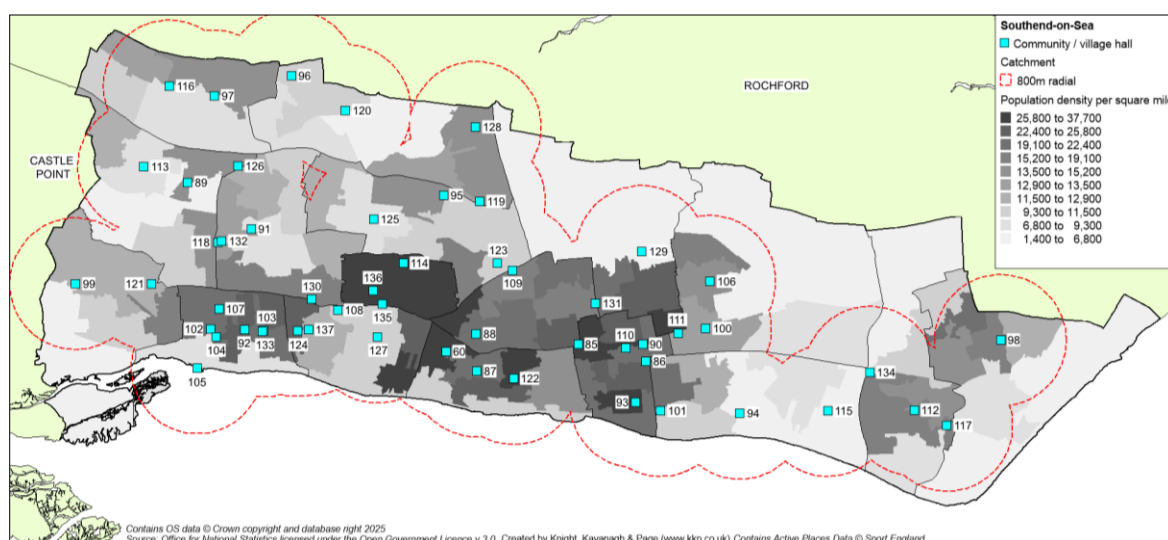


Figure 14.1: Community halls in Southend-on-Sea

Table 14.1: Smaller halls in Southend-on-Sea

ID	Name	Courts
85	All Saints Church Hall	0
86	Ambleside Social Club	1
87	Avenue Baptist Church	0
88	Balmoral Community Centre	0
89	Belfairs Methodist Church Hall	1
90	Belle Vue Baptist Church Hall	1
91	Blenheim Community Hall	0
92	Caedmon Hall	0
93	Centre Place Community Centre	0
94	Christ Church Hall	0
95	Earls Hall Baptist Church	0
96	Eastwood Community Centre	0
97	Eastwood Memorial Hall	0
98	Friars Baptist Church	0
99	Highlands Methodist Church	1
100	Holy Trinity Church Hall	1

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

ID	Name	Courts
101	Kensington Road Scout Hall	0
102	Leigh Community Centre	0
103	Leigh Road Baptist Church	1
104	Leigh Wesley Methodist Church	0
105	Leigh-On-Sea Scout Hall	0
106	Methodist Church Hall	0
107	Moose Hall	0
108	Park View Suite	0
109	Providence Baptist Church	0
110	Sacred Heart Church Hall	0
111	Salvation Army Hall	0
112	Shoeburyness & Thorpe Bay Baptist Church	0
113	St Aidan's Church Hall	1
114	St Andrews Church Hall	0
115	St Augustine's Church Hall	0
116	St Davids Church Hall	0
117	St George's Church Hall	1
118	St James Church Hall	0
119	St John Fisher RC Church	0
120	St Laurence and All Saints Church	0
121	St Margaret's Church Hall	1
122	St Mark's Community Centre	0
123	St Mary's Guild Hall	0
124	St Michaels and All Angels	0
125	St Peters Church Hall	0
126	St Peters Mazenod Hall	0
127	St Saviours Church Hall Essex	1
128	St Stephens Church Hall	1
129	St. Edmunds Community Centre	1
130	The Arlington Rooms	0
131	The Cornerstone URC	1
132	The Scout Hut, Ellenbrook Close	0
133	The Stables	0
134	Thorpedene Community Centre	0
135	Westcliff Free Church	0
136	Westcliff National Spiritualist Church	0
137	Westcliff United Reformed Church	0
60	Havens Community Hub	0

All sites were identified as providing some form of community use. Radial catchment modelling demonstrates the good access to community hall provision in Southend-on-Sea; approximately 94.7% of the population lives within 800 metres (approximately a 10-minute walk) of a community hall with community access. They potentially offer different types of physical activity which are relevant to the local communities which they serve.

Some halls contain line markings for traditional sports hall activities. Line markings in community halls can help to increase the number of activities which can take place. Halls which contain marked badminton courts include:

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

- ◀ Ambleside Social Club.
- ◀ Belfairs Methodist Church Hall.
- ◀ Belle Vue Baptist Church Hall.
- ◀ Highlands Methodist Church.
- ◀ Holy Trinity Church Hall.
- ◀ Leigh Road Baptist Church.
- ◀ St Aidans Church Hall.
- ◀ St George's Church Hall.
- ◀ St Margaret's Church Hall.
- ◀ St Saviours Church Hall Essex.
- ◀ St Stephens Church Hall.
- ◀ St. Edmunds Community Centre.
- ◀ The Cornerstone URC.

Availability

A wide range of providers own/operate community halls across the faith, charitable and education sectors providing a similarly wide range of physical, arts and cultural activity. Patterns of community use vary according to geographic location, local demand and provider agency orientation. Community halls tend to be able to provide community use opportunity during daytimes when venues such as schools are not available. They also cater for substantial weekend use and can be more cost effective than hiring facilities on school sites.

14.2 Demand

The below table outlines a selection of activities identified to be taking place at each site.

Table 14.2: Community hall usage

Site name	Activities
All Saints Church Hall	Film club, private functions.
Ambleside Social Club	Music events, private functions.
Avenue Baptist Church	Unknown.
Balmoral Community Centre	Group exercise classes, parent and toddler groups.
Belfairs Methodist Church Hall	Badminton, parent and toddler groups.
Belle Vue Baptist Church Hall	Badminton, basketball, art dabble, reading groups.
Blenheim Community Hall	Baby play, parent and toddler groups.
Caedmon Hall	Unknown.
Centre Place Community Centre	Stay and play, soft play
Christ Church Hall	Youth groups, religious groups.
Earls Hall Baptist Church	Parent and toddler groups.
Eastwood Community Centre	Parent and toddler groups.
Eastwood Memorial Hall	Unknown.
Friars Baptist Church	Arts and crafts, religious groups.
Havens Community Hub	Table tennis, dance, group exercise.
Highlands Methodist Church	Badminton, karate, keep fit, art group, choir.
Holy Trinity Church Hall	Youth groups, aerobics, local choirs, art groups.
Kensington Road Scout Hall	Youth groups.
Leigh Community Centre	Group exercise classes, dance classes.
Leigh Road Baptist Church	Badminton, social table tennis, parent and toddler groups.
Leigh Wesley Methodist Church	Group exercise classes, dance groups.
Leigh-On-Sea Scout Hall	Unknown.
Methodist Church Hall	Youth groups.
Moose Hall	Community events.
Park View Suite	Unknown.
Providence Baptist Church	Religious groups.
Sacred Heart Church Hall	Seasonal events, coffee mornings.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site name	Activities
Salvation Army Hall	Unknown.
Shoeburyness & Thorpe Bay Baptist Church	Group exercise classes, parent and toddler groups.
St Aidans Church Hall	Community groups, youth groups.
St Andrews Church Hall	Religious groups.
St Augustines Church Hall	Group exercise classes, religious groups.
St Davids Church Hall	Youth groups.
St George's Church Hall	Unknown.
St James Church Hall	Religious groups.
St John Fisher RC Church	Unknown.
St Laurence and All Saints Church	Religious groups.
St Margaret's Church Hall	Youth groups.
St Mark's Community Centre	Unknown.
St Mary's Guild Hall	Unknown.
St Michaels and All Angels	Parent and toddler groups, religious groups.
St Peters Church Hall	Community groups.
St Peters Mazenod Hall	Unknown.
St Saviours Church Hall Essex	Religious groups, community groups.
St Stephens Church Hall	Unknown.
St. Edmunds Community Centre	Unknown.
The Arlington Rooms	Unknown.
The Cornerstone URC	Parent and toddler groups, youth groups.
The Scout Hut, Ellenbrook Close	Youth groups.
The Stables	Tennis, badminton, social table tennis
Thorpedene Community Centre	Unknown.
Westcliff Free Church	Religious groups.
Westcliff National Spiritualist Church	Religious groups.
Westcliff United Reformed Church	Carpet bowls, group exercise classes, religious groups.

14.3 Summary of key facts and issues

Elements	Assessment finding	Specific facility needs
Quantity	There are 54 community halls in Southend-on-Sea. They are distributed across the authority, generally serving smaller population areas.	Ensure that smaller halls located within community centres continue to serve the local community.
Quality	No quality rating has been produced for any site.	There is a need to ensure that ageing halls are regularly refurbished to ensure they remain fit for purpose.
Accessibility	There is a good level of accessibility; 94.7% of the population lives within 800m of a smaller hall.	Increase accessibility via identifying opportunity to make more use of existing and/or to develop new community provision to serve current and future population-based demand.
Availability (Management and usage)	All sites appear to have some level of spare capacity.	Support the work of community hall managers to ensure that realistic usage levels are optimised and that activities at each reflect/support the need of local people.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

SECTION 15: CLIMBING WALLS

The British Mountaineering Council (BMC) is the national representative body that champions the interests of climbers, hill walkers, mountaineers and ski mountaineers in England and Wales. It is the Sport England recognised NGB for competition climbing. It is presently preparing its 2025-20230 strategy. Its Strategic Plan (2020-2024) sets a vision ‘to create a better future for climbers, hill walkers and mountaineers’ based on five key themes:

- ◀ Access, conservation & environmental sustainability.
- ◀ Membership engagement, services & support.
- ◀ Education, inspiration & skills.
- ◀ Organisational development & sector leadership.
- ◀ GB Climbing - competitions, talented athletes & the GB Teams.

Sport climbing (speed, bouldering and lead) officially debuted at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics. All three disciplines can be hosted at indoor venues and are popular formats of climbing. Bouldering is identified as a high growth area, especially for children entering the sport. The International Federation of Sport Climbing (IFSC) has several requirements for climbing walls used in Olympic standard competitions, they include:

- ◀ **Boulder:** maximum height of 4m and safety mats below, climbers solve (complete) problems on 4/5 boulders in the lowest number of attempts over a set period of time.
- ◀ **Lead:** climbers secured by a rope on an overhanging route climb to the highest point possible on a 15m high wall in six minutes. (Climbers can preview the route for six minutes prior and are kept in isolation before performing their attempt).
- ◀ **Speed:** secured from above, climbers run up standardised parallel routes on a 15m wall. The fastest climber wins.

15.1: Supply

KKP audit identified one climbing facility within the Authority, Indirock, which is located within Victoria Shopping Centre on Southend High Street. It features a 3.8m high bouldering wall with varying routes suitable for climbers of all abilities.

Due to health and safety requirements and the extensive training required to be a qualified climbing instructor and to operate a climbing wall, there is a need for a large population catchment to make a commercial facility sustainable, so facilities do tend to be located in more urban areas.

Table 13.1: Supply of climbing walls

ID	Site	Facility type
61	Indirock	Bouldering wall

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

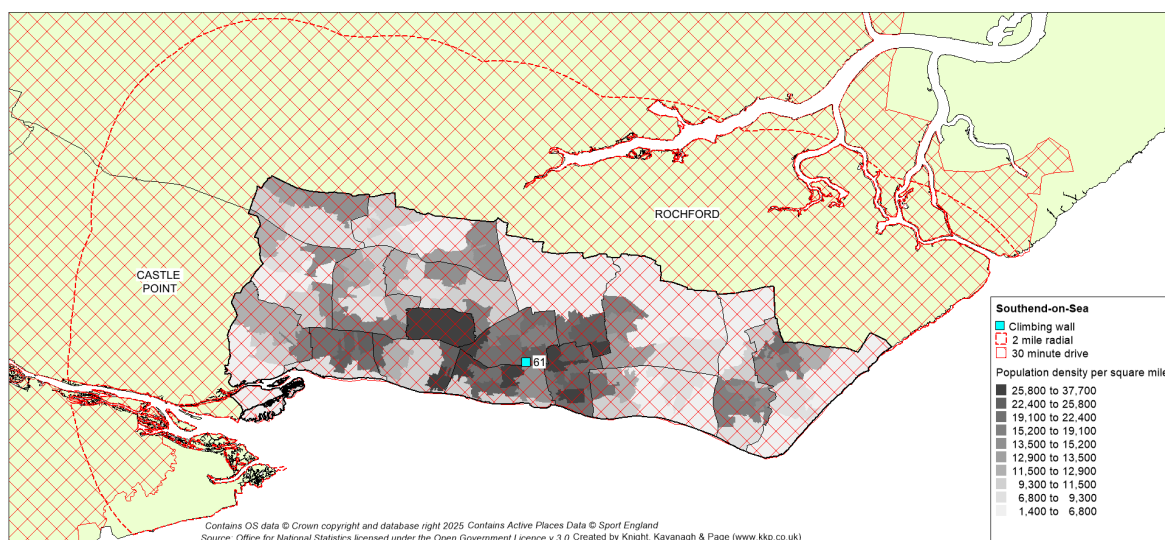


Figure 13.1: Climbing facilities in Southend-on-Sea

Accessibility and availability

Drive time catchment modelling suggests that 100% of Southend-on-Sea's population is within a 30-minute drive of a climbing wall facility.

As shown in Figure 13.1 above, the central location of Indirock means that a large percentage of local people live within half an hour of the climbing facility. In addition to this, its town centre location means it has good public transport links.

Indirock is available for pay and play use seven days per week, with free 15-minute introductory sessions for those looking to try the sport. In addition, it offers a 2-week introductory pass for £20, which includes unlimited climbing.

Regular climbers can do so via a £55 monthly climbing pass, which includes unlimited climbing, or an off-peak membership (allowing access weekdays before 16:00) for £32 per month. Pay as you play prices are £12.50 (peak time) and £8 (off-peak).

Shoe and chalk hire is also available for an additional cost. Discounted membership/visits are available for those on low income.

15.2: Demand

Demand for use at Indirock is reportedly high, particularly with those who have never previously experienced climbing/bouldering activity before. The site, since opening in 2022, has attracted 35,000 online signups, 115,000 un-instructed climbs and hosted 2,000 soft play sessions for younger climbers.

In addition, it has also invested in a mobile climbing wall, which it uses to take climbing activities to the most deprived areas within Southend-on-Sea.

15.3: Summary of key facts and issues

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Facility type	Climbing / bouldering	-
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	Indirock provides a good opportunity for both experienced and beginner climbers in Southend-on-Sea.	The audit did not identify any demand issues.
Quality	The audit has not identified any issues regarding the quality of Indirock.	-
Accessibility	All Southend-on-Sea residents live within 30 minutes' drive time of an indoor climbing facility.	Ensure that support is given, if required, to ensure that Indirock can remain in its current location, which is key to attracting high footfall.
Availability (Management and usage)	Given the commercial operation of Indirock, availability is good.	-

- Support Indirock to continue offering cost effective/discounted sessions to those in the most deprived areas in Southend-on-Sea.
- Collaborate with BMC to ensure that adequate training opportunities are available to ensure that facility staffing does not hinder the facilities growth.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

SECTION 16: SUMMARY: STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

The strategy which follows will take account of the findings of this needs assessment, the Authority's demographic make-up and the Council's vision. There is a general requirement to continue to invest in sports facilities in Southend-on-Sea to ensure that they are fit for purpose for the 21st Century (e.g., welcoming, clean, attractive, flexible spaces, wide programme offer, ability to learn to swim cost-effective to manage and operate etc). This should lead to increased participation and a more active authority. Strategy recommendations are likely to be predicated upon some or all of the following:

In terms of public leisure provision, the Council, in partnership with Freedom Leisure, should:

- ◀ Consider whether and how it might be possible to open up the sports hall at Shoeburyness Leisure Centre to the public on more occasions during weekday daytimes.
- ◀ Invest in the public leisure centre pool stock. Both Belfairs Swim Centre and Shoeburyness Leisure Centre are below average in quality. Plant room investment at Belfairs Swim Centre is needed to enable proper adjustment of the pool temperature.
- ◀ Focus on the recruitment of learn to swim teachers. Currently, all leisure centres are, in terms of staffing, operating at 100% capacity after reducing the number of sessions on offer. A pay review should be carried out to evaluate how staff can be better recruited and retained.
- ◀ Consider how to make better use of the significant size of Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre. This could involve remodelling the site to encompass all health and fitness provision on one floor to increase accessibility for less mobile users. It currently features a substantial number of underutilised spaces such as the closed health and fitness suite, bar and social area, changing provision and studio space.
- ◀ Modernise the spin studio at Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre, which is popular, and replace the broken equipment.
- ◀ Concurrently, repair or replace the trampolines stored in the 2-court sports hall to enable a re-start of the trampolining sessions to meet proven pre-existing demand.
- ◀ Upgrade the health and fitness suite and studio space at Shoeburyness Leisure Centre. This could involve the extension of both existing facilities (making use of closed changing room space and car parking respectively) to encourage greater membership take up and general use of the facilities on offer. This will help the site to compete with popular commercial operators in Southend-on-Sea.
- ◀ Ensure that potential members can easily view the cost of leisure centre membership and complete an online sign-up process without the need to wait to be contacted by a staff member. This would fall more in line with competitors' membership strategies.
- ◀ Consider how the new Freedom Leisure contract can help the Council meet the needs of its residents. Suitable activities should be programmed in public leisure centre timetabling, such as free (or low-cost) swimming sessions, walking football, rugby or basketball.
- ◀ Building on the above, ensure that public leisure centre memberships and specific activities are available to people living in the Authority's more deprived communities at an appropriate price point and that the mechanisms used to promote this are more prominent. For example, no concessionary pricing is available to students, over 65s or those looking to play during quieter times when booking an indoor tennis court at Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre.
- ◀ Ensure that any future facilities meet local authority carbon reduction targets whilst meeting the needs of local clubs e.g., via provision of adequate changing facilities and meeting sport-specific specifications such as suitable run off spaces in sports halls for basketball, wall colouring appropriate for badminton, volleyball line markings and posts.
- ◀ In collaboration with Sport England, commission FPM analysis to gain further understanding of the effect of population growth on the supply of and demand for sports hall and swimming pool space.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

BUILT FACILITIES - NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

To support wider sport and leisure provision, the Council (and partners) should:

- ◀ Collaborate with schools to ensure that sports hall quality remains at/rises to an appropriate standard and that they continue to be made available for community use.
- ◀ Collaborate with educational sites to look at operational processes whereby, wherever possible, they remain open for the maximum possible period of time for community use throughout the year. In addition to seeking to apply innovative solutions to help tackle this issue, clubs need to be supported and offered alternatives during the periods in which exam tables take up sports hall space.
- ◀ Support the reintroduction of Hamstel Junior School Swimming Pool, which was popular with commercial swimming lesson providers.
- ◀ Consider partnership with TruGym (Thorpe Bay) to encourage the operator to open up the only squash courts with community access in Southend-on-Sea for pay and play use.
- ◀ Encourage cross-sport collaboration between clubs such as the potential for facility sharing between Invicta Table Tennis Club and Southend-on-Sea Bowls Club.
- ◀ Look to support clubs seeking to access different facilities to enable them to continue to grow participation. Sports to which this applies include badminton, basketball, archery, table tennis and swimming.
- ◀ Consider whether health/physical activity referral activity could be delivered in community halls due to the large supply and good distribution of facilities.