



# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

## STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN DECEMBER 2025

QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

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# **BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

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# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

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## ABBREVIATIONS

3G	Third Generation Turf
AGP	Artificial Grass Pitch
ANOG	Assessing Needs & Opportunities Guide
BE	Bowls England
CFA	County Football Association
DCMS	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
EA	England Athletics
ECB	England & Wales Cricket Board
EH	England Hockey
EN	England Netball
FA	Football Association
FC	Football Club
FF	Football Foundation
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
FPM	Facilities Planning Model
GIS	Geographic Information System
GMA	Grounds Maintenance Association
GPMF	Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund
HC	Hockey Club
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh and Page
LFFP	Local Football Facility Plan
NFFS	National Football Facilities Strategy
NGB(s)	National Governing Body (of sport)
NLS	National League System
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NTP	Non-Turf Pitch
MES	Match Equivalent Session
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PIP	Pitch Improvement Programme
PPC	Playing Pitch Calculator
PPS	Playing Pitch Strategy
PPOSS	Playing Pitch & Outdoor Sport Strategy
PQS	Performance Quality Standard
RFU	Rugby Football Union
RUFC	Rugby Union Football Club
SFC	Sports Facilities Calculator
U	Under (related to participating age groups)

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

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### PART 1: INTRODUCTION

Knight, Kavanagh & Page Ltd (KKP) has been appointed by Braintree District Council (BDC) to deliver a Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy (PPOSS). The PPOSS will provide the necessary robustness and direction to ensure that the Council has a framework for the prioritisation, provision and development of sports facilities across the public, private and independent sectors. It covers all formal playing pitch and outdoor sport facilities across the authority area to assist it to strategically plan for the future.

Building upon the preceding Assessment Report, this Strategy and Action Plan provides a clear, strategic framework for the maintenance and improvement of existing playing pitch and accompanying ancillary facilities up to 2041 (in line with the Local Plan review). It has been developed to provide:

- ◀ A vision for the future improvement and prioritisation of playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities.
- ◀ A number of aims to help deliver the recommendations and actions.
- ◀ A series of strategic recommendations which provide a strategic framework for the improvement, maintenance, development and, as appropriate, rationalisation of the playing pitch and outdoor sport facility stock.
- ◀ A series of sport-by-sport recommendations which provide a strategic framework for sport led improvements to provision.
- ◀ A prioritised area-by-area and site-by-site action plan that prioritises and can address key issues.
- ◀ Guidance as to how the PPOSS can be delivered.

The Strategy is delivered in accordance with Sport England's Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) Guidance (for playing pitch sports) and Sport England's Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guide (for "non-pitch" sports). Sport England's PPS Guidance details a stepped approach, separated into five distinct sections:

- ◀ Stage A: Prepare and tailor the approach
- ◀ Stage B: Gather information and views on the supply of and demand for provision
- ◀ Stage C: Assess the supply and demand information and views
- ◀ Stage D: Develop the Strategy
- ◀ Stage E: Deliver the Strategy and keep it robust and up to date

This report represents Stage D of the process, with stages A-C covered in the preceding Assessment Report and Stage E ongoing once the study is complete. The lifespan of a PPOSS is considered to be three years, although this can be increased if updated.

The ANOG has a similar staged approach, as follows:

- ◀ Stage A: Prepare and tailor the approach.
- ◀ Stage B: Gather information on supply and demand.
- ◀ Stage C: Assessment – bringing the information together.
- ◀ Application: Application of an assessment.

Where not already implemented, the recommendations that come out of this strategy should be translated into local planning policy so that there is a mechanism in place to protect existing provision and to secure investment where the opportunity arises. The lifespan of a PPOSS is considered to be three years, although this can be increased if it is regularly kept up to date.

The PPOSS replaces the existing study (2015) for the Braintree District whilst also now covering a wider scope and additional sports.

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The Action Plan (Part 6) recommends several priority projects relating to sports provision which should be realised over the Local Plan period. It provides a framework for improvement and, although resources may not currently be in place to implement it, potential partners and possible sources of external funding.

Partner organisations in Braintree have a vested interest in ensuring that existing playing pitches and ancillary provision are protected and enhanced. As such, many of the objectives and actions within this document need to be delivered and implemented by a wide range of bodies such as national governing bodies of sport (NGBs), sports organisations and education establishments. In many instances, BDC will not be the organisation which delivers these actions or recommendations as the PPOSS is not solely just for the Local Authority to act upon. It applies to/for all the stakeholders and partners involved.

### Scope

The scope of the PPOSS focuses geographically on all local provision, regardless of ownership and management arrangements. Sport included within the project are as follows:

- ◀ Football pitches (grass, third generation turf (3G) and ancillary provision).
- ◀ Rugby union pitches.
- ◀ Cricket pitches.
- ◀ Hockey pitches (artificial grass pitches (AGPs)).
- ◀ Other grass pitch sports as relevant e.g. rugby league, lacrosse, baseball/softball and American football.
- ◀ Tennis courts (including padel and pickleball facilities).
- ◀ Bowling greens.
- ◀ Athletics tracks (and running).
- ◀ Netball courts.
- ◀ Golf courses.
- ◀ Cycling (learn to ride space, road circuits, pump tracks, mountain biking/off road trails).
- ◀ Basketball courts.

In addition, 3G pitches are included, with this mainly focusing on football activity but also taking into account other sports that can use the surface type (e.g., rugby union and rugby league).

Where an outdoor sport has not been included, this is because its presence has not been evidenced. However, that is not to say that the sports are not played informally, or that localised demand does not exist.

Sport England's PPS guidance applies to football, rugby union, cricket and hockey as well as the other grass pitch sports identified. ANOG guidance applies to the remaining 'non-pitch' sports.

As well as considering current supply and demand, the strategy will ensure that a planned approach to sport and physical activity facilities takes place in the Council's area now and up to 2033, in line with the current Local Plan period. However, in respect of any future Local Plan review a period up to 2041 will need to be addressed.

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

## Study area

Braintree District is located in the north of Essex between west of Colchester and north of Chelmsford and is on the A120 leading to Stansted Airport. The main towns are Braintree, Witham and Halstead with a number of key service villages: Coggeshall, Earls Colne, Hatfield Peverel, Kelvedon & Feering and Sible Hedingham. Outside the main settlements the District has a predominantly rural character.

The study area is the Braintree District Council boundary area. Further to this sub areas or analysis areas are used to allow a more localised assessment of provision and examination of playing pitch supply and demand at a local level. Use of analysis areas also allows local circumstances and issues to be taken into account.

Braintree has seven neighbouring authorities: South Cambridgeshire, West Suffolk, Babergh, Colchester, Maldon, Chelmsford and Uttlesford. Due to this, there is a level of imported demand and sports teams from outside the study area that use outdoor sports facilities within Braintree. In addition, it is likely that sports teams from inside the Braintree District also use facilities outside of the area.

Braintree is divided into three analysis areas to better reflect the population split within the District. Each analysis area is made up of the following parishes/wards:

Table 1.1: Table of wards within the analysis areas

Analysis area	Map ID	Ward
Rural North	7	Bumpstead
Rural North	9	Gosfield & Greenstead Green
Rural North	11	Halstead St Andrew's
Rural North	12	Halstead Trinity
Rural North	14	Hedingham
Rural North	18	Stour Valley North
Rural North	19	Stour Valley South
Rural North	20	The Colnes
Rural North	21	Three Fields
Rural North	26	Yeldham
Central	1	Bocking Blackwater
Central	2	Bocking North
Central	3	Bocking South
Central	4	Braintree Central & Beckers Green
Central	5	Braintree South
Central	6	Braintree West
Central	8	Coggeshall
Central	10	Great Notley & Black Notley
Central	16	Rayne
South	13	Hatfield Peverel & Terling
South	15	Kelvedon & Feering
South	17	Silver End & Cressing
South	22	Witham Central
South	23	Witham North
South	24	Witham South
South	25	Witham West

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For a map showing the analysis areas, please see Figure 1.1 below.

Figure 1.1: Map of the Braintree District analysis areas



# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

## PART 2: VISION AND AIMS

In line with existing corporate policies, the proposed vision for the Braintree District PPOSS is:

“To work with partners to create high quality, inclusive and sustainable sports facilities which allow communities to thrive through increasing participation and supporting health and wellbeing now and in the future.”

In addition, the following overarching aims are based on the three Sport England themes (see figure below). It is recommended that these are also adopted by the Council and its partners to enable it to achieve the overall vision of the PPOSS and Sport England planning objectives. Strategy delivery is the responsibility of, and relies upon, all relevant stakeholders.

### AIM 1

To **protect** the existing supply of outdoor sport provision and ancillary facilities where it is needed for meeting current and future needs.

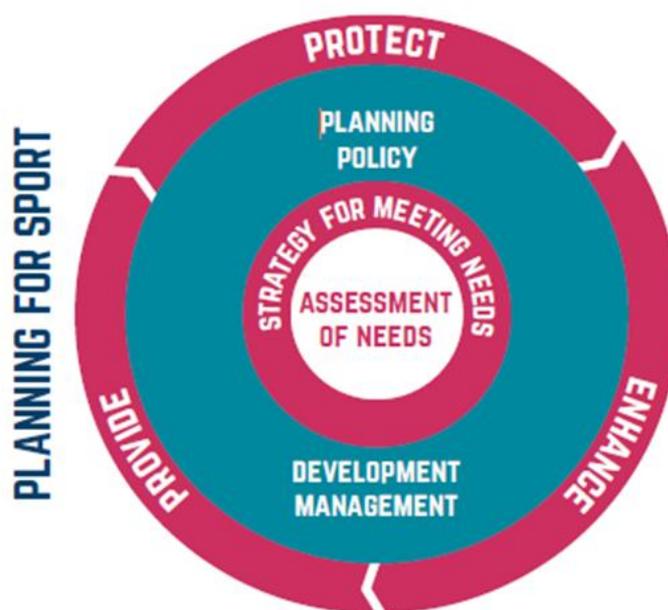
### AIM 2

To **enhance** outdoor sport provision and ancillary facilities through improving quality and management of sites.

### AIM 3

To **provide** new outdoor sport provision and ancillary facilities where there is current or future demand to do so.

Figure 2.1: Sport England themes



Source: Sport England, Planning for Sport Guidance (2024)

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## PART 3: HEADLINE FINDINGS

The table below highlights the current quantitative shortfalls for each main pitch sport included within the PPOSS, as identified in the preceding Assessment Report. For qualitative findings and site-specific findings, please see Part 4: Sport Specific Recommendations and Scenarios, and Part 6: Action Plan.

Natural turf pitches have a limit of how much play they can accommodate over a certain period of time before their quality, and in turn their use, is adversely affected. As the main usage of pitches is for matches, it is appropriate for the comparable unit to be match equivalent sessions. The table below therefore uses this for football, rugby union, rugby league and cricket, converting both the amount of play a site can accommodate (its carrying capacity) and how much play takes place (its current use) into the same unit of demand to enable an analysis to be undertaken.

Based on how the sports tend to be played, the match equivalent session unit for football, rugby union and rugby league pitches relates to a typical week within the season for each sport, whereas for cricket, the number of match equivalent sessions is over the course of a season. This is because how much play a cricket pitch can accommodate is primarily determined by the number and quality of wickets on a square, with only one match generally played per pitch per day and with the wickets rotated throughout a season to reduce wear and to allow for repair. Each wicket is therefore able to accommodate a certain amount of play per season as opposed to a week.

For artificial surfaces, the carrying capacity of the provision is much higher, meaning how much play can be accommodated is primarily determined by availability, rather than how usage adversely affects quality, as is the case with grass pitches. Therefore, the total number of pitches required is instead used to form an analysis. This is pertinent to 3G and hockey (sand/water-based pitches).

Future demand has to this point been determined by using Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator, which looks at forecasted population change over a predetermined period. For Braintree District, this has been set to forecasted population rates (using ONS-based projections) to 2041, in line with the Local Plan.

Table 3.1: Current quantitative headline findings (pitch sports)

Analysis area	Pitch type	Current supply/demand balance	Future supply/demand balance (to 2041)
<b>Football</b>	-	-	-
Central	Adult	Actual spare capacity of 2 match equivalent sessions	Actual spare capacity of 1.5 match equivalent sessions
Central	Youth 11v11	Shortfall of 0.5 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 1.5 match equivalent sessions
Central	Youth 9v9	Shortfall of 5.5 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 6 match equivalent sessions
Central	Mini 7v7	Actual spare capacity of 0.5 match equivalent sessions	Played to capacity
Central	Mini 5v5	Actual spare capacity of 3.5 match equivalent sessions	Actual spare capacity of 3.5 match equivalent sessions
Rural North	Adult	Shortfall of 7 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 8 match equivalent sessions
Rural North	Youth 11v11	Played to capacity	Shortfall of 0.5 match equivalent sessions

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Analysis area	Pitch type	Current supply/demand balance	Future supply/demand balance (to 2041)
Rural North	Youth 9v9	Actual spare capacity of 1 match equivalent sessions	Actual spare capacity of 1 match equivalent sessions
Rural North	Mini 7v7	Played to capacity	Shortfall of 0.5 match equivalent sessions
Rural North	Mini 5v5	Actual spare capacity of 0.5 match equivalent sessions	Actual spare capacity of 0.5 match equivalent sessions
South	Adult	Shortfall of 9.5 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 10.5 match equivalent sessions
South	Youth 11v11	Shortfall of 1 match equivalent session	Shortfall of 2 match equivalent sessions
South	Youth 9v9	Shortfall of 5 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 6 match equivalent sessions
South	Mini 7v7	Shortfall of 0.5 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 1 match equivalent session
South	Mini 5v5	Actual spare capacity of 2.5 match equivalent sessions	Actual spare capacity of 2 match equivalent sessions
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Adult</b>	<b>Shortfall of 14.5 match equivalent sessions</b>	<b>Shortfall of 17.5 match equivalent sessions</b>
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Youth 11v11</b>	<b>Shortfall of 1.5 match equivalent sessions</b>	<b>Shortfall of 4 match equivalent sessions</b>
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Youth 9v9</b>	<b>Shortfall of 9.5 match equivalent sessions</b>	<b>Shortfall of 11 match equivalent sessions</b>
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Mini 7v7</b>	<b>Played to capacity</b>	<b>Shortfall of 1.5 match equivalent sessions</b>
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Mini 5v5</b>	<b>Actual spare capacity of 6.5 match equivalent sessions</b>	<b>Actual spare capacity of 6 match equivalent sessions</b>
<b>3G pitches</b>	-	-	-
Central	11v11	Actual spare capacity of 0.25 pitch	Actual spare capacity of 0.25 pitch
Rural North	11v11	Shortfall of 0.25 pitch	Shortfall of 0.25 pitch
South	11v11	Shortfall of 2 pitch	Shortfall of 2 pitch
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>11v11</b>	<b>Shortfall of 2 pitches</b>	<b>Shortfall of 2 pitches</b>
<b>Rugby union</b>	-	-	-
Central	Senior	Shortfall of 7.5 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 8 match equivalent sessions
Rural North	Senior	Played to capacity	Played to capacity
South	Senior	Shortfall of 5 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 5 match equivalent sessions
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Senior</b>	<b>Shortfall of 12.5 match equivalent sessions</b>	<b>Shortfall of 13 match equivalent sessions</b>
<b>Hockey</b>	-	-	-
Central	<b>Full size</b>	Played to capacity	Played to capacity
Rural North	<b>Full size</b>	Played to capacity	Played to capacity
South	<b>Full size</b>	Played to capacity	Played to capacity
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Full size</b>	<b>Played to capacity</b>	<b>Played to capacity</b>
<b>Cricket</b>	-	-	-
Central	Saturday	Shortfall of 37 match equivalent sessions	-

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Analysis area	Pitch type	Current supply/demand balance	Future supply/demand balance (to 2041)
Central	Sunday	Shortfall of 37 match equivalent sessions	-
Central	Midweek	Shortfall of 37 match equivalent sessions	-
Rural North	Saturday	Actual spare capacity of 48 match equivalent sessions	-
Rural North	Sunday	Actual spare capacity of 30 match equivalent sessions	-
Rural North	Midweek	Actual spare capacity of 96 match equivalent sessions	-
South	Saturday	Shortfall of 62 match equivalent sessions	-
South	Sunday	Shortfall of 50 match equivalent sessions	-
South	Midweek	Shortfall of 58 match equivalent sessions	-
<b>Braintree District</b>	Saturday	<b>Shortfall of 51 match equivalent sessions</b>	<b>Shortfall of 75 match equivalent sessions</b>
<b>Braintree District</b>	Sunday	<b>Shortfall of 57 match equivalent sessions</b>	<b>Shortfall of 57 match equivalent sessions</b>
<b>Braintree District</b>	Midweek	<b>Actual spare capacity of four match equivalent sessions</b>	<b>Shortfall of two match equivalent sessions</b>

For the remaining sports, quantitative shortfalls can be more difficult to determine, with capacity guidance differing and with focus often away from formal activity. The current and future picture for each sport across Braintree District is therefore instead summarised in the table below.

Table 3.2: Headline findings (remaining sports)

Sport	Headline findings
<b>Tennis</b>	For club-based tennis, there is seemingly sufficient capacity in the Braintree District to facilitate current and future demand. No responding clubs report any issues, suggesting that there is no requirement for additional court space. In contrast, there is likely to be a shortfall of provision for non-club activity, with few local authority courts existing and with some of the supply accessed by clubs, poor quality and/or without sports lighting. This likely leading to levels of unmet and latent demand.
<b>Padel</b>	There are currently four outdoor padel courts in the Braintree District, located at The Essex Golf and Country Club and The Notleys Golf Club. The LTA estimates a further eight courts would need to be provided across the District to meet the demand.
<b>Netball</b>	Whilst there is a limited supply of netball provision within the Braintree District, existing demand levels are being adequately serviced. However, improving the alternative supply in the District and creating additional provision could result in increased demand levels and consequently help the sport grow. This should be further considered alongside the findings of the Chelmsford PPOSS and in partnership with neighbouring authorities to provide a regional solution to the issues identified.
<b>Bowls</b>	Both current and future demand for bowls in the Braintree District can be met via the existing supply, although monitoring is required in relation to Braintree BC and Witham BC to ensure that this remains the case due to its high membership. In addition, with no clubs operating with unsustainably low numbers, it is imperative that all four greens are protected for continued bowls activity. The levels of demand recorded could not be condensed onto fewer greens.

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Sport	Headline findings
<b>Athletics</b>	The supply of dedicated athletics facilities is sufficient to meet current demand. Braintree & District AC has a waiting list of 30 members. The Club cites this is due to a lack of coaches and volunteers which is limiting its growth. As well as some level of qualitative improvement is needed at Braintree Sport & Health Club. This is especially in regard to the surface of the track, which will require a resurface by 2026 (when its Track Mark accreditation expires).
<b>Golf</b>	The existing supply of golf provision in the Braintree District is sufficient to meet demand levels, with a large quantity of facilities provided that collectively offers good variety to ensure that all golfers can be catered for. As demand levels are also high, particularly when accounting for needs from the wider region, all existing provision needs to be protected.
<b>Cycling</b>	There is some club based demand identified in the Braintree District, with one BMX club which accesses a dedicated facility at Deanery Hill (Queen Elizabeth II Foundation Field). Therefore, the provision should be protected and sustained and seen as a destination venue for BMX cyclists in the District.
<b>Basketball</b>	There is seemingly a good supply of basketball courts in the Braintree District across the MUGA supply. However, there are clear quality issues that should be overcome to better accommodate existing usage and to encourage higher levels of demand.
<b>Other grass pitch sports</b>	The current level of supply is sufficient enough to meet community demand for rounders in the Braintree District, with rounders diamonds provided at Council and town/parish council sites and thus are available for community use able to adequately cater for any potential future demand. That being said, there are no community available facilities in the North Analysis Area.

## Conclusion

The existing position for all sports is either that demand is being met or that there is a shortfall, whereas the future position shows the exacerbation of current shortfalls and the creation of additional shortfalls for some pitch/facility types and in some areas where demand is currently being met. As a result, no provision can be deemed surplus to requirements, meaning that there is a clear need to protect all existing provision. This is unless another planning policy exception is met, as per Paragraph 104 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Despite the identified shortfalls, most of the deficits identified could be met by better utilising current provision, such as through improving quality, site re-configuration, installing additional sports lighting, enabling access to existing unused sites, such as at unavailable schools, and bringing disused sites back into use. This means that significant levels of new provision will not necessarily be required, providing that other solutions can be delivered to the required degree.

As exceptions to the above, the shortfall of 3G pitches and padel courts can only be met via the installation of new provision given that such demand cannot be met in any alternative ways (although existing sites could be utilised). Additionally, there is also a distinct need for additional cricket provision, whilst large scale housing growth could also necessitate the need for further facilities (see Part 7 of this report).

Furthermore, it should also be noted that even for sports and in areas where demand is being met, this does not mean that no actions will be required over the lifespan of the PPOSS.

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## PART 4: SPORT SPECIFIC ISSUES SCENARIOS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this section, in order to help develop actions for each sport, and to understand their potential impact, a number of relevant scenario questions are tested against the findings evidences in the preceding Assessment Report for each sport. This then informs the sport specific recommendations.

The included scenarios focus on the impact that they will have on the shortfalls and key issues identified and how they can be overcome. However, whilst each can improve the picture to a greater or lesser extent, it should be noted that carrying out some scenarios to the fullest degree is likely to be unviable and that a combination of actions will instead be required to ensure that all current and future demand can be met.

For some sports, no scenarios are included, although that is not to say that no action is required. Instead, recommendations are clear without the requirement for scenarios to be tested.

### Football – grass pitches

#### Assessment Report summary

##### Football – supply and demand summary

- Actual spare capacity by site and pitch type across the Braintree District totalling 24.5 match equivalent sessions per week and is identified across 35 pitches.
- It is determined that there is currently a shortfall of adult, youth 11v11 and youth 9v9 pitch capacity, with the mini 7v7 played to capacity and mini 5v5 pitches displaying actual spare capacity.
- When factoring in future demand, shortfalls worsen on adult and youth pitches whilst they are created on the mini 7v7 pitches.
- Overall, the Central and Rural North analysis areas display actual spare capacity, whilst the South Analysis Area shows shortfalls for the majority of pitch types.

##### Football – supply summary

- The audit identifies a total of 133 grass football pitches within the Braintree District across 58 sites, with 112 pitches available for community use across 45 sites.
- Disused provision is identified at Burches Meadow.
- In addition to formal football provision, there are eight sites across the Braintree District which accommodate recreational provision that is or can be used for football activity.
- Future provision should be established as part of the residential development at Land North East of Witham.
- Most community available pitches across the Braintree District are managed by sports clubs (43 pitches).
- Of the pitches that are available for community use, 19 are assessed as good quality, 58 as standard quality and 35 as poor quality.
- Blackmore End Playing Fields, Braintree Town FC- Crossing Road, Deanery Hill (Queen Elizabeth II Foundation Field), John Ray Recreation Ground are serviced by poor quality ancillary provision.

##### Football – demand summary

- There are 337 affiliated teams from within 54 clubs based within the Braintree District.
- 326 teams from within 50 clubs are identified as playing regular, competitive matches on pitches within the Braintree District. This comprises of 66 adult, 118 youth 11v11, 58 youth 9v9, 63 mini 7v7 and 25 mini 5v5 teams.
- There are 23 dedicated female teams based in the District.
- Walking football and futsal teams also have a presence within the Braintree District, although this generally takes place away from grass pitch provision.
- There are seven clubs playing within the men's football pyramid structure (Braintree Town FC, Coggeshall Town FC, Earls Colne FC, Halstead Town FC, Hatfield Peverel FC, White Notley FC and Witham Town FC).

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- ◀ Two clubs are identified as exporting demand outside of the Braintree District into neighbouring authorities. Braintree FC fields three futsal teams who export demand outside of the District to the sports hall at St John Payne Catholic School in Chelmsford for match play.
- ◀ In respect of imported demand, Bethel Christian Fellowship FC, which is otherwise based in Chelmsford, imports demand into the District.
- ◀ A total of four clubs identify latent demand in that they express they could field more teams if they had more pitch capacity.
- ◀ Future demand from population growth projects an increase of 17 teams, whilst a total of 10 clubs quantify growth aspirations amounting to 52 teams (including 14 female).
- ◀ Predicted participation increases will be further considered via the incorporation of a scenario in the proceeding Strategy document. This will also evidence the potential impact of other growth scenarios.

## Scenarios

### Improving pitch quality

In total, there are 30 pitches across 17 sites which are overplayed by a combined total of 43.5 match equivalent sessions per week. Improving quality of such provision (i.e., through increased maintenance or improved drainage) will increase capacity across the sites and as a consequence help to reduce both current and future shortfalls across the District.

To illustrate the above, Table 4.1 highlights the current level of overplay that would be alleviated if quality improved to good at each site. As a reminder, the capacity rating for each type and quality rating is:

Adult pitch quality	Adult matches per week	Youth pitch quality	Youth matches per week	Mini pitch quality	Mini matches per week
Good	3	Good	4	Good	6
Standard	2	Standard	2	Standard	4
Poor	1	Poor	1	Poor	2

Table 4.1: Overplay if all overplayed pitches were good quality (in match equivalent sessions)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Current quality	Current capacity rating	Good quality capacity rating
4	Blackmore End Playing Fields	Rural North	Adult	1	Poor	1.5	0.5
4	Blackmore End Playing Fields	Rural North	Youth (9v9)	1	Poor	0.5	2.5
8	Braintree Sport & Health Club	Central	Youth (11v11)	2	Standard	0.5	3.5
8	Braintree Sport & Health Club	Central	Youth (9v9)	1	Standard	0.5	1.5
15	Courtauld Sports Ground	Rural North	Adult	1	Poor	4.5	2.5
17	Deanery Hill (Queen Elizabeth II Foundation Field)	Central	Youth (9v9)	1	Poor	1.5	1.5
24	Gosfield School	Rural North	Adult	2	Poor	0.5	0.5

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Current quality	Current capacity rating	Good quality capacity rating
36	Keith Bigden Memorial Ground	South	Youth (11v11)	1	Good	0.5	0.5
42	Lawn Meadow	Rural North	Adult	1	Standard	2.5	1.5
45	New Rickstones Academy	South	Youth (11v11)	3	Poor	0.5	8.5
46	Notley Green	Central	Youth (9v9)	1	Standard	4.5	2.5
48	Notley Sports Centre	Central	Adult	1	Poor	0.5	1.5
49	Oak Farm	South	Adult	2	Poor	1.5	2.5
50	Rayne Village Hall	Central	Adult	1	Standard	0.5	0.5
52	Rickstones Sports Ground	South	Adult	2	Standard	4.5	2.5
52	Rickstones Sports Ground	South	Youth (9v9)	1	Standard	1	1
64	Steeple Bumpstead Recreation Ground	Rural North	Youth (9v9)	1	Poor	1	2
66	The Bell Field	Rural North	Adult	1	Poor	1	1
67	The Crops	Central	Adult	1	Good	2	2
75	Witham Sports Ground	South	Youth (9v9)	1	Poor	2	1
76	Witham Town Football Club	South	Adult	1	Good	8	8
76	Witham Town Football Club	South	Mini (7v7)	1	Standard	1	1
76	Witham Town Football Club	South	Youth (9v9)	1	Standard	3	1

As seen, some of the overplayed pitches could accommodate current demand if quality was improved. However, there are also sites which could still accommodate a level of overplay even if quality was improved due to sheer amount of demand or are already good quality. This is at the following sites:

- ✦ Courtauld Sports Ground (one adult).
- ✦ Keith Bigden Memorial Ground (one youth 11v11).
- ✦ Lawn Meadow (one adult).
- ✦ Notley Green (one youth 9v9).
- ✦ Rickstones Sports Ground (two adult).
- ✦ The Crops (one adult).
- ✦ Witham Town Football Club (one adult and one youth 9v9).

As a result of improving quality across the overplayed pitches, the existing shortfalls on adult and youth pitches would be eradicated across the Braintree District. This is shown in the table below. Please note that Table 4.2 and Table 4.3 shows total capacity and not the potential capacity created will not necessarily be in the peak period and therefore may not fully meet demand.

## BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Table 4.2: Current supply and demand if quality improved to good at overplayed sites

Pitch type	Current total	Potential capacity with improvements
Adult	14.5	2.5
Youth 11v11	1.5	11.5
Youth 9v9	9.5	10.5
Mini 7v7	-	2
Mini 5v5	6.5	6.5

It should also be noted that if quality was improved, this will also likely require existing maintenance budgets to be maintained or enhanced over a long term period. This may not be feasible for some operators.

Further to the above, future shortfalls will be eradicated on adult and youth pitches, with adult pitches played to capacity and the youth pitches with overall actual spare capacity created.

Table 4.3: Future supply and demand if quality improved to good at overplayed sites

Pitch type	Future total	Potential capacity with improvements
Adult	17	0
Youth 11v11	4	9
Youth 9v9	11	9
Mini 7v7	1.5	0.5
Mini 5v5	6	6

### Priority sites for improved pitch quality

As improving the quality of all overplayed sites may not be feasible from an investment point of view, an alternative approach is to focus on improving specific strategic sites, where large clubs such as Diamond Youth, Great Bradfords Youth, Sporting 77, Valley Green FC and Witham Town FC utilise grass pitches for match play demand. To that end, the below tables identifies six sites for grass pitch improvements that would benefit from investment and that are key to the development of football. This improvement should be led by appropriate operators/owners, with The County Football Association (CFA) and Football Foundation (FF) able to provide support and guidance as well as some potential funding.

Table 4.4: Impact of quality improvements to chosen priority sites

Site ID	Site name	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Current capacity rating (MES)	Good quality capacity rating (MES)
4	Blackmore End Playing Fields	Adult	1	1.5	0.5
4	Blackmore End Playing Fields	Mini (5v5)	1	0	4
4	Blackmore End Playing Fields	Mini (7v7)	1	0	4
4	Blackmore End Playing Fields	Youth (9v9)	1	0.5	2.5
17	Deanery Hill (Queen Elizabeth II Foundation Field)	Mini (5v5)	1	1.5	5.5
17	Deanery Hill (Queen Elizabeth II Foundation Field)	Mini (7v7)	2	1.5	9.5
17	Deanery Hill (Queen Elizabeth II Foundation Field)	Youth (9v9)	1	1.5	1.5
35	John Ray Recreation Ground	Adult	4	3	7

## BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Site ID	Site name	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Current capacity rating (MES)	Good quality capacity rating (MES)
35	John Ray Recreation Ground	Mini (5v5)	1	3	5
35	John Ray Recreation Ground	Mini (7v7)	2	6	10
35	John Ray Recreation Ground	Youth (9v9)	1	0	2
52	Rickstones Sports Ground	Adult	2	4.5	2.5
52	Rickstones Sports Ground	Mini (5v5)	1	2.5	4.5
52	Rickstones Sports Ground	Mini (7v7)	1	1	3
52	Rickstones Sports Ground	Youth (9v9)	1	1	1
75	Witham Sports Ground	Adult	4	3	4
75	Witham Sports Ground	Youth (9v9)	1	2	1
76	Witham Town Football Club	Adult	1	8	8
76	Witham Town Football Club	Mini (5v5)	1	2.5	3.5
76	Witham Town Football Club	Mini (7v7)	1	1	1
76	Witham Town Football Club	Youth (9v9)	1	3	1

It has been identified that Witham Town Football Club is currently in the process of improving its grass pitches through the FA's Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund and has received machinery grants.

Linked to the previous scenario of improving pitch quality, strategic sites Blackmore End Playing Fields, Deanery Hill (Queen Elizabeth II Foundation Field), Witham Sports Ground and Witham Town Football Club display levels of overplay. This therefore emphasises that these sites should be a key priority for investment.

Improving quality at strategic sites would create 30 equivalent sessions of additional capacity per week, with the impact of these improvements on the overall supply and demand balance shown in the table below (note that the table below is presented on a peak time model and that not all capacity from improving sites will generate capacity within the peak periods, albeit it will create an improved quality experience for users).

Based on improvements, shortfalls for adult and youth pitches would be reduced but still remain, whilst actual spare capacity would be established on mini 7v7 pitches.

Table 4.5: Impact on current supply and demand if quality improved at chosen sites

Pitch type	Current capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Potential capacity (match equivalent sessions)
Adult	14.5	2.5
Youth 11v11	1.5	1.5
Youth 9v9	9.5	3.5
Mini 7v7	-	7
Mini 5v5	6.5	11.5

As seen in the table below, future shortfalls would remain on adult and youth pitches. Mini 7v7 pitches would have overall spare capacity rather than a shortfall existing.

## BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Table 4.6: Impact on future supply and demand if quality improved at chosen sites

Pitch type	Future capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Potential capacity (match equivalent sessions)
Adult	17	5
Youth 11v11	4	4
Youth 9v9	11	5
Mini 7v7	1.5	5.5
Mini 5v5	6	11

### New grass pitches at planned residential developments across the District

There are plans in place to provide new football grass pitch provision which are completed but not operational yet or at advanced planning stages. This includes one adult and two mini 7v7 pitches at Maltings Lane (Haygreen Road) and two adult pitches at Rivenhall Park and as well as one youth 11v11 and two mini 7v7 pitches proposed at Finchingfield Playing Fields.

On a District wide level, this increases capacity by eight match equivalent sessions per week at peak times. The shortfalls on adult and youth 11v11 pitches would still remain, albeit at reduced levels, whilst actual spare capacity is created on the mini 7v7 pitches. The impact of creating these pitches can be seen in the table below.

Table 4.7: Current supply and demand if additional pitches provided at planned residential developments across the District

Pitch type	Current capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Potential capacity (match equivalent sessions)
Adult	14.5	11.5
Youth 11v11	1.5	0.5
Youth 9v9	9.5	9.5
Mini 7v7	-	4
Mini 5v5	6.5	6.5

### Loss of tenure at education sites

As highlighted in the Assessment Report, three of the community accessible sites in Braintree District are managed by education providers. The table below outlines this further.

Table 4.8: Demand taking place on grass pitches at education sites

School	Security of tenure	Club	Teams
Gosfield School	Unsecure	Halstead Town FC	One team
Hedingham School	Unsecure	Braintree Athletic Braintree Blades Stisted FC	One team One team One team
New Rickstones Academy	Secure	Witham Town FC	One team

In instances where clubs do not have formal tenure agreements in place, clubs could theoretically be asked to vacate at any time which would result in each requiring alternate provision to service existing levels of demand.

## BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

If community access to the unsecure education sites was to be lost, shortfalls in Braintree District would be exacerbated on adult and youth 11v11 pitches, as shown in the following table.

Witham Town FC accesses the grass pitches at Rickstones Academy which has a formal use agreement in place with the sports clubs which use its facilities at the site. Therefore, tenure is already included and deemed to be secure and have been discounted from Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Impact on current supply and demand without access to unsecure sites in match equivalent sessions

Pitch type	Current capacity (MES)	Potential capacity (MES)
Adult	14.5	16.5
Youth 11v11	1.5	1.5
Youth 9v9	9.5	9.5
Mini 7v7	-	-
Mini 5v5	6.5	6.5

As shown above, to avoid the risk of the supply and demand balance worsening, it is necessary to try and ensure that grass pitches at education sites continue to stay open to community use, given the reliance upon school sites across Braintree District. However, it should be noted that in practice this can be difficult to achieve.

Whilst not always possible, securing community use agreements would ensure that demand continues to be accommodated in the long-term. Where there is external investment on sites e.g., by an NGB, Sport England, the Council or through s106 funding, there are opportunities to secure community use as part of the funding or approval agreement. This also applies to new schools or for existing schools seeking changes to provision that requires planning permission as, via planning consent, the Council can mandate the implementation of a community use agreement as part of the planning stipulations.

### Bringing disused pitches back into use

Currently, there is one site identified as being disused which previously accommodated a football pitch but no longer does so. This relates to Burches Meadow, which previously provided one adult pitch, although it is not known when this was last provided/used.

In addition to the above, there are two further sites (Kelvedon Recreation Ground and Strutt Memorial Ground) which previously accommodated some football provision equating to two adult pitches at the former and one adult pitch at the latter. The sites are not classified as disused as they are still being accessed, although they are no longer marked out and used for affiliated football.

Bringing the pitches back into use for the sole benefit of adult football would add an additional four match equivalent sessions per week of peak time capacity to the overall supply and demand balance if all these pitches were brought back into use established to a minimum of standard quality with secured tenure. This is shown in the table below.

## BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Table 4.10: Current supply and demand if disused pitches were reinstated in match equivalent sessions

Pitch type	Current capacity (MES)	Potential capacity (MES)
Adult	14.5	10.5
Youth 11v11	1.5	1.5
Youth 9v9	9.5	9.5
Mini 7v7	-	-
Mini 5v5	6.5	6.5

As seen in the table above, if disused pitches were to be reinstated, shortfalls on adult pitches would still remain albeit at a reduced level.

Notwithstanding the above, none of the sites currently has any supporting ancillary provision and provide either one or two pitches (unless further pitches could be marked out). However, Burches Meadow could potentially accommodate multiple youth/mini pitches, which there is less of a requirement for significant ancillary provision. Further feasibility should be considered to judge the value in re-instating the pitches at both sites as ultimately each resembles a poor quality sporting offer in their existing states.

### Accommodating exported demand

Currently, there are three teams across two clubs (consisting of three adult teams) which have been identified as being exported from Braintree District into neighbouring authorities. This is from the following clubs:

- ◀ Feering Village FC.
- ◀ Stoke Wanderers FC.

The impact of all demand returning to Braintree District is shown in the following table. As seen, the existing deficit would increase on adult pitches.

Table 4.11: Current supply and demand if all exported demand returned to the District in match equivalent sessions

Pitch type	Current capacity (MES)	Potential capacity (MES)
Adult	14.5	17.5
Youth 11v11	1.5	1.5
Youth 9v9	9.5	9.5
Mini 7v7	-	-
Mini 5v5	6.5	6.5

### Continuation of growth trends

This scenario examines the impact of future demand based on potential growth from historical FA affiliation data. Figure 4.1 below plots the forecasted increases for the upcoming 2025/26 season, taking into account the following demand from previous seasons:

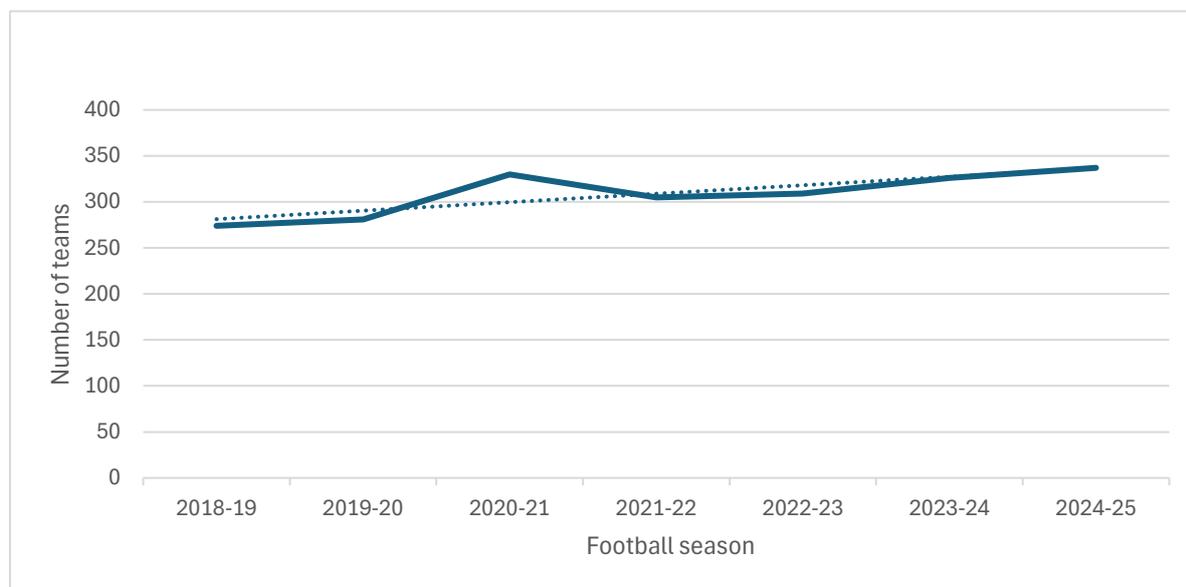
- ◀ 2018-19: 274 teams.
- ◀ 2019-20: 281 teams.
- ◀ 2020/21: 330 teams.
- ◀ 2021/22: 305 teams.
- ◀ 2022/23: 309 teams.
- ◀ 2023/24: 326 teams.
- ◀ 2024/25: 337 teams.

## BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Please note the reduction in teams in the 2021/22 season due to the impact of Covid.

With an average yearly increase of 3.5% in Braintree District between 2018 and 2025, this would result in an additional 12 teams and 24 match equivalent sessions per week over the next five years. On this basis, participation increases reported by clubs during consultation is a significantly lower than those identified through forecasting growth via this method.

Figure 4.1: Annual growth in football teams across Braintree District (2018-2025)



If the above future demand through forecasted growth was to be realised over the next five years, this would exacerbate existing shortfalls on adult and youth pitches and deficits would also be established on mini 7v7 pitches. This is shown in the table below.

Table 4.12: Current supply and demand if growth trends continued (to 2030) in match equivalent sessions

Pitch type	Current capacity (MES)	Potential capacity (MES)
Adult	14.5	19.5
Youth 11v11	1.5	9.5
Youth 9v9	9.5	14.5
Mini 7v7	-	4
Mini 5v5	6.5	4.5

Given the current shortfalls identified for grass football pitches, this further evidences the need to improve pitch quality at overplayed and poor quality sites and to potentially develop more pitches (which could include 3G pitches) to better support this anticipated growth in demand.

Actual growth should be monitored regularly via Stage E updates to understand which growth scenario (population forecasts, continuation of growth trends or club aspirations) is playing out to be the most accurate.

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

## Accounting for club future demand aspirations

During consultation, 10 clubs report aspirations to increase the number of teams that they provide, equating to a predicted growth of 52 teams - broken down as eight adult, 17 youth 11v11, 14 youth 9v9, 10 mini 7v7 and three mini 5v5 teams. This was previously discounted from calculations as it is considered to be more aspirational than future growth predicted via population growth and evidenced participation trends; however, the table below explores the impact if such demand is realised.

In addition, four 11v11 3G pitches are being developed across the District (three are operational and one is opening soon at Alec Hunter Academy) and the expectation is that this will further boost participation growth.

Table 4.13: Current supply and demand with club future demand aspirations accounted for in match equivalent sessions

Pitch type	Current capacity (MES)	Potential capacity (MES)
Adult	14.5	18.5
Youth 11v11	1.5	10
Youth 9v9	9.5	16.5
Mini 7v7	-	5
Mini 5v5	6.5	5

If realised, the impact of club aspirational growth would exacerbate the shortfalls on adult and youth pitches and a shortfall established on mini 7v7 pitches. Spare capacity would still remain on mini 5v5 pitches but at a reduced level.

As noted above, it is important that Stage E monitors future club demand aspirations to help to plan for the most likely scenario.

## Ancillary provision

As well as creating capacity on the pitch there is a requirement to also ensure that current and future levels of demand can be accommodated off the pitch, more specifically regarding ancillary provision and changing rooms.

As outlined in the Assessment Report, ancillary facility ratings are primarily influenced by the type of amenities which are available on a site accompanied by their quality, such as a clubhouse, changing rooms, car parking, dedicated official and spectator facilities. Good quality ancillary facilities are particularly important for rugby clubs as they can assist with income generation. Furthermore, it is becoming increasingly important for the provision to be inclusive, particularly due to growing women's and girls', disability and junior/mini demand.

Although the size and configuration of ancillary provision may alter based on the sports using the provision, and the number of pitches it services, generally the same principles are recommended to allow for varied use from all demographics:

- ◆ Accessible changing areas which can be separated, or are private/self-contained, to allow for separate male/female/all gender or senior/junior separation.
- ◆ A private accessible changing room (with relevant changing and showering provision) for someone who requires assistance.
- ◆ Separate female / male / all gender toilet provision.

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- ◀ Suitably designed and specified showering cubicles to all users to maintain dignity and privacy whilst showering.

Open planned changing, toilets and particularly showering facilities can provide a significant barrier to many people resulting in them either not taking part or having a poorer sporting experience.

Specifically in the Braintree District, demand for the following clubs maybe affected due to the poor quality of their changing provision:

- ◀ Blackmore End Playing Fields (Great Bradfords Youth).
- ◀ Braintree Sport & Health Club (Great Bradfords Youth).
- ◀ Braintree Town FC - Cressing Road (Braintree Town FC and Braintree Town Supporters).
- ◀ Deanery Hill - Queen Elizabeth II Foundation Field (Sporting 77).
- ◀ John Ray Recreation Ground (Braintree Youth and Kelvedon FC).
- ◀ Keith Bigden Memorial Ground (Hatfield Peverel FC).
- ◀ Releet Sports Ground (Notley Youth).
- ◀ Rickstones Sports Ground (Valley Green FC).
- ◀ Witham Town Football Club (Witham Town FC).

Linked to the above, there are currently 24 dedicated female teams and future participation increases amounting to two senior women's and 12 youth girls' teams. In order for these aspirations to be realised, dedicated women's and girls' changing rooms would need to exist. Without improvements to facilities, these clubs would still to establish the aspirations and may even have issues retaining current levels of current demand.

### Summary of scenarios

It is evident that a combination of improving quality, bringing back disused pitches back into use and securing community use will meet the current demand without the need for additional pitches. However, it appears that there is a need for more pitches to meet future demand, given the significant shortfalls on adult and youth 9v9 pitches.

As an alternative option increased access to 3G pitches for match play purposes would be beneficial in alleviating the remaining overplay. In effect, a multi-phased approach is required in Braintree District to alleviate identified overplay. Future demand should be monitored through Stage E.

### Recommendations

- ◀ Protect existing pitches in line with national (i.e. the NPPF and Sport England's Playing Fields Policy) and local planning policy.
- ◀ Improve pitch quality with a focus on overplayed pitches and strategic sites listed above such as at Blackmore End Playing Fields, Deanery Hill (Queen Elizabeth II Foundation Field), John Ray Recreation Ground, Rickstones Sports Ground, Witham Sports Ground and Witham Town Football Club.
- ◀ Utilise the Football Foundation's PitchPower app to assist in the improvement and ongoing maintenance of provision.
- ◀ Support eligible organisations to access funding to improve pitches at their sites, such as through the Football Foundation's Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund (GPMF).
- ◀ Work with education sites, particularly at Gosfield School, Hedingham School and New Rickstones Academy, to provide secured community use, with a focus on those currently in use by clubs.

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## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

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- ◀ Consider bringing disused pitches back into use, subject to a sustainable programme of use and appropriate quality being developed.
- ◀ Improve ancillary facilities where there is a demand to do so and where it can benefit the wider footballing offer, with a particular focus on multi-pitch sites and key sites for the growth of female and adult participation.
- ◀ Seek to provide a resolution for the return of demand that is currently exported from Braintree District.
- ◀ Regularly monitor future growth levels to determine if additional pitches are required, particularly for adult and youth football – this can be done via the Stage E process (see Part 8).
- ◀ Ensure that any large housing developments are provided for and make on-site provision for meeting existing and future football pitch needs.
- ◀ Where a housing development is not of a size to justify on-site football provision, consider using contributions to improve existing sites within the locality, with priority placed on priorities and needs identified in the PPOSS Action Plan and the LFFP.
- ◀ Where a development is of a size to justify on-site football provision, focus on the creation of multi-pitch sites with community use that reduce existing shortfalls, with accompanying clubhouse provision included given that single pitch sites without appropriate ancillary facilities can be unsustainable.

### Third generation turf (3G) pitches

#### Assessment Report summary

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

- ◀ There is an insufficient supply of 3G pitch provision to meet football requirements, with two additional 11v11 pitches needed to meet training needs, equating to 0.25 pitches in the Rural North Analysis Area and two pitches in the South Analysis Area. Whilst there is an oversupply of 0.25 pitches in the Central Analysis Area.
- ◀ For rugby union, the creation of World Rugby compliant 3G provision may provide a solution to the identified overplay of grass pitches, although this needs to be considered against grass pitch solutions.
- ◀ No demand for access to 3G provision has been identified from any other sports, suggesting that no other demand currently requires consideration.
- ◀ **3G – supply summary**
- ◀ There are six 11v11 3G pitches across six sites, which are available for community use and serviced by sports lighting.
- ◀ There are four smaller size 3G pitches. Three of these have sports lighting and are available for community use (Discovery Centre (Great Notley), Hedingham School and Lyons Hall Primary School). Whilst the pitch at Notley Green Primary School is neither available for community nor serviced by sports lighting.
- ◀ Planning applications have been approved and work has begun on the development of four 11v11 3G pitches in the Braintree District, with these located at Alec Hunter Academy (23/03020/FUL), New Rickstones Academy (24/00352/FUL), Notley High School (24/00027/FUL) and Witham Sports Ground (23/03067/FUL). For this assessment, they have been included in the supply as they are newly installed. The pitches at New Rickstones Academy, Notley High School and Witham Sports Ground are fully operational and the pitch at Alec Hunter Academy is due to be fully operational by January 2026. The work is being funded through the Football Foundation and Section 106 monies from housing developments in the vicinity.
- ◀ The Braintree LFFP has three recommended projects for the creation of 11v11 3G pitches.
- ◀ Planning permission has been granted for the development of a smaller sized 3G pitch at Witham Sports and Social Club (21/00074/FUL).
- ◀ All 11v11 3G pitches are either FA or FIFA certified and can therefore be used to host competitive matches.
- ◀ No pitches in the Braintree District are World Rugby compliant.

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

- ◀ All 11v11 3G pitches are fully available for use during peak time hours.
- ◀ All six 11v11 3G pitches are rated as good quality having been installed in the last three years.
- ◀ Of the smaller size pitches, Notley Green Primary School is assessed as good quality and the pitches at Discovery Centre (Great Notley) and Lyons Hall Primary School as standard quality. The pitch at Hedingham School is assessed as poor quality, having been installed in 2012 and the carpet has not been replaced since.

### 3G – demand summary

- ◀ The 3G pitches currently servicing the Braintree District are reported to be operating at or close to capacity at peak times, especially during winter months.
- ◀ This applies not only to midweek capacity but also to weekend capacity on account of all four of the 11v11 3G pitches being FIFA/FA approved to host competitive matches.
- ◀ All activity is currently football related across five sites, with including 36 teams gaining access for match play purposes (at the time of audit).
- ◀ As well as club training and match play activity, the pitches are also accessed for recreational football, walking football and coaching sessions as well as by commercial leagues.
- ◀ Unmet demand for 3G provision is expressed, with 10 responding football clubs representing 149 teams as well as Braintree RUFC identifying that their training requirements are not currently being met.
- ◀ Four football clubs also currently export some 3G demand outside of the Braintree District, whilst two clubs import activity into the District.
- ◀ Future football and rugby union team growth could increase 3G pitch requirements.

## Scenarios

### Accommodating football training demand

In order to satisfy current football training demand (based on the FA's scenario of one 11v11 3G pitch equivalent being able to cater for 38 community football teams) there is a theoretical need for nine 11v11 3G pitches in Braintree District. This results in a shortfall of two 11v11 3G pitches to accommodate all football training demand, as seen below. Broken down, this equates to a shortfall of 0.25 pitches in the Rural North Analysis Area and two pitches in the South Analysis Area. Whilst there is an oversupply of 0.25 pitches in the Central Analysis Area.

Table 4.14: Current demand for 3G pitches in Braintree District (based on 38 teams per pitch)

Analysis area	Current demand	Current 3G requirement <sup>1</sup>	Current number of 11v11 3G pitch equivalents	Current shortfall
Central	117	3	3.25	0.25
Rural North	85	2	1.75	0.25
South	136	4	2	2
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>

### Accommodating future football demand

When factoring in future demand of 17 teams (from projecting population growth to 2041), the requirement remains the same, with nine 11v11 3G pitches required in Braintree District overall.

<sup>1</sup> Rounded to the nearest whole number

## BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Future demand expressed by clubs equates to the growth of 52 football teams. If this was to be achieved there would be a total of 389 teams playing within the District, which means that there will be a need for 10 11v11 3G pitches. This has previously been discounted from calculations as it is considered to be more aspirational than future growth predicted via population growth.

Table 4.15: Potential football training demand for 3G pitches incorporating club aspirations

Analysis area	Potential future demand	Future 11v11 3G pitch requirement <sup>2</sup>	Current number of 11v11 3G pitch equivalents	Future 11v11 3G pitch shortfall
Central	141	4	3.25	0.75
Rural North	92	2	1.75	0.25
South	153	4	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>

As an alternative method for forecasting future demand, predicted growth through a trend based analysis, using historic affiliation data for Braintree District and over a five year period, would equate to an additional 12 teams. If this level of increase was to be achieved, there would be a total of 349 teams within Braintree District by 2030, which would lead to a theoretical need for nine 11v11 3G pitches and a shortfall of two. This is shown in the table below.

Table 4.16: Impact of future demand positions for 3G pitches based on growth trends

Future demand positions	Future number of teams	11v11 3G requirement <sup>3</sup>	Current number of 11v11 3G pitch equivalents	Future shortfall
Population growth (up to 2041)	354	9	7	2
Participation increases	389	10	7	3
Trend based growth (from affiliation)	349	9	7	2

### Moving football match play demand to 3G pitches

Moving match play to 3G pitches in addition to training demand is supported by the FA, which is particularly keen to work with local authorities to understand the potential demand for 11v11 3G pitches should all competitive matches that are presently played on council pitches be transferred. This is due to a recognition that councils often have budget restraints, with improving and maintaining pitches to an appropriate standard not always possible.

Within Braintree District, there are currently 139 teams playing at local authority and parish council sites at peak time across the formats of play.

Table 4.17: Number of teams currently using council pitches in Braintree District<sup>4</sup>

Pitch type	Pitch size	Peak period	No. of teams
Adult	11v11	Saturday PM	16
Youth	11v11	Sunday AM	61
Youth	9v9	Sunday AM	26
Mini	7v7	Sunday AM	26

<sup>2</sup> Rounded to the nearest whole number

<sup>3</sup> Rounded to the nearest whole number

<sup>4</sup> Includes town and parish council pitches

## BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Pitch type	Pitch size	Peak period	No. of teams
Mini	5v5	Sunday AM	10
-	-	<b>Total</b>	139

The FA suggests an approach for estimating the number of 11v11 3G pitches required to accommodate the above demand for competitive matches, as seen in the table below.

Table 4.18: 11v11 3G pitches required for the transfer of council pitch demand

Format	No. of teams at peak time	No. of matches at peak time	No. of 3G units required per match <sup>5</sup>	Total 3G units required	No. of 3G pitches required
Adult	16	8	32	256	4
Youth 11v11	61	30.5	32	976	15.25
Youth 9v9	26	13	10	130	2.03
Mini 7v7	26	13	8	104	1.63
Mini 5v5	10	5	4	20	0.31

As there are currently six 11v11 3G pitches provided in Braintree District, this results in a deficit of 17 pitches. However, as this is more than the number of pitches required for existing training demand, it may not be considered practical to provide this many as sustainability would then become questionable (unless certain future demand scenarios are achieved). Pitches generally need high levels of midweek usage to be operationally viable.

An alternative approach to consider is the transfer of all mini football from grass to 3G pitches, with the FA having an ambition to transfer 50% of all mini play on to 3G pitches nationally. Thus, a programme of play has been created for Braintree District to determine how many 3G pitches would be required to accommodate this. The table below tests a scenario that would enable all mini 5v5 and mini 7v7 football to transfer based on a programme of play at current peak time (Sunday AM).

Table 4.19: Moving all mini matches to 3G pitches

Time	AGP	Total games/teams
9.30am – 10.30am	4 x 5v5	4/8
10.30am – 11.30am	2 x 7v7	2/4
11.30am – 12.30pm	2 x 7v7	2/4
12.30pm – 1.30pm	2 x 7v7	2/4

Based on the above programming and separate start times for the formats, the overall need is for eight 11v11 3G pitches to accommodate all current mini match play demand in Braintree District (based on 63 teams playing 7v7 football and 25 teams playing mini 5v5 football at peak time). As such, it is considered all current mini football demand could be accommodated on the supply of 3G pitches, if training requirements were to be met.

<sup>5</sup> Based on how pitches are split within a full size 3G pitch

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### World Rugby compliant 3G pitches

World Rugby produced the 'performance specification for artificial grass pitches for rugby', more commonly known as 'Regulation 22' that provides the necessary technical detail to produce pitch systems that are appropriate for rugby union. The RFU generally supports the development of 3G pitches which support rugby union, particularly where grass rugby pitches are over capacity and where a pitch would support the growth of the game at the host site and for the local rugby partnership, including local clubs and education establishments.

There are currently no World Rugby compliant 3G pitches in Braintree District, meaning no clubs are utilising the provision for training (or matches). However, given the level of shortfall on grass pitches that has been identified (12.5 match equivalent sessions per week currently and 13 match equivalent sessions per week when factoring in future demand from population growth), the creation of World Rugby compliant provision could be warranted. In particular, there is a need for provision to service Braintree RUFC given the deficits identified at its home ground and the improbability of other improvements fully resolving the shortfalls.

If a World Rugby compliant new pitch is to be sought, focus should therefore be placed on accommodating demand from clubs with shortfalls at Braintree Rugby Football Club (Braintree RUFC) equating to 7.5 match equivalent sessions per week of overplay. A pitch could be developed in situ for the host club, or if nearby providing sufficient access was enabled. This is to improve the supply and not to enable the dispersal of existing pitches.

When establishing the creation of World Rugby compliant 3G pitch provision, this could be through developing provision primarily for rugby union. Alternatively, the provision could be established in conjunction with reducing 3G shortfalls for football, although this may necessitate the need for more pitches as the outcomes for football would be reduced. For the development of any 3G pitch at Braintree Rugby Union Football Club (or any other suggested sites), there is a need to ensure that Sport England's Playing Field Policy is adhered to. Furthermore, it should be acknowledged that any 3G pitch proposal on this site would need to protect/replace any cricket pitches that would be affected.

### New site options

The table below identifies potential sites which could, in theory, be suitable for future development to meet the shortfall of 3G pitches. However, for the development of any 3G pitch at the sites below (or any other sites in the future), there is a need to ensure that NPPF requirements and Sport England's Playing Field Policy is adhered to, particularly when the loss of grass provision is entailed.

The sites listed have been identified by a combination of the findings from the Assessment Report, the 2025 Braintree LFFP, operator aspirations, consultation with Essex County FA and the basic feasibility for installing a pitch due to having the available land and on-site management options.

Each of the sites will require a feasibility study to be undertaken to determine if they are indeed suitable in meeting known need. Such a full feasibility would also need to include a range of matters including site characteristics as well as sports, financial and planning issues. This should be done in consultation with Essex County FA, the RFU (where applicable) and the FF as well as Sport England and any other relevant NGBs. It is crucial to recognise that this list is only presented as a starting point for discussion and should be updated as part of the Stage E process.

## BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Table 4.20: Potential 3G pitch site options in Braintree District

Analysis area	Current shortfall	Site name	Comments
Central	None for football, but a need for rugby union	Braintree Rugby Union Football Club	Site provides three senior rugby pitches and is heavily accessed and overplayed by Braintree RUFC. There are aspirations to create a 3G pitch to support the Club's training needs and growing demand, in addition to preserving the grass pitches for match play. It should, however, be acknowledged that any proposal on this site would need to protect/replace any cricket pitches that would be affected.
Central	None for football	Braintree Town area	There is a potential need for an additional 11v11 3G pitch in the Analysis Area, despite no theoretical shortfall, as the 11v11 3G pitches are operating at capacity. Key clubs include Braintree Youth (19 teams), Great Bradfords Youth (27 teams) and Notley Youth FC (18 teams). Releet Sports Ground, John Ray Recreation Ground and Braintree Sport & Health Club have been identified as potential sites. Based on the FA 1:38 training model, actual site usage and club demand is key consideration beyond this. This might justify future provision subject to a suitable business plan and programme of use.
Rural North	One 11v11 pitch for football	Coggeshall area	Given the identified shortfalls in the Rural North Analysis Area, the development of a 11v11 3G pitch should be targeted within this Analysis Area, Honeywood School has been identified as a potential option as well as the wider Coggeshall area.
South	Two 11v11 pitches for football	South East area	Given the identified shortfalls in the South Analysis Area, the development of a 11v11 3G pitch should be targeted within this Analysis Area in order to support demand in the Coggeshall and Witham. It should be noted that Honeywood Science Community School will also pick up some demand from the South Analysis Area. Key clubs to provide for include Hatfield Peverel FC (22 teams), Witham Town Youth FC (39 teams) and Coggeshall Town Youth FC (12 teams).

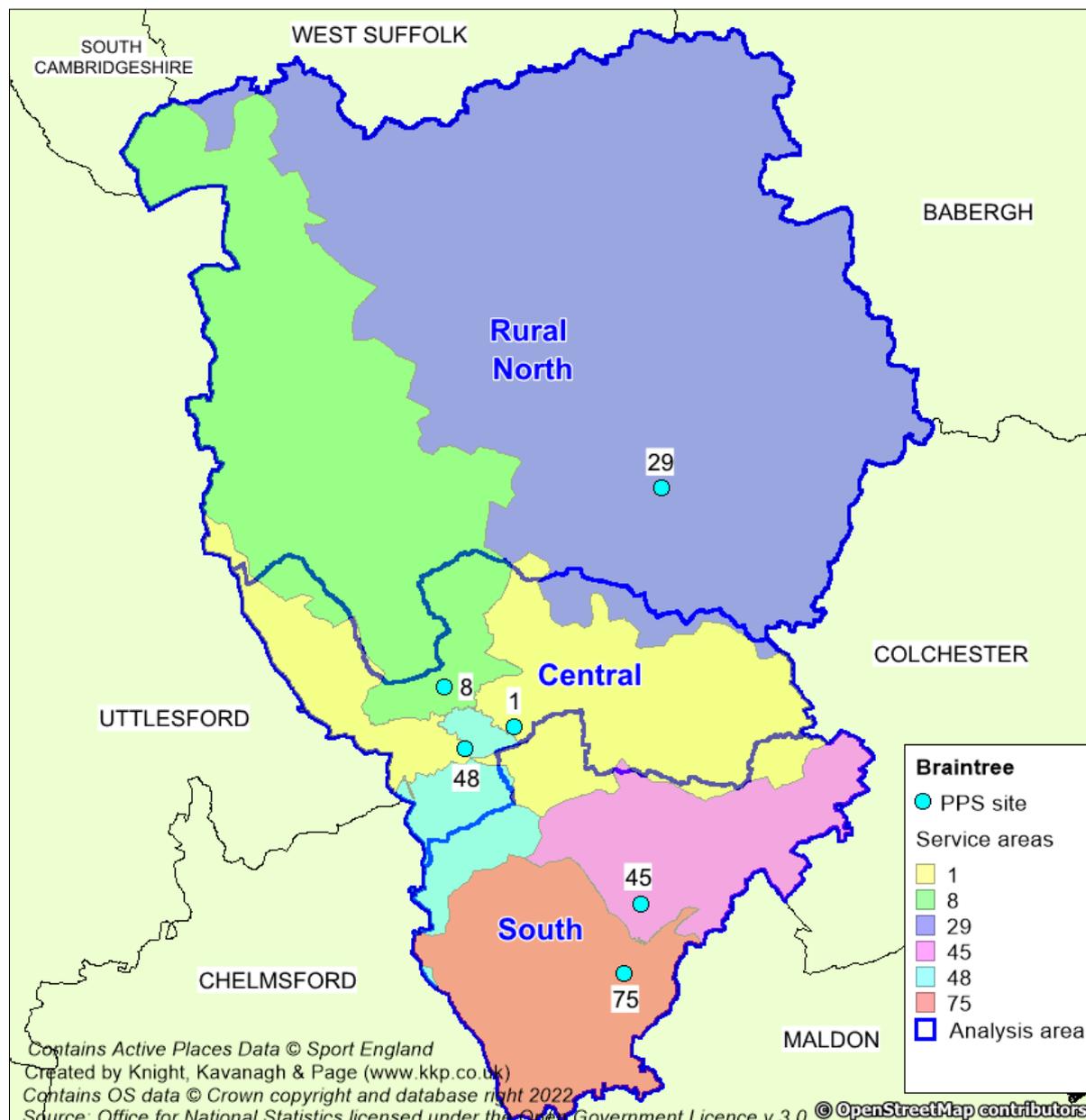
If the above 3G pitch options were to be delivered, this would eradicate shortfalls across the Braintree District, in addition to meeting some potential future demand requirements.

Figure 4.2 below adds the above, illustrating the service areas of the existing 11v11 size 3G pitches in the Braintree District, using the road network to present the catchment area for each pitch. This allows for visualisation of which locations should be prioritised for new 3G pitch developments.

As can be seen the pitch at Alec Hunter Academy services the largest catchment area and attracts demand from the three analysis areas (Central, South and Rural North). As well as this, the pitches at Braintree Sport & Health Club and Notley Sports Centre attract demand from two of the three analysis areas (Central and Rural North).

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Figure 4.2: Braintree District 3G pitch service area map



The recommended dimensions for an 11v11 3G artificial grass pitch for football are 100 x 64 metres. This extends to an area of 106 x 70 metres with the recommended minimum three metre run off area included. These dimensions allow for all age group match play to take place including adults, youth under 17/18 and younger age groups via overmarked pitches, e.g., the marking out of two 9v9 pitches for under 11/12s.

If a new pitch is proposed to measure below the recommended dimensions, then justification must be provided for this in relation to the identified needs it will provide for and/or site constraints. In doing so, the impacts of a reduced pitch size in meeting current and future needs must be considered, e.g., a pitch not providing the recommended dimensions for adult match play and/or only being able to accommodate one rather than two overmarked 9v9 pitches. This justification needs to be included in the planning application details submitted to the relevant Local Planning Authority for the new pitch.

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## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

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Unless otherwise stated and justified for an individual pitch, proposals in this PPOSS for any new 3G artificial grass pitches are based on providing them to the recommended dimensions.

### Recommendations

- ◀ Protect current stock of 3G pitches in line with national (i.e. the NPPF and Sport England's Playing Fields Policy) and local planning policy.
- ◀ Work with relevant partners to deliver additional 3G pitches to alleviate identified shortfalls, with priority placed on establishing pitches in the Rural North and South analysis areas.
- ◀ Explore creation of 3G pitches that are both football and rugby union compliant when alleviating shortfalls if they can cater for demand from Braintree RUFC or support the creation of additional 3G pitches above and beyond football training shortfalls if they can be sustainable.
- ◀ Carry out further feasibility work to identify suitable locations for new 3G pitches and ensure this is done in consultation with the relevant stakeholders including Sport England and the appropriate NGBs.
- ◀ Ensure any new 3G pitches are provided with the recommended dimensions for the sports that they will be established to cater for.
- ◀ Ensure any new 3G pitches protect/replace any other pitches that would be affected by the development (e.g., where cricket outfielders are affected).
- ◀ Ensure that any new 3G pitches with external funding have community use agreements in place and seek to use this to also tie in access to grass pitch and other sporting provision, where relevant.
- ◀ Where any new 3G pitch involves the conversion of a sand-based hockey pitch, ensure support is provided from EH and that no hockey demand is negatively impacted upon.
- ◀ Seek FIFA/FA testing of all existing and new 3G pitches and ensure they are on the FA 3G Pitch Register so that they can be used for competitive football matches and ensure re-testing is carried out when it is required.
- ◀ For any pitches built to RFU specifications, seek World Rugby compliancy so that they can be used for full contact activity and ensure re-testing when it is required (every two years).
- ◀ Ensure all current and future 3G providers have a sinking fund in place for long-term sustainability and seek to resurface provision when it is required.
- ◀ Encourage more football match play demand to transfer to 3G pitches, where possible, particularly from council sites and for mini demand.
- ◀ Support all 3G pitch providers where possible to improve the sustainability of running the facility, e.g. conversion to LED sports lighting.

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

## Rugby union - grass pitches

### Assessment Report summary

#### Rugby union – supply and demand summary

- ◀ No pitches in the Braintree District are considered to provide actual spare capacity, whilst four pitches across two sites that are overplayed by a total of 12.5 match equivalent sessions per week.
- ◀ There is a current capacity shortfall of 12.5 match equivalent sessions on rugby union pitches, increasing to 13 when accounting for future demand.
- ◀ There is a clear shortfall of rugby union provision, and a shortfall for the two large clubs in the District (Braintree RUFC and Witham RUFC).

#### Rugby union - supply summary

- ◀ There are 10 grass rugby union pitches identified across five sites, with all pitches available for community use across 13 sites.
- ◀ Of the 10 pitches provided, two are operated by education providers, two are operated by Parish Councils and the remaining six are operated by sports clubs.
- ◀ All four clubs in the Braintree District have secure site tenure either via direct ownership or being part of a wider entity that has ownership or a long-term lease agreement.
- ◀ Of pitches that are available for community use, there are eight assessed as standard and two as poor.
- ◀ Poor quality pitches are provided at Courtauld Sports Ground and Gosfield School.
- ◀ The poor quality ancillary facilities are identified at Courtauld Sports Ground and Feering Community Centre Playing Field.

#### Rugby union - demand summary

- ◀ There are four rugby clubs considered based in the Braintree District collectively providing a total of 34 teams. As a breakdown, this consists of nine senior men's, two senior women's, eight age grade boys', three age grade girls' and 12 age grade mixed teams.
- ◀ Whilst overall demand levels have increased in recent years, there has been a decline in senior activity.
- ◀ In the Braintree District, one sports lit pitch is provided at Braintree Rugby Union Football Club and Witham Rugby Union Football Club. These pitches are used to accommodate all training demand from Braintree and Witham rugby clubs.
- ◀ Whilst Halstead Templars and Kelvedon & Feering rugby clubs use portable lighting on its match pitches.
- ◀ Braintree RUFC reports latent demand in that they could field more teams if it had access to increased pitch provision and links this to a need for a 3G pitch.
- ◀ Two clubs (Braintree and Witham rugby clubs) report future aspirations for additional teams, whilst population projections predict a growth of one age grade mixed team.

## Scenarios

### Improving pitch quality

Maintenance and drainage solutions are an integral method in improving pitch quality at rugby union sites, ensuring that pitches can accommodate demand throughout the season. Locally, there are three sites which are identified as being overplayed in Braintree District and the following scenario explores what impact improving both the level of maintenance and installation of drainage solutions would have on the capacity of provision. It would alleviate overplay on overplayed pitches.

The table below illustrates the RFU pitch quality scoring methodology which ascertains the capacity of pitches based on the scoring criteria.

## BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Table 4.21: Pitch capacity (matches per week) based on quality assessments

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

The table below looks at what capacity benefits would be ascertained through improvement of both maintenance and drainage solutions to good quality (M2/D3) improvements to both drainage and maintenance to explore maximum benefits.

Table 4.22: Capacity of overplayed pitches if quality was maximised (M2/D3)

Site ID	Site name	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Current quality	Sports-lit?	Current capacity rating (MES)	Good quality rating (MES)
7	Braintree Rugby Union Football Club	Senior	1	Standard	Yes	6.5	5
7	Braintree Rugby Union Football Club	Senior	1	Standard	No	1	0
74	Witham Rugby Union Football Club	Senior	1	Standard	Yes	2.5	1
74	Witham Rugby Union Football Club	Age grade	1	Standard	No	2.5	1

Overall, this would reduce current shortfalls from 12.5 match equivalent sessions to seven match equivalent sessions per week across Braintree District as a whole, whilst reducing future shortfalls from 13 match equivalent sessions to 7.5 match equivalent sessions per week.

Table 4.23: Supply and demand balance with quality improvements in match equivalent sessions

Demand	Current capacity balance (MES)	Potential total (MES)
Current	12.5	7
Future	13	7.5

The sports-lit pitch at Braintree Rugby Union Football Club (Braintree RFC) and the pitches at Witham Rugby Union Football Club would remain overplayed even if quality was maximised, although at reduced levels. This is predominately due to high levels of training demand on the provision. Therefore, there is a need to provide additional provision as a means of reducing overplay.

## BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

### Increasing access to training provision (sports-lit grass pitches)

An alternative method of addressing capacity issues is through increasing the number of sports lit pitches. Of the pitches that would remain overplayed despite quality improvements, Braintree Rugby Union Football Club has three senior pitches with only one senior pitch serviced by sports lighting. Whilst Witham Rugby has two senior and one age grade pitch, with only one senior pitch serviced by sports lighting.

For Braintree Rugby Union Football Club, if it was to have the remaining two senior pitches serviced by sports lighting, this would allow training demand to be evenly dispersed across the pitches, whilst also potentially improving the user experience. As a result, 2.5 match equivalent sessions of overplay could be transferred to the pitches, which will have a significant benefit on shortfalls across the site.

The following table further explores the above and the potential capacity impact if training demand was to be evenly dispersed. It shows that the site would go from being overplayed to being at a balanced capacity.

Table 4.24: Capacity with additional sports lighting at club sites

Site ID	Site name	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Quality	Capacity rating (MES)	Potential capacity balance (MES)
7	Braintree Rugby Union Football Club	Senior	1	Standard (M1/D1)	6.5	2.5
74	Witham Rugby Union Football Club	Senior	1	Standard (M1/D1)	2.5	0.5
74	Witham Rugby Union Football Club	Age grade	1	Standard (M1/D1)	2.5	0.5

If additional sports lighting was carried out in conjunction with pitch quality improvements, a shortfall would still exist on the senior pitch at Braintree Rugby Union Football Club whilst overall spare capacity would be established at Witham Rugby Union Football Club.

Table 4.25: Capacity with additional sports lighting and quality improvements at club sites

Site ID	Site name	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Quality	Capacity rating (MES)	Potential capacity balance (MES)
7	Braintree Rugby Union Football Club	Senior	1	Standard (M1/D1)	6.5	1
74	Witham Rugby Union Football Club	Senior	1	Standard (M1/D1)	2.5	1
74	Witham Rugby Union Football Club	Age grade	1	Standard (M1/D1)	2.5	1

Notwithstanding the above, it is considered unlikely for pitch quality and sports lighting to be maximised at the site, with this also likely to place additional pressures on the Club (e.g., from a maintenance perspective). An alternative could therefore be needed, such as via the supply or additional grass pitches or through the creation of a World Rugby compliant 3G pitch.

## BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

### Increasing pitch stock

In addition to maximising pitch quality and sports lighting, additional pitch provision is required to fully alleviate identified shortfalls at Braintree Rugby Union Football Club and Witham Rugby Union Football Club. The table below therefore explores how many pitches are needed.

At Braintree Rugby Union Football Club, two additional pitches would each need to be provided to a good quality to meet demand from Braintree RFC. Whilst one additional pitch is required for Witham RFC, providing it is established at a good quality (and that existing pitches are also improved).

Table 4.26: Number of new pitches required to alleviate overplay

Site ID	Site name	Current capacity rating (MES)	Good quality rating (MES)	Club users	No. of pitches required
7	Braintree Rugby Union Football Club	7.5	5	Braintree RFC	2
74	Witham Rugby Union Football Club	5	2	Witham RFC	1

An alternative to creating new pitches is the creation of World Rugby compliant 3G pitches, as previously set out. Similarly, although shortfalls could be alleviated via improving quality and establishing additional sports lighting, a 3G pitch is also being proposed at Coronation Park. Providing this is World Rugby compliant (in addition to supporting football use) will lessen the need for other solutions at the site and help enable the Club's growth.

### World Rugby (WR) compliant 3G pitches

As previously set out, there is evidence to support the creation of a World Rugby compliant 3G pitch, despite no such provision currently existing in Braintree District. To that end, there is an aspiration from Braintree RFC to install a pitch at its self-titled site to support its growing demand and training activity. Furthermore, if a pitch was provided that it could access, this could offer a solution to the overplay currently experienced by the Club.

The following table further explores the creation of a World Rugby compliant 3G pitch and the potential capacity impact it could have if all training demand from Braintree RFC was to be transferred. As seen, shortfalls would be significantly reduced equating to 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week.

Table 4.27: Capacity if training demand was transferred to a World Rugby 3G pitch

Site ID	Site name	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Quality	Capacity rating (MES)	Potential capacity balance (MES)
7	Braintree Rugby Union Football Club	Senior	2	Standard (M1/D1)	7.5	0.5

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

## Accommodating future demand from club aspirations

Future demand expressed through club aspirations and by the RFU projects the number of rugby union teams to grow by five teams across Braintree District, which broken down equates to one team in the Central Analysis Area and four teams in the South Analysis Area. This has previously been discounted from calculations as it is considered to be more aspirational than future demand predicted via population growth; however, if such demand is realised, it will increase shortfalls throughout the District, as shown in the following table.

Table 4.28: Supply and demand balance with future demand aspirations accounted for

Analysis area	Current supply/ demand balance (MES)	Future supply/ demand balance (MES)
Central	7.5	8
Rural North	0	0
South	5	7
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>15</b>

This growth would further amplify the need to action other scenarios presented and the need for additional pitches and/or access to World Rugby compliant 3G pitch provision.

The table below explores the impact of the future demand on a club-by-club basis and how it can be sufficiently accommodated.

In addition, especially for clubs with future demand for women's and girls' activity, it is imperative that the accompanying ancillary facilities are adequate in quality and inclusive. All rugby clubs which have a target to create female teams are currently serviced by only standard quality or poor quality provision.

The table explores the impact of the future demand on a club-by-club basis and how it can be sufficiently accommodated.

Table 4.29: Summary of provision required to accommodate future demand aspirations

Club	Future team aspirations	Future demand (MES)	Comments
Braintree RUFC	1 x senior men's	0.5	To accommodate current demand, the Club needs to improve its current pitch stock and access an additional pitch. This future demand would entail a further pitch being required (or access to a World Rugby compliant 3G pitch).
Witham RUFC	1 x senior men's 2 x age grade boys 1 x age grade girls	2	To accommodate current demand, the Club needs to improve its current pitch stock and access an additional pitch. This future demand would entail a further pitch being required (or access to a World Rugby compliant 3G pitch).

## Ancillary provision

As well as creating capacity on the pitch there is a requirement to also ensure that current and future levels of demand can be accommodated off the pitch, more specifically regarding ancillary provision and changing rooms.

## BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

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As outlined in the Assessment Report, ancillary facility ratings are primarily influenced by the type of amenities which are available on a site accompanied by their quality, such as a clubhouse, changing rooms, car parking, dedicated official and spectator facilities. Good quality ancillary facilities are particularly important for rugby clubs as they can assist with income generation. Furthermore, it is becoming increasingly important for the provision to be inclusive, particularly due to growing women's and girls', disability and junior/mini demand.

Although the size and configuration of ancillary provision may alter based on the sports using the provision, and the number of pitches it services, generally the same principles are recommended to allow for varied use from all demographics:

- ◀ Accessible changing areas which can be separated, or are private/self-contained, to allow for separate male/female/all gender or senior/junior separation.
- ◀ A private accessible changing room (with relevant changing and showering provision) for someone who requires assistance.
- ◀ Separate female / male / all gender toilet provision.
- ◀ Suitably designed and specified showering cubicles to all users to maintain dignity and privacy whilst showering.

Open planned changing, toilets and particularly showering facilities can provide a significant barrier to many people resulting in them either not taking part or having a poorer sporting experience.

Specifically in the Braintree District, demand for the following clubs maybe affected due to the poor quality of their changing provision:

- ◀ Courtauld Sports Ground (Halstead Templars RUFC).
- ◀ Feering Community Centre Playing Field (Kelvedon & Feering RUFC).
- ◀ Witham Rugby Union Football Club (Witham RUFC).

Without improvements to facilities these clubs could struggle to attract new participants and teams, particularly women and girls, and may even have issues retaining current levels of demand.

### Recommendations

- ◀ Protect existing pitches in line with national (i.e. the NPPF and Sport England's Playing Fields Policy) and local planning policy.
- ◀ Improve pitch quality at all sites used by clubs through improved maintenance and/or the installation of drainage systems, with a focus on those currently overplayed (Braintree Rugby Union Football Club and Witham Rugby Union Football Club).
- ◀ Support clubs in taking part in the GMA pitch advisory service to explore technical requirements to improve pitch quality to address overplay.
- ◀ Consider an increase to the level of sports lighting used by clubs to further alleviate overplay and to better accommodate training demand i.e., at Braintree Rugby Union Football Club.
- ◀ Explore the creation of a World Rugby compliant 3G pitch, particularly if it can cater for demand from Braintree RFC.
- ◀ Where World Rugby compliant 3G provision is provided, seek the transfer of demand from overplayed grass pitches.
- ◀ Ensure future demand can be adequately accommodated, particularly in regard to women's and girls' demand.
- ◀ Improve the ancillary facilities servicing the clubs and ensure facilities are inclusive and have appropriate segregation.

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- ◀ Ensure that any large housing developments are provided for and assess the need for new pitch provision through master planning on an individual basis.
- ◀ Where a development is of a size to justify on-site rugby provision, ensure that any proposals for new pitches will attract adequate demand.
- ◀ Where a development is not of a size to justify on-site rugby provision, or if sufficient demand cannot be attracted, consider using contributions to improve existing sites within the locality.

### Hockey - artificial grass pitches

#### Assessment Report summary

##### Hockey – supply and demand summary

- ◀ There is a current insufficient supply of full size hockey suitable AGPs in the Braintree District, with a shortfall of one senior team.
- ◀ When factoring in future demand, the shortfall of provision will be increased.
- ◀ Capacity issues for training activity are also identified, meaning that the supply of hockey pitches in the Braintree District is currently insufficient to meet current and future demand.

##### Hockey – supply summary

- ◀ There are two full size suitable AGPs in the Braintree District across the same number of sites (Releet Sports Ground and Witham Sports Ground).
- ◀ In addition to the full size AGPs, there are three smaller size hockey suitable pitches at Gosfield School, Oak Farm and Silver End Academy. However, the pitches are not suitable for purposeful hockey demand.
- ◀ The full-size pitches are available for community use and serviced by sports lighting.
- ◀ Braintree HC owns the freehold of the pitch at Releet Sports Ground and therefore has security of tenure. Whilst Witham HC rents the provision at Witham Sports Ground on a seasonal basis from Freedom Leisure.
- ◀ The two full size pitches offer full availability during the peak period.
- ◀ The pitch at Releet Sports Ground is assessed as standard quality as it was last resurfaced in 2015 and Braintree HC reports it has an aspiration to upgrade its lighting to LED; however, it requires funding in order to do this.
- ◀ The pitch at Witham Sports Ground was last resurfaced in 2021 and is rated as good quality.
- ◀ Braintree HC reports the clubhouse at Releet Sports Ground is of standard quality. It reports its facilities are slowly declining in quality and are becoming outdated. The Club has a wider aspiration to refurbish the clubhouse facilities as well as improving the car parking.
- ◀ Witham HC reports the facilities at Witham Sports Ground are poor quality with basic and outdated provision provided.

##### Hockey – demand summary

- ◀ There are two hockey clubs (Braintree HC and Witham HC) playing in the District.
- ◀ There is a total of 32 dedicated hockey teams across the two community clubs with the most prominent being senior men's teams with 12, followed by senior women's, six for dedicated mini teams, four for junior boys and three for junior girls' teams. The senior team numbers include veteran and U21 teams.
- ◀ Both clubs have seen an increase in its teams over recent years. Growth equates to one senior and two junior teams for Braintree HC and two junior teams for Witham HC.
- ◀ Back to hockey sessions are ran by Braintree HC.
- ◀ Braintree HC currently exports some junior demand to the hockey suitable AGP at Felstead School in Uttlesford as an overspill venue, however it primarily uses the provision at The Releet Sports Ground.
- ◀ Both clubs report future demand for five additional senior teams (two men's and three women's) as well as four junior teams.
- ◀ Witham HC has future demand aspirations, but the Club states that this cannot be accommodated without increased pitch capacity at Witham Sports Ground, with some capacity taken up by football groups, or through the creation of another full size pitch.

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

◀ In addition to hockey usage at the site, considerably football activity also takes place, particularly during midweek evenings and on Saturday mornings.

## Scenarios

### Accommodating match play demand

One full size hockey pitch with sports lighting is able to accommodate four match equivalent sessions on one day, which equates to one pitch being able to cater for eight 'home' teams at peak time based on them playing on a home and away basis (one team requires 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week on its 'home' pitch).

Using the above calculations, on the basis that there are currently two full size hockey suitable pitches in, this provides a theoretical opportunity to accommodate up to eight matches and 16 senior teams at peak time across the District at peak time (on Saturdays).

Table 4.30: Summary of hockey pitch capacity for match play

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	No. of pitches	Potential capacity in teams	Actual capacity in teams	Number of hockey teams using the provision at peak time	Capacity balance (in teams)
51	Releet Sports Ground	Central	1	8	8	9	1
75	Witham Sports Ground	South	1	8	8	10	2
-	-	<b>Totals</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>3</b>

As seen, it is determined that current provision can potentially accommodate up to 16 senior teams on a Saturday, with this equating to eight match equivalent sessions per week (where teams play on a home and away basis). With 19 senior teams currently provided (equating to 9.5 match equivalent sessions per week) and requiring access, there is a current shortfall on Saturdays for match play demand. When factoring in future demand expressed by both clubs and noting this cannot be accommodated on the pitches it currently accesses, this would further increase the shortfall.

### Accommodating training demand

In terms of capacity for training, both full size AGPs in the Braintree District have high levels of existing usage (football and hockey), with spare capacity for growth minimal. This is exacerbated by additional usage from other sports, most predominately football, which further reduces availability for hockey clubs at desired times.

Both Braintree HC and Witham HC highlight issues with accessing additional training slots at Releet Sports Ground and Witham Sports Ground during midweek due to usage for football training. A similar picture to Saturday match play capacity is therefore presented. This means that alternative venues may be required, either via utilising pitches not currently accessed (at which point quality improvements may be necessary), or through new provision.

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

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## Protecting sand-based AGPs for hockey

As both full size pitches located in Braintree District are used extensively for hockey, these should not be considered for 3G pitch conversion unless a replacement pitch in a suitable location is provided. As such, all the pitches should be protected for future hockey usage and attempts should be made for this to be ensured through planning management e.g., through having permitted development rights removed (meaning planning permission would be required for a surface change).

Furthermore, given both full size pitches are played to capacity in the District and both clubs are showing a growth trend, Stage E should continue to monitor the continued growth of the clubs to assess whether a third pitch is required in the area, especially if football training activity is difficult to move off the sites.

## Recommendations

- ◀ Ensure the full size hockey suitable AGPs at Releet Sports Ground and Witham Sports Ground are protected for continued hockey usage.
- ◀ Encourage football users to transfer to 3G pitch provision as and when new 3G pitches are provided to free up capacity for hockey.
- ◀ Resurface the pitch at Releet Sports Ground when required and ensure an adequate maintenance programme is in place.
- ◀ Upgrade the sports lighting at Releet Sports Ground and Witham Sports Ground to LED.
- ◀ Ensure all providers have a sinking fund in place for long-term sustainability.
- ◀ Improve ancillary facilities at Releet Sports Ground and Witham Sports Ground.
- ◀ Ensure that any large housing developments are provided for and assess the need for new pitch provision through master planning on an individual basis.
- ◀ Where a development is of a size to justify on-site provision, ensure that any proposals for new pitches will attract adequate demand.

## Cricket squares

### Assessment Report summary

#### Cricket – supply and demand summary

- ◀ Actual spare capacity is identified amounting to 48 match equivalent sessions on a Saturday, 42 match equivalent sessions on a Sunday and 103 match equivalent sessions exist midweek.
- ◀ In total, five sites are overplayed by a total of 99 match equivalent sessions per season. Coggeshall Town Cricket Club has the highest amount of overplay due to the amount of demand that Coggeshall Town CC fields.
- ◀ Overall, there is currently an insufficient supply of cricket squares in the Braintree District to cater for Saturday and Sunday cricket, with this projected to worsen when accounting for future demand.

#### Cricket – supply summary

- ◀ In total, there are 21 grass wicket squares in the Braintree District across 19 sites, with one grass wicket square being unavailable for community use.
- ◀ There are also five NTPs, with three accompanying grass wicket squares and the remaining two being standalone wickets.
- ◀ Bocking Sports Club previously accommodated a six wicket grass square; however, upon non-technical assessments, the provision seems not to have been actively maintained or used for an extended period of time.
- ◀ Church Road Playing Fields previously accommodated a grass wicket square with eight wickets that was last active circa 2016. However, the square is no longer maintained but the site is still used for football.

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- ◀ Courtauld Sports Ground previously provided a grass wicket square but is no longer maintained, although the site is still utilised for football.
- ◀ Notley Green previously accommodated a grass wicket square that was last active circa 2000. However, the square is no longer maintained but the site is still used for football.
- ◀ Dusty Lane, Tye Green previously accommodated a grass wicket square that was last active circa 2011. ECB and Essex Cricket has advised that the site is too small for senior cricket and is not viable for re-instating a grass wicket square. However, the site and boundary size is sufficient for an NTP for junior cricket. Therefore, it should still be protected as a playing field for other sports unless appropriate mitigation is made off-site.
- ◀ The audit of community available grass wicket squares found 12 to be good quality and eight to be standard quality.
- ◀ The audit of ancillary facilities determines that six (30%) are accompanied by good quality provision, nine squares (45%) by standard quality provision and three (15%) by poor quality provision. The remaining two squares (10%) are not accompanied by any ancillary provision.
- ◀ There are 10 sites supplying 24 net bays, whilst four clubs report demand for new, improved and/or additional training facilities.

### Cricket – demand summary

- ◀ There are 16 clubs in the Braintree District which collectively provide 80 teams, equating to 40 open age, eight senior women’s, five junior girls’ and 27 junior boys’ teams.
- ◀ There has been a general increase in demand in recent years, with seven clubs reporting an increase in participation and only Rayne CC reporting a decrease in participation.
- ◀ It must be noted that the ECB has recently established a target of trebling the number of girls’ teams across the Country by 2028, with this therefore likely to further increase in demand in the Braintree District. This will be further tested as a scenario in the Strategy.
- ◀ A total of four clubs undertake All Stars cricket, whilst two undertake Dynamo’s and three have women’s softball demand.
- ◀ Future demand from population forecasts equates to the predicted growth of two open age and one junior boys’ teams (up to 2041), whereas six clubs indicate aspirations to increase levels of participation amounting to a total predicted growth of nine teams.

## Scenarios

### Improving quality/addressing overplay

Although a regular, sufficient maintenance regime can sustain sites with minimal levels of overplay (e.g., at), a reduction in play is recommended to ensure there is no detrimental effect on quality over time. As such, attempts should be made to reduce identified overplay, although it is recognised that many clubs do not necessarily believe that there are capacity issues and are able to accommodate such excess demand. This means that they are not always open to potential solutions (e.g., NTP installation).

In the Braintree District, overplay is found across six squares at five sites, with this scenario looking at the impact of quality improvements as a solution to reducing or alleviating the shortfalls identified. However, of the overplayed squares, five are already good quality, which means the position will not improve without a transfer of demand.

Table 4.31: Overplay if all squares were good quality (match equivalent sessions)

Site ID	Site name	Club	No. of squares	Current quality	Current capacity rating	Good quality capacity rating
12	Coggeshall Town Cricket Club	Coggeshall Town CC	1	Good	37	37
37	Kelvedon and Feering Cricket Club	Kelvedon & Feering CC	2	Good	30	30

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Site ID	Site name	Club	No. of squares	Current quality	Current capacity rating	Good quality capacity rating
53	Sauls Bridge Sports Ground	Witham CC	1	Standard	4	1
65	Terling Cricket Club	Terling CC	1	Good	19	19
97	Hatfield Peverel Cricket Club	Hatfield Peverel CC	1	Good	9	9

By increasing quality, only Sauls Bridge Sports Ground would see overplay eradicated, although only one match equivalent session per season created. Notwithstanding this, in total, five match equivalent sessions per season of overplay would be alleviated. This would reduce shortfalls for Saturday and Sunday cricket, although a deficit would remain. Whilst nine match equivalent sessions of spare capacity per season would be established for midweek cricket.

Table 4.32: Overall supply and demand balance if overplayed squares improved to good in match equivalent sessions

Playing format	Current capacity (MES)	Potential capacity (MES)
Saturday	51	46
Sunday	57	52
Midweek	4	9

Although improving quality can have a positive impact, the potential capacity created will not necessarily be in the peak period and therefore may not fully meet demand. It should also be noted that if quality was improved, for this to be sustained over a long term period, this will likely require existing maintenance budgets to be maintained or enhanced.

When factoring in future demand, current shortfalls for Saturday and Sunday cricket would still remain albeit at a reduced level, whereas the shortfall for midweek cricket would be eradicated and three match equivalent sessions of spare capacity created.

Table 4.33: Future supply and demand balance if overplayed squares improved to good in match equivalent sessions

Playing format	Future capacity (MES)	Potential capacity (MES)
Saturday	75	70
Sunday	57	52
Midweek	2	3

### Transfer of demand

Where squares remain overplayed despite maximising quality, installing NTPs could assist as this can enable the transfer of demand from grass wickets. In the Braintree District, none of the overplayed sites (Coggeshall Town Cricket Club, Kelvedon and Feering Cricket Club, Sauls Bridge Sports Ground, Terling Cricket Club, Hatfield Peverel Cricket Club) have an NTP and thus could theoretically benefit from such provision as a way of reducing identified deficits, providing sufficient space exists (further investigation is required to determine suitability).

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Notwithstanding the above, please note that the inclusion of an NTP for the management of fixtures can alleviate overplay issues, usage is subject to league rules allowing usage and minimum pitch specifications, particularly for senior fixtures where play is generally not allowed. Generally, only junior fixtures can be played on the provision, in addition to some lower level senior play and midweek demand (e.g., recreational leagues and friendlies). Furthermore, undue pressure should not be placed on clubs and volunteers to install self-funded NTPs.

The ECB highlights that non-turf pitches which follow its TS6<sup>6</sup> guidance on performance standards are suitable for high level, senior play and are considered able to take 60 matches per season, although this may include training sessions via the use of mobile nets. Typically, however, play would be more suited to junior teams as senior leagues typically stipulate the use of natural turf wickets.

As an alternative to NTPs (or in addition), although not readily available within grassroots cricket, there may be potential in the future to address overplay through the installation of hybrid wicket/s on competitive senior pitches. The ECB has been working with SIS Pitches on the installation of hybrid cricket wickets at county cricket clubs (2019) and more recently recreational squares such as Perry Hall Park in Birmingham (2021) and Didsbury Cricket Club in Manchester (2022).

A hybrid wicket combines natural turf grass with less than 5% of uniquely engineered, soft polyethylene yarn, which has already been used to improve golf tees, tennis courts and pitch surrounds. These wickets are to offer a greater capacity in addition to reducing time on repair works with a faster recovery time. Reports found that hybrid wickets improve surface stability, reduced wear, reduced bowler foot holes and significantly extended hours of playing time.

Ideally, once these become more readily available for community cricket clubs and have gone through the required testing, they could act as a way to increase levels of playing capacity on overplay squares. This would be particularly beneficial for those sites which are limited on space and cannot create additional wickets due to restrictions on things such as boundary length or ball strike.

Although it is difficult at this stage to understand what impact hybrid wickets could have on each site's capacity, it is suggested that it could potentially alleviate all the overplay on both junior and senior wickets. This is based on the assumption that more senior demand can take place on the hybrid wickets allowing for the outer senior wickets to be used/converted for junior demand. However, it should also be known that hybrid wickets are a new development and remain largely untested at grassroots level, meaning there is no data at present to formally promote them as a solution.

In addition, it should also be noted that hybrid wickets have generally been designed to support high quality provision. It is said that only sites achieving a 'good' standard or above via PitchPower assessments are suitable (meaning 'basic' and 'poor' sites are not).

### **Accommodating exported demand**

There is currently one club; Chelmsford Titans CC that exports one Sunday team outside of the Braintree District each week as demand cannot be accommodated on existing provision due to the lack of peak time capacity. The impact of accommodating this within the Braintree District is evidenced in the table below.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.cag.org.uk/docs/ecb-non-turf-pitches-ts6-final-328.pdf>

## BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Table 4.34: Supply and demand balance if exported demand returned to the District in match equivalent sessions

Playing format	Current capacity (MES)	Potential capacity (MES)
Saturday	51	51
Sunday	57	47
Midweek	4	4

As seen, shortfalls would increase, and there is no clear means to accommodating all the demand without improving access to sites (e.g., schools) or without establishing new provision. In total, one square is required based on two senior teams being accommodated at peak time (on a Saturday).

### Removing imported demand

The Assessment Report identified that five clubs import demand into the District to play competitive matches. If this match play was to be played back in their respective authorities, the shortfall would be eradicated for Saturday cricket and actual spare capacity established. The shortfalls would remain on Sunday cricket and actual spare capacity for midweek cricket. The impact of this is explored in the table below.

Table 4.35: Supply and demand balance if imported demand returned to their respective local authorities in match equivalent sessions

Playing format	Current capacity (MES)	Potential capacity (MES)
Saturday	51	9
Sunday	57	57
Midweek	4	4

### Accommodating future demand

In total, six cricket clubs in the Braintree District express future demand, which if realised will further exacerbate existing shortfalls for all formats of play. The table below therefore studies the future demand on a club-by-club basis to better understand what can and cannot be accommodated on the existing level of supply. This has previously been discounted from calculations as it is considered to be more aspirational than future demand predicted via population growth

Table 4.36: Accommodating future demand (club aspirations)

Club	Open age	Senior women's	Junior	Comments
Braintree CC	1	-	-	Site will become overplayed if demand is realised.
Earls Colne CC	1	-	-	Site will become overplayed if demand is realised.
Hatfield Peverel CC	-	-	1	Existing site is overplayed so demand cannot be accommodated.
Kelvedon & Feering CC	1	1	2	Existing site is overplayed so demand cannot be accommodated.
Rayne CC	1	-	-	Site will become overplayed if demand is realised.
Terling CC	-	1	-	Existing site is overplayed so demand cannot be accommodated.

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As seen, none of the clubs could accommodate future demand on their current provision due to either being overplayed or could be overplayed if the future demand is realised. As such, increased provision is required, through accessing currently unavailable and/or unused sites or through new pitches being established.

### **Accommodating girls' demand**

The ECB has recently established a target of trebling the number of girls' teams across the Country by 2028, with this therefore likely to further increase in demand across the District above and beyond what is forecast through other methods. To quantify this in the Braintree District, with five junior girls' teams fielded, this will increase to 15 teams by 2028.

As girls' demand commonly takes place during midweek, the sites listed below display spare capacity that should be prioritised for accommodating additional fixtures:

- ◀ Earls Colne Recreation Club.
- ◀ Gestingthorpe Playing Field.
- ◀ Halstead Cricket Club.
- ◀ Wethersfield Playing Field.
- ◀ Witham Cricket Club.
- ◀ Wickham St Paul's Recreation Ground.

However, this will place further pressure on the shortfalls identified, particularly if other growth is realised and if exported demand returns to the District. As such, whilst this particularly growth could likely be accommodated in isolation, it adds to the overall need for increased pitch provision when considered with other factors.

In addition, when considering the suitability of sites to accommodate girls' demand, it is imperative that the ancillary provision is of a required standard.

### **Ancillary provision**

As well as creating capacity on the pitch there is a requirement to also ensure that current and future levels of demand can be accommodated off the pitch, more specifically regarding ancillary provision and changing rooms.

As outlined in the Assessment Report, ancillary facility ratings are primarily influenced by the type of amenities which are available on a site accompanied by their quality, such as a clubhouse, changing rooms, car parking, dedicated official and spectator facilities. Good quality ancillary facilities are particularly important for cricket clubs as they can assist with income generation. Furthermore, it is becoming increasingly important for the provision to be inclusive, particularly due to growing women's and girls', disability and junior demand.

Although the size and configuration of ancillary provision may alter based on the sports using the provision, and the number of pitches it services, generally the same principles are recommended to allow for varied use from all demographics:

- ◀ Accessible changing areas which can be separated, or are private/self-contained, to allow for separate male/female/all gender or senior/junior separation.
- ◀ A private accessible changing room (with relevant changing and showering provision) for someone who requires assistance.
- ◀ Separate female / male / all gender toilet provision.
- ◀ Suitably designed and specified showering cubicles to all users to maintain dignity and privacy whilst showering.

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Open planned changing, toilets and particularly showering facilities can provide a significant barrier to many people resulting in them either not taking part or having a poorer sporting experience.

Specifically in the Braintree District, demand for the following clubs maybe impacted due to the poor quality of their changing provision:

- ◀ Coggeshall Town Cricket Club (Airfield Ground).
- ◀ Gestingthorpe Playing Field.
- ◀ Halstead Cricket Club.
- ◀ Rayne Village Hall.
- ◀ Sauls Bridge Sports Ground.
- ◀ Terling Cricket Club.

Without improvements to facilities these clubs could struggle to attract new participants and teams, particularly women and girls, and may even have issues retaining current levels of demand.

### Recommendations

- ◀ Protect existing pitches in line with national (i.e. the NPPF and Sport England's Playing Fields Policy) and local planning policy.
- ◀ Improve quality at sites assessed as poor and standard quality and ensure quality is sustained at sites assessed as good through partnership working with Essex Cricket.
- ◀ Install additional NTPs to accompany grass wicket squares (where space allows), particularly where overplay is present and where it cannot be eradicated via quality improvements.
- ◀ Consider the need for hybrid wickets to further support providing additional capacity.
- ◀ Encourage facility operators to provide improved security of tenure for clubs without ownership or a long-term lease arrangement in place.
- ◀ Continue to support ECB initiatives such as All Stars and Dynamos and ensure unaffiliated demand and recreational cricket is provided for.
- ◀ Continue to support the growth of women's and girl's cricket, which includes the new partnership between the ECB and Metro Bank.
- ◀ Improve the changing facilities where there is a need to do so and ensure inclusivity and appropriateness for mixed gender usage.
- ◀ Consider options to increase and improve stock of suitable practice facilities where demand exists to do so and consider the creation of additional practice nets at publicly open sites (e.g., parks and recreation grounds) to encourage and increase recreational demand.
- ◀ Review changes in participation over Stage E in case some of the recommendations need revising to account for growth in the women and girls' game.
- ◀ Utilise sites such as Earls Colne Recreation Club, Gestingthorpe Playing Field, Halstead Cricket Club, Wethersfield Playing Field, Witham Cricket Club and Wickham St Paul's Recreation Ground to accommodate additional women's and girls' demand.
- ◀ Work with clubs to accommodate targeted growth for women's and girls' cricket through Essex Cricket's County Facilities Strategy and ECB's Inspiring Generations Strategy.
- ◀ Ensure that any large housing developments are provided for and make on-site provision for meeting existing and future cricket pitch needs.
- ◀ Where a development is not of a size to justify on-site cricket provision, or if sufficient demand cannot be attracted, consider using contributions to improve existing sites within the locality.
- ◀ Ensure that any developments nearby to existing cricket sites do not prejudice the use of the provision (e.g. through ball-strike issues).

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## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

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### Tennis courts

#### Assessment Report summary

##### Tennis – supply and demand summary

- ◀ For club-based tennis, there is seemingly sufficient capacity in the Braintree District to facilitate current and future demand. No responding clubs report any issues, suggesting that there is no requirement for additional court space. However, this should be monitored particularly in relation to provision at Gosfield Tennis Club, where one of the courts is assessed as poor quality.
- ◀ In contrast, there is likely to be a shortfall of provision for non-club activity, with few local authority courts existing and with some of the supply accessed by clubs, poor quality and/or without sports lighting. This likely leading to levels of unmet and latent demand.
- ◀ A need for additional padel courts has also been identified.

##### Tennis – supply summary

- ◀ A total of 57 traditional tennis courts are identified in the Braintree District across 22 sites.
- ◀ Of the courts, 55 are categorised as being available for community use at 18 sites compared to 10 courts that are unavailable, with these located at Alec Hunter Academy, Gosfield School, Prested Hall Hotel and Sports Club and The Essex Golf and Country Club.
- ◀ Planning permission has recently been granted (June 2025) for the construction of two tennis courts serviced by sports lighting located at Courtald Sports Ground (25/00289/FUL).
- ◀ Maltings Academy is in the process of submitting a planning application to install sports lighting on its tennis courts using S106 funding.
- ◀ Of the community courts, 15 courts are provided at club sites, seven at local authority sites, 12 at parish council sites, 18 are provided at education sites and the remaining three courts are classified as 'other' are those provided at Prested Hall Hotel and Sports Club and The Essex Golf & Country Club.
- ◀ All clubs have security of tenure, either via freehold for their sites or long term lease agreements.
- ◀ Most outdoor tennis courts have a macadam surface; there are 55 of this type compared to two artificial courts.
- ◀ Of the courts, 23 are serviced by sports lighting, with 20 of these are available for community use.
- ◀ 17 courts are assessed as good quality, 20 as standard quality and 20 as poor quality.
- ◀ There are also four outdoor padel courts in the Braintree District, provided at The Essex Golf & Country Club and Notleys Golf Club.

##### Tennis – demand summary

- ◀ There are four tennis clubs in the Braintree District, with membership equating to 439, where known through consultation (it is not known for Gosfield LTC)
- ◀ Membership is seemingly on the rise, with two clubs reporting recent increases and only one reporting a decrease.
- ◀ Whilst no latent or unmet demand has been identified by clubs, it is considered to exist for recreational tennis, with LTA data identifying potential demand equating to 600 people.
- ◀ Future demand is expressed by three clubs and amounts to 60 potential additional members (35 senior and 25 junior).
- ◀ Based on identified population growth, the Sports Facilities Calculator indicates a requirement for an additional 0.74 courts, up to 2041.
- ◀ A need for 12 padel courts has been identified in the District by the LTA (meaning a shortfall of eight).

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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### Scenarios

#### Improving the recreational tennis offer

The LTA has developed a package of support for LAs to grow the use of park tennis courts by removing key barriers to participation. The three products are ClubSpark, Play and Gate Access and can be used individually or in combination. The products are used to provide a remote booking and access system.

Instead of providing free access, some local authorities are now securing their courts as per a membership scheme that allows members access through the use of pay and play with annual passes available utilising gate access technology.

In the Braintree District, local authority sites providing tennis courts is minimal. The courts at Strutt Memorial Ground were recently constructed (October 2025), with this in partnership between Hatfield Peverel Parish Council and the LTA.

Based on the findings of this study, quality requires improving at Gosfield Tennis Club (one of the courts is assessed as poor quality).

#### Accommodating current and future club-based demand

The LTA suggests that a court without sports lighting can accommodate a maximum of 40 members, whereas a court with sports lighting can accommodate 60 members.

On this basis, when reviewing club demand in the Braintree District, it is evident that all four clubs (where membership is known) are operating below the LTA recommended capacity guidelines both now and in the future. To confirm, all four clubs are fully serviced by sports lighting on all its courts.

The clubs should be monitored through the Stage E process as it is in a position where it may become unsustainable to operate.

#### Padel

Padel tennis is relatively new and is growing in popularity, particularly since its recognition as a sport and integration within the LTA. It is played mainly in a doubles format on an enclosed court and can be played in groups of mixed ages and abilities. The rules are broadly the same as tennis, although you serve under-arm and the walls are used as part of the game with the ball allowed to bounce off them.

To further grow the sport, the LTA is focused on improving the infrastructure and the coach education pathway, with £6 million invested by the NGB since 2021. At the end of 2020, there were 87 courts, 350 in 2023 and 500 courts are now provided in 2024. There is also a projected growth of 1,000 in 2026, with it therefore envisaged that, with growing infrastructure, participation in padel will increase substantially in the next five years, with the LTA identifying an aim to grow the number of courts to 1,000 and the number of players to 400,000.

There are currently four outdoor padel courts in the Braintree District, located at The Essex Golf and Country Club and The Notleys Golf Club. The LTA estimates a further eight courts would need to be provided across the District to meet all the demand.

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Given the padel courts in the Braintree District are located at commercial sites where costs are often high, there is a need for provision to provide an opportunity for all members of the community where they are located, to have the opportunity to play the sport.

Notwithstanding the above, the LTA also states that it is not encouraging clubs or local authorities to convert existing tennis courts to padel courts, unless a benefit to both tennis and padel can be evidenced. This is to ensure that the provision of traditional courts remains sufficient and the growth of padel is not to the detriment of tennis.

### Recommendations

- ◀ Protect existing quantity of courts.
- ◀ Improve court quality at sites assessed as poor or standard quality and sustain quality at sites assessed as good, especially at sites in use by clubs or that are (could be) well used for recreational demand.
- ◀ Linked to the above, improve park courts as a priority to create a year-round recreational tennis option to meet local demand.
- ◀ Explore options to further improve the recreational tennis offer via utilisation of technology provided by the LTA (e.g., Clubspark) to support the customer journey and through investment into facilities and accompanying ancillary provision.
- ◀ Explore the feasibility of formalising community use of educational sites in order to increase capacity for informal/recreational demand.
- ◀ Consider development of additional courts for recreational demand, potentially through adding more courts to existing sites.
- ◀ Where local authority courts are improved/established, ensure the operation of the provision is sustainable and in line with other recommendations.
- ◀ Ensure sinking funds are put into place by operators for long-term sustainability.
- ◀ Improve ancillary provision servicing courts where demand is, or could be, high.
- ◀ Continue to monitor club demand to ensure that supply remains sufficient.
- ◀ Support opportunities to provide padel courts at suitable sites given its growing demand (separate to existing tennis courts) and seek to maximise activity, providing no existing in-use traditional courts are lost as a result.
- ◀ Linked to the above, ensure other sports such as netball and basketball which use multi-sports courts are protected as there is an increasing number of padel court proposals coming forward that would displace netball and basketball.
- ◀ Ensure that any housing developments consider potential increases in demand for the sport and that new provision or contributions are properly sought through utilisation of the Sport England Playing Pitch Calculator.

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

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## Netball courts

### Assessment Report summary

#### Netball – supply and demand summary

- ◀ Whilst there is a limited supply of netball provision within the Braintree District, existing demand levels are being adequately serviced. However, improving the alternative supply in the District and creating additional provision could result in increased demand levels and consequently help the sport grow. This should be further considered alongside the findings of the Chelmsford PPOSS and in partnership with neighbouring authorities to provide a regional solution to the issues identified.

#### Netball – supply summary

- ◀ There are 33 netball courts identified in the Braintree District across 14 sites. Of these, 22 are available for community use across 10 sites compared to 11 courts that are unavailable at four sites (all provided at education sites).
- ◀ Most outdoor netball courts in the Braintree District are operated by education providers, with 24 courts falling under this management type. Of the remaining courts, six are managed by the Council (at Braintree Sport & Health Club, Great Notley Country Park and Witham Sports Ground) and three by parish councils (at John Ray Recreation Ground and Feering Community Centre Playing Field).
- ◀ A total of three sites; Honywood Community Science School, Braintree Sport & Health Club and The Ramsey Academy are reported as being in use for netball activity across the District.
- ◀ All but two of the outdoor netball courts in the Braintree District have a macadam surface, with 31 being of this type and 22 (68%) being available for community use.
- ◀ Only five courts are serviced by sports lighting, with these provided at Braintree Sport & Health Club and Witham Sports Ground.
- ◀ There are 16 netball courts overmarked (e.g., by tennis courts) compared to 15 that are dedicated for netball use (standalone).
- ◀ There are 16 courts assessed as standard quality and 15 as poor quality (none are rated as good quality).

#### Netball – demand summary

- ◀ There are three netball clubs in the Braintree District known as Braintree Youth NC, Halstead NC and Kelvedon NC.
- ◀ All affiliated match play demand takes place outside of the Braintree District, in Chelmsford and Colchester via the use of central venues by the Colchester Netball League and Chelmsford & District Netball League (exported demand).

## Scenarios

N/A

## Recommendations

- ◀ Protect existing courts.
- ◀ Secure community use at sites that are currently in use or that could be used in the future such as at Honywood Community Science School and The Ramsey Academy.
- ◀ Improve court quality at sites assessed as poor or standard quality and sustain quality at sites assessed as good, especially at sites in use by clubs and for England Netball initiatives.
- ◀ Consider establishing additional sports lighting at venues in use for netball or at venues that could attract netball demand following installation.
- ◀ Ensure ancillary provision is appropriate where community access is received.
- ◀ Ensure demand can continue to be accommodated outside of the Braintree District (e.g., in Chelmsford) where this is the case through choice.

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

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## Bowling greens

### Assessment Report summary

#### **Bowls – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ Both current and future demand for bowls in the Braintree District can be met via the existing supply, although monitoring is required in relation to Braintree BC and Witham BC to ensure that this remains the case due to its high membership.
- ◀ In addition, with no clubs operating with unsustainably low numbers, it is imperative that all four greens are protected for continued bowls activity. The levels of demand recorded could not be condensed onto fewer greens.

#### **Bowls – supply summary**

- ◀ There are nine flat bowling greens in the Braintree District across the same number of sites. All nine are available for community use. The South Analysis Area provides four greens whilst there are three greens in the Rural North Analysis Area and the remaining two in the Central Analysis Area.
- ◀ Most bowling greens are owned and managed by town council/parish council or respective sports club.
- ◀ All greens provide security of tenure.
- ◀ Six greens are assessed as good quality (66%) and three (33%) as standard quality (none are assessed as poor quality).

#### **Bowls – demand summary**

- ◀ There are eight bowling clubs as playing within the Braintree District.
- ◀ Membership of the clubs, where known totals 469 members, made up of 336 senior men, 127 senior women and six junior members.
- ◀ The largest club is Braintree BC with 116 members, whilst the smallest is Witham Mill Lane BC with 50 members.
- ◀ Two greens (Courtauld Sports Ground and Witham Mill Lane BC) are available for pay and play usage, although take up is relatively minimal.
- ◀ Three responding clubs report future demand aspirations, with this equating to an overall growth of 40 members (23 senior and 17 junior).

### Impact of accommodating current and future demand

Bowls England does not have any specific guidance on bowling green capacity, stating that it can vary from site-to-site and from club-to-club. However, as a guide, it states that any green operating with a membership of over 80 may need additional resource to ensure that it is meeting its required level of demand.

In the Braintree District, where membership is known, Bocking Alliance BC, Castle Hedingham BC and Steeple Bumpstead BC are operating within a 'sustainable' capacity range. However, Braintree BC and Witham BC are running above the recommended capacity limit. That being said, both clubs do not report any usage pressures and states that all demand can be met on its provision. As such, no action is required at present, although demand levels should be monitored to ensure this remains the case.

### Recommendations

- ◀ Protect existing greens.
- ◀ Improve green quality at sites assessed as standard quality and sustain quality at sites assessed as good.
- ◀ Seek to improve ancillary facility quality where it is necessary e.g. at Castle Hedingham BC, Steeple Bumpstead BC and Witham BC.
- ◀ Support clubs operating with a high membership to ensure demand continues to be met on their existing provision.

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

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- ◀ Support the implementation of new products to increase participation within the Authority i.e., Bowls Bash (a shortened format) and Play Bowls (pay and play participation).

### Athletics

#### Assessment Report summary

##### **Athletics – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ The supply of dedicated athletics facilities is sufficient to meet current demand.
- ◀ Braintree & District AC has a waiting list of 30 members. The Club cites this is due to a lack of coaches and volunteers which is limiting its growth.
- ◀ As well as some level of qualitative improvement is needed at Braintree Sport & Health Club. This is especially in regard to the surface of the track, which will require a resurface by 2026 (when its Track Mark accreditation expires).

##### **Athletics – supply summary**

- ◀ In the Braintree District, there is one full size purpose built outdoor athletics track provided located at Braintree Sport & Health Club.
- ◀ The track at Braintree Sport & Health Club is owned and managed by Freedom Leisure (on behalf of the Council). As such, it is fully available for community use.
- ◀ The provision at Braintree Sport & Health Club is assessed as standard quality, primarily due to the age of the surface and some signs of wear and tear evident as well as faded line markings noted.
- ◀ Braintree Sport & Health Club has UKA TrackMark accreditation until September 2026. At which point, the track will require a respray/full resurface.

##### **Athletics – demand summary**

- ◀ There are three clubs in the Braintree District affiliated to England Athletics, both of which are running clubs.
- ◀ Braintree and District AC is a large athletics club based at Braintree Sport & Health Club. It has a membership totalling 280 people. It states that it currently has a waiting list in place of circa 30 people. The Club accesses Braintree Sport & Health Club on Tuesday and Thursday evenings for training sessions via a rental agreement which is secured on an annual basis. In addition, it competes in a range of competitions and leagues meaning it also has requirements to utilise the facility on weekends.
- ◀ Halstead Running Club is a road running club. It currently has 80 senior males and 60 senior females and is based at Courtauld Sports Ground as a meeting point and primarily utilises the local road network for training activity. In addition, it accesses the track at Braintree Sport & Health Club on a weekly basis between September and April.
- ◀ Witham Running has 133 senior males, 68 senior females and one junior member. It uses Maltings Academy and New Rickstones Academy as a meeting point and utilises the local road network.
- ◀ There is one Park Run event in the Braintree District held on a weekly basis, with this located at Great Notley Country Park.
- ◀ Future growth aspirations are identified by both running clubs and England Athletics, although this is not quantified and does not account for any track and field demand.

### Scenarios

The 400m sports lit community accessible track and field facility at Braintree Sport & Health Club provides the District with an adequate amount of formal athletic provision to cater for its current demand.

The track is assessed as standard quality primarily due to the age of the surface and some signs of wear and tear evident as well as faded line markings noted. The EA ANOG report outlines the track will likely require a respray/full resurface by 2026. This should be a priority to ensure that the track can continue to service Braintree District athletics demand now and in the future.

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England Athletics' latest approach to facility planning includes the play track, compact track, mini track and active track which present more affordable means of councils installing new athletics provision. These facilities cater for a more recreational and informal offer for athletics and general health and wellbeing opportunities.

Braintree District Council could consider the installation of such provision in line with future housing developments as part of future master planning for its larger, more notable sites.

### Recommendations

- ◀ Protect existing formal athletics provision in the Braintree District and consider further increasing provision to meet demand.
- ◀ Sustain quality and look to make improvements via resurfacing, when necessary to ensure demand can continue to be met and the track at Braintree Sport & Health Club remains TrackMark accredited.
- ◀ Support clubs, running groups, events and initiatives such as Parkrun and pursue increased participation, where possible.
- ◀ Ensure all clubs/groups continue to have home bases to operate from and pursue improved security of tenure where it is required.
- ◀ Support the development of providing some form of additional athletics provision, in line with England Athletics new generation of track products.

### Golf courses

#### Assessment Report summary

##### **Golf – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ The existing supply of golf provision in the Braintree District is sufficient to meet demand levels, with a large quantity of facilities provided that collectively offers good variety to ensure that all golfers can be catered for.
- ◀ As demand levels are also high, particularly when accounting for needs from the wider region, all existing provision needs to be protected.

##### **Golf – supply summary**

- ◀ There are currently eight golf sites in operation in the Braintree District.
- ◀ Seven of the sites provide one 18-hole course each, whilst one provides one 9-hole course each.
- ◀ Three sites have a Par 3 course in addition to their standard hole offerings.
- ◀ Three sites supply a traditional driving range, with three available to the community and sports-lit.
- ◀ Of the sites, there are two members clubs (Braintree Golf Club and Haverhill Golf Club), whilst the remainder operate as proprietary venues.
- ◀ Average membership fees, where known, are slightly below the national average, although each site with an 18-hole course is in excess of this.
- ◀ Quality across the sites is good, with no issues reported.

##### **Golf – demand summary**

- ◀ The current average membership across the golf sites in the Braintree District is 586, suggesting that demand is higher than national rates (the average is 407).
- ◀ In line with a national trend of increasing membership, demand across the Braintree District has increased since 2018, despite a small reduction from 2022 data.
- ◀ Whilst pay and play usage is not known, it would be expected that demand would be higher at the propriety courses due to other on-site amenities and the operational structures in place.
- ◀ Imported demand into the Braintree District is expected to be higher than what would ordinarily be expected given the number and mix of sites that are within the District and with shortfalls existing in neighbouring authorities.

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

- ◀ Unmet demand is seemingly low, with no sites operating a waiting list and with active advertising ongoing.
- ◀ Using an England Golf tool, latent demand is seemingly high, with Rivenhall Oaks Golf Centre identified as having the largest levels of potential demand.

## Scenarios

N/A

## Recommendations

- ◀ Protect existing golf provision.
- ◀ Sustain course and ancillary facility quality and seek improvements where necessary.
- ◀ Support clubs in membership retention and potential growth and encourage clubs and providers to work more collaboratively in terms of creating pathways for players.

## Cycling and BMX

### Assessment Report summary

#### Cycling – supply and demand summary

- ◀ There is some club based demand identified in the Braintree District, with one BMX Club which accesses a dedicated facility at Deanery Hill (Queen Elizabeth II Foundation Field). Therefore, the provision should be protected and sustained and seen as a destination venue for BMX cyclists in the District.
- ◀ Whilst the other club (North Essex Velo) does not require dedicated facilities as it primarily utilises roads.
- ◀ Continued implementation of initiatives promoted by British Cycling should also be explored in order to encourage more people to get into cycling. This therefore includes Go-Ride and Breeze.

#### Cycling – supply summary

- ◀ In the Braintree District, there are two BMX pump tracks at Deanery Hill (Queen Elizabeth II Foundation Field) and Rayne Village Hall.
- ◀ Deanery Hill (Queen Elizabeth II Foundation Field) includes a small outdoor cycle park with a free-to-use pump track. Designed for BMX, mountain and off-road bikes, the track allows riders to build momentum without pedalling. It's suitable for all ages and abilities, from complete beginners to more confident riders. It is mainly utilised by Braintree BMX Club for club sessions.

#### Cycling – demand summary

- ◀ There are two affiliated cycling clubs based in the Braintree District.
- ◀ Collectively, the clubs run charity rides, club training rides, competitive time trials, recreational rides, road racing and track racing.
- ◀ The track at Deanery Hill (Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field) is used for club usage and recreational sessions. Public programme sessions are also held every Sunday for five hours. Braintree BMX club is the resident community club using the site. It has sole use for three hours on Tuesday nights and three hours on Saturday afternoons.
- ◀ Whilst levels of future and latent demand are identified, the nature of cycling means that most of this will not require space at a dedicated facility or within a club.

## Scenarios

N/A

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

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## Recommendations

- ◀ Protect existing provision.
- ◀ Ensure continued access to sites and routes used for formal cycling.
- ◀ Ensure all clubs/groups have home bases to operate from and pursue improved security of tenure where it is required.
- ◀ Support British Cycling initiatives and ensure appropriate infrastructure is in place to accommodate such demand

## Basketball courts

### Assessment Report summary

#### **Basketball- supply and demand summary**

- ◀ There is seemingly a good supply of basketball courts in the Braintree District across the MUGA supply. However, there are clear quality issues that should be overcome to better accommodate existing usage and to encourage higher levels of demand.
- ◀ Additionally, there are no dedicated 3X3 facilities, despite this being a fast growing format of basketball. Whilst this can be played on the courts that are provided, a specific facility could be of greater benefit and attract increased demand from a wider catchment.

#### **Basketball- supply summary**

- ◀ All 11 MUGAs in the Braintree District are set up to accommodate basketball activity.
- ◀ One basketball court is assessed as standard quality (Notley Sports Centre) and the remaining 10 as poor quality.
- ◀ None of the basketball courts are serviced by sports lighting, which will be impacting on their capacity to accommodate demand, particularly during winter months.

#### **Basketball- demand summary**

- ◀ As with most recreational spaces, demand for outdoor basketball activity is difficult to track as usage is not recorded due to the open access nature of the provision.
- ◀ A lot of access will be for other sports, predominately football, due to the dual use nature of MUGAs.
- ◀ Courts in parks are identified as being particularly key, with usage likely to be received by community groups as well as groups of individuals all year round.

## Scenarios

N/A

## Recommendations

- ◀ Protect existing courts.
- ◀ Explore establishing new provision in the Analysis Areas, given there is a lack of basketball provision.
- ◀ Improve court quality at sites assessed as poor or standard quality.
- ◀ Consider establishing additional sports lighting at venues to increase capacity and community use appeal.
- ◀ To increase the 3X3 basketball provision in the region, consider converting existing single-hoop shooting/ practise facilities into dedicated 3X3 courts (with line-markings and upgraded baskets).

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

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## Other grass pitch sports

### Assessment Report summary

#### **Other grass pitch sports –supply and demand summary**

- ◀ The current level of supply is seemingly sufficient enough to meet community demand for rounders in the Braintree District, with all rounders diamonds provided at Council and Parish Council sites and thus are available for community use able to adequately cater for any potential future demand. That being said, there are no community available facilities in the North Analysis Area.

#### **Other grass pitch sports – supply summary**

- ◀ There are currently five rounders diamonds identified across the same number of sites in the Braintree District, with all of these available for community use.

#### **Other grass pitch sports – demand summary**

- ◀ There are currently five rounders teams which play within the Braintree Ladies Rounders League. At present, matches are played at the local authority and parish council sites across the District.

## Scenarios

N/A

## Recommendations

- ◀ Protect existing quantity, in line with national (i.e. the NPPF and Sport England's Playing Fields Policy) and local planning policy.
- ◀ Ensure continued access to existing sites and pitches to enable continued access for rounders.

## PART 5: STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

The strategic recommendations for the Strategy have been developed via the combination of information gathered during consultation, site visits and analysis which culminated in the production of an assessment report, as well as key drivers identified for the Strategy. They reflect overarching and common areas to be addressed, which apply across playing pitch and outdoor sport facilities and may not be specific to just one sport.

### OBJECTIVE 1

To **protect** the existing supply of outdoor sport provision and ancillary facilities where it is needed for meeting current and future needs.

#### Recommendations:

- a) Ensure, through the use of the PPOSS, that playing pitches and outdoor sport facilities are protected through the implementation of local planning policy.
- b) Secure tenure and access to sites for high quality, development minded clubs, through a range of solutions and partnership agreements.
- c) Maximise community use of education facilities where needed.

#### **Recommendation (a) – Ensure, through the use of the PPOSS, that playing pitches and outdoor sport facilities are protected through the implementation of local planning policy.**

The PPOSS shows that all existing playing field and outdoor sport sites cannot be deemed surplus to requirements because of shortfalls now and in the future. As such, all provision requires protection or replacement until all identified shortfalls have been overcome. This includes disused (including any which may not have been identified in this document) underused and poor quality sites as there is a requirement for such provision to help meet and alleviate the identified shortfalls.

When shortfalls are evident, provision can only be permanently lost when the current picture changes to the extent that the site in question is no longer needed as a result of no shortfalls existing, or unless appropriate mitigation is provided and agreed upon by all stakeholders, in line with national planning policy. NPPF paragraph 104 states that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

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

The PPOSS should be used to help inform development management decisions that affect existing or new playing pitch provision and accompanying ancillary facilities. All applications are assessed by the Local Planning Authority on a case-by-case basis taking into account site specific factors.

## BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

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In addition, Sport England is a statutory consultee on planning applications that affect or prejudice the use of playing field used within the last five years. They will use the PPOSS to help assess the planning application against its Playing Fields Policy.

### Policy Exception E1:

‘A carefully quantified and documented assessment of current and future needs has demonstrated to the satisfaction of Sport England that there is an excess of playing field provision in the catchment, and the site has no special significance to the interests of sport’.

Where the PPOSS cannot demonstrate that the site, or part of a site, is clearly surplus to requirements then replacement of the site, or part of a site, will be required to comply with the remaining Sport England policy exceptions.

### Policy Exception E2

‘The proposed development is for ancillary facilities supporting the principal use of the site as a playing field and does not affect the quantity and quality of playing pitches or otherwise adversely affect their use’.

### Policy Exception E3:

‘The proposed development affects only land incapable of forming part of a playing pitch and does not:

- ◀ Reduce the size of any playing pitch;
- ◀ Result in the inability to use any playing pitch (including the maintenance of adequate safety margins and run-off areas);
- ◀ Reduce the sporting capacity of the playing field to accommodate playing pitches or the capability to rotate or reposition playing pitches to maintain quality;
- ◀ Result in the loss of other sporting provision or ancillary facilities on the site;
- ◀ Prejudice the use of any remaining areas of playing field on the site’.

### Policy Exception E4:

‘The playing field or fields to be lost as a result of the proposed development would be replaced, prior to the commencement of development, by a new playing field site or sites:

- ◀ of equivalent or better quality and
- ◀ of equivalent or greater quantity;
- ◀ in a suitable location and;
- ◀ subject to equivalent or better management arrangements.

### Policy Exception E5:

‘The proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor facility for sport, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice of use, of the area of playing field’.

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## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

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### Disused provision

Disused sites should also be protected from development or replaced in accordance with the NPPF and Sport England's policy exceptions as they currently provide a solution to reducing identified shortfalls. As such, any disused sites are included within the Action Plan together with a recommendation in relation to bringing the site back into use or to mitigate permanent loss via a replacement site to address the shortfalls identified.

For playing pitch sports, the lawful use of a disused playing field is still that of a playing field until such time as it is developed for a non-pitch sport use or its use is formally changed through the planning system. There is no positive obligation, under planning law, for a playing field to be actively used as such.

The below lists known disused playing pitch sites currently within the Braintree District:

- ◀ Burches Meadow- it is unknown when pitches were last marked out.
- ◀ Dusty Lane, Tye Green- last marked out circa 2011.

In addition to the above, Strutt Memorial Ground previously accommodated some football provision equating to one adult pitch. The site is not classified as disused as it is still being accessed for recreational purposes, although the pitch is longer marked out and used for affiliated football.

Linked to the above, there are some existing playing field sites such as Strutt Memorial Ground, which may be able to or have previously accommodated more pitches than are presently marked. There may also be sites which are no longer prepared and used for formal sport but that still serve another function, such as a public open space or park. These sites should therefore not be considered disused as they continue to operate as part of the green infrastructure typology.

### Additional provision

As far as possible, this report aims to capture all of the outdoor sports facilities within Braintree District. However, there may be instances that have led to omissions within the report, such as at school sites where access was not possible (although facilities at sites not accessed are still included within the PPOSS where provision is known to exist from other data sources), or where no stakeholders were aware of facilities existing (including disused). Where pitches/facilities have not been recorded within the report, they remain categorised as such and for planning purposes continue to be so. Furthermore, exclusions of a pitch/facility does not mean that it is not required from a supply and demand point of view, with the recommendations of this study still applying to them.

### **Recommendation (b) – Secure tenure and access to sites through a range of solutions and partnership agreements.**

Much like some authorities nationally, there is reliance on the education sector to provide for an element of demand for playing pitch and outdoor sport facilities in Braintree District. However, where this is the case, particularly for the likes of hockey, it is imperative that future opportunities to secure tenure for clubs is explored and progressed where possible, unless a community use agreement is already in place.

The schools set out in the table below currently provide community use to clubs for match play purposes in Braintree District.

## BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Table 5.1: Known use of education sites

School	Club	Security of tenure	Sport
Alec Hunter Academy	Braintree Town Youth FC	Unsecure	Football (3G)
Gosfield School	Halstead Town FC	Unsecure	Football Football (sand-based AGP)
Hedingham School	Braintree Athletic Braintree Blades Stisted FC	Unsecure	Football Football (3G)
New Rickstones Academy	Witham Town FC Valley Green FC	Unsecure	Football Football (3G)
Notley Sports Centre (Notley High School)	Great Notley FC	Unsecure	Football (3G)

In instances where clubs do not have formal tenure agreements in place, clubs could theoretically be asked to vacate at any time which would result in each requiring alternate provision to service existing levels of demand. Not having fully formalised usage therefore presents a risk for those clubs using these sites as community use could technically be terminated. In contrast, securing community use will help to create additional capacity and could help to address deficiencies in the existing supply picture.

For unsecure sites, NGBs, Sport England and other appropriate bodies such as the FF and Active Essex can often help to negotiate and engage with providers where the local authority may not have direct influence. This is particularly the case at sites that have received funding from these bodies or are going to receive funding in the future as community access can be a condition of any agreement. It is increasingly important for the Council to work with voluntary sector organisations to enable them to take greater levels of ownership and support the wider development and maintenance of facilities.

Given current budgetary pressures, it is increasingly important for the Council to work with voluntary sector organisations to enable them to take greater levels of ownership and support the wider development and maintenance of facilities. To facilitate this, where practical, it should support and enable clubs to generate sufficient funds for the acquisition and development of sites, providing that this is to the benefit of sport.

The Council (including parish and town councils) and private landlords (as relevant) should further explore opportunities where security of tenure could be granted via lease agreements (minimum 25 years as recommended by Sport England and NGBs) so that clubs are in a position to apply for external funding. This is particularly the case at poor quality sites, possibly with inadequate or no ancillary facilities, so that quality can be improved and sites developed.

Local sports clubs should continue to be supported by partners including the Council (where relevant) and NGBs to achieve sustainability across a range of areas including management, membership, funding, facilities, volunteers and partnership work. For example, club development should be supported and clubs should be encouraged to develop evidence of business and sports development plans to generate income via their facilities.

Relevant clubs could also be encouraged to look at different management models such as registering as Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASC)<sup>7</sup>. They should also be signposted to work with partners locally, such as volunteer support agencies or local businesses.

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.cascinfo.co.uk/cascbenefits>

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Each club interested in leasing a council site (including those from parish and town councils) should be required to meet service and/or strategic recommendations. An additional set of criteria should also be considered, which takes into account club quality, aligned to its long-term development objectives and sustainability, as seen in the table below.

Table 5.2: Recommended criteria for lease of sport sites to clubs/organisations

Club	Site
<p>Clubs should have Clubmark/NGBs accreditation award.</p> <p>Clubs commit to meeting demonstrable local demand and show pro-active commitment to developing school-club links.</p> <p>Clubs are sustainable, both in a financial sense and via their internal management structures in relation to recruitment and retention policy for both players and volunteers.</p> <p>Ideally, clubs should have already identified any match funding required for initial capital investment identified.</p> <p>Clubs have processes in place to maintain sites to the existing or better standards.</p>	<p>Sites should be those identified as 'Local Sites' (recommendation d) for new clubs (i.e., not those with a District-wide significance) but that offer development potential.</p> <p>For established clubs which have proven success in terms of self-management 'Key Centres' are also appropriate.</p> <p>As a priority, sites should acquire capital investment to improve (which can be attributed to the presence of an accreditation award).</p> <p>Sites should be leased with the intention that investment can be sourced to contribute towards the improvement of the site.</p>

Furthermore, the Council could establish a series of core outcomes to derive from clubs taking on a lease arrangement to ensure that the most appropriate clubs are assigned to sites. As an example, outcomes may include:

- ◀ Increasing participation, particularly in target areas such as women's and girls' activity.
- ◀ Supporting the development of coaches and volunteers.
- ◀ Commitment to quality standards.
- ◀ Improvements to facilities, or as a minimum retaining existing standards.

In addition, clubs should be made fully aware of the associated responsibilities/liabilities when considering leases of multi-use public playing fields. It is important in these instances that the sites remain available for other purposes and for other users.

For clubs with lease arrangements already in place, these should be reviewed when fewer than 25 years remain so that extensions can be secured, thus improving security of tenure and helping them attract funding for site development. Any club with less than 25 years remaining on an agreement is unlikely to gain any external funding (unless the agreement has been recently entered into).

### **Recommendation (c) - Maximise community use of education facilities where needed**

To maximise community use of education facilities more coherent, structured relationship with schools is recommended. The ability to access good facilities within the local community is vital to any sports organisation, yet many clubs struggle to find good quality places to play and train. In Braintree District, pricing policies at facilities can be a barrier to access at some education sites but physical access, poor quality and resistance from providers to open up provision is also an issue, especially at academies and independent schools.

A large number of sporting facilities are located on education sites and making these available to sports clubs can offer significant benefits to both the schools and local clubs, as well helping to reduce identified shortfalls. It is, however, common for school provision not to be fully maximised for community use, even on established community use sites.

## **BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

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In some instances, facilities are unavailable for community use due to poor quality and therefore remedial works will be required before it can be established (e.g., at New Rickstones Academy). The low carrying capacity of these facilities sometimes leads to them being played to capacity or overplayed simply due to curricular and extra-curricular use, meaning they cannot accommodate any additional use by the community.

Whilst community sport should ultimately be sought at all educational sites, priority should be placed on firstly exploring community use options at larger venues offering several pitches. Securing access to this site will significantly reduce shortfalls. However, it is also noted that smaller sites and particularly primary schools can also serve a significant purpose as they can be at the heart of local communities, particularly in more rural areas.

Although there are a growing number of academies over which the Council has little or no control, it is still important to understand the significance of such sites and attempt to work with the providers where there are opportunities for community use. In addition, relevant NGBs have a role to play in supporting the Council to deliver upon this recommendation and communicating with schools where necessary to address shortfalls in provision.

As detailed earlier, NGBs, Sport England, Active Essex and other funding bodies can often help to negotiate and engage with providers where the local authority may have limited direct influence. This is particularly the case at sites that have received funding from the relevant organisations or are going to receive investment in the future as community access can be a condition of the funding agreement.

Where new schools are provided in major new residential developments, they should be designed and scaled to facilitate community access, with opportunities for meeting the community's outdoor sports needs explored at the outset to maximise the potential for facility provision to be made within the developments, if appropriate. An example of this is ensuring the provision of adult and/or youth 11v11 grass football pitches, 11v11 size 3G pitches or multi-use provision such as sports lit courts that can accommodate tennis, netball and basketball activity given current shortfalls and their suitability for the playing format of students.

## OBJECTIVE 2

To enhance outdoor sport provision and ancillary facilities through improving quality and management of sites

### Recommendations:

- d) Improve quality
- e) Adopt a tiered approach (hierarchy of provision) to the management and improvement of sites.
- f) Work in partnership with stakeholders to secure funding.
- g) Secure developer contributions.

### Recommendation (d) – Improve quality

There are a number of ways in which it is possible to improve quality, including, for example, addressing overplay and improving maintenance. Given that the majority of councils' face reducing budgets, it is currently advisable to look at improving key sites as a priority (e.g., the largest, well used sites that are overplayed and/or poor quality). The Action Plan within this document provides a starting point for this, identifying key sites, poor quality sites and/or sites that are overplayed which should be prioritised for improvement.

Based upon an achievable target, using existing quality scoring to provide a baseline, a standard should be used to identify deficiencies and investment should be focused on those sites which fail to meet the proposed quality standard. For the purposes of quality assessments, the Strategy refers to pitches and ancillary facilities separately as being of 'good', 'standard' or 'poor' quality. However, some good quality sites have poor quality elements and vice versa (e.g., a good quality pitch may be serviced by poor quality changing facilities).

It is also important to note the impact the weather has on quality. The worse the weather, the poorer the facilities tend to become, especially if no, or inadequate, drainage systems are in place. This also means that quality can vary year on year dependent upon the weather and levels of rainfall, although maintenance regimes could be altered to reduce this impact.

If a poor quality site receives little or no usage that is not to say that no improvement is needed. It may instead be the case that it receives no demand because of its quality, thus an improvement in said quality will attract demand to the site, potentially from overplayed standard or good quality sites (thus reducing capacity issues). Where this occurs, it is vital that the improvements are advertised and marketed towards potential users as their perception of the provision may need altering.

In addition, without appropriate, fit for purpose ancillary facilities, good quality provision may be underutilised, especially by adults and female users who have more of a requirement. Changing facilities form the most essential part of this offer (although other provision can be key for income generation) and therefore key sites should be given priority for improvement. For the majority of sports, no senior league matches can take place without appropriate changing facilities and the same also applies to women's and girls' demand.

## BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

For football, The FA has a Pitch Improvement Programme aimed at improving the standard of grass pitches across the Country. For provision included in the programme, clubs can utilise the services of the FF's PitchPower app to carry out a free on-site assessment of their pitches. This then provides the Grounds Management Association (GMA) with the detail needed to create a personalised, informative report to advise on how improvements can be made. Clubs then receive bespoke advice and support to help with any future actions, funding applications and equipment, with clubs getting access to discounted rates for machinery and consumables through local partnerships.

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

For rugby union and cricket, the respective NGBs are now also utilising PitchPower, with reports being produced similar to those for football.

For the improvement/replacement of 3G pitches and hockey AGPs, this is most commonly linked to age, with any surfaces older than 10 years generally requiring replacement. Where pitches are provided, sinking funds should be put into place to ensure that refurbishment can take place when it is required.

Notwithstanding the above, with pressures on budgets, any wide-ranging direct investment into quality is unlikely and other options for improvements should therefore also be considered. This could be via clubs leasing/managing sites as highlighted in Objective 1, with clubs taking on maintenance, whilst other options may include the use of equipment banks and the pooling of resources for maintenance.

### Addressing overplay

In order to improve the overall quality of the outdoor facility stock; it is necessary to ensure that provision is not overplayed beyond recommended carrying capacity. This is determined by assessing quality (via a non-technical site assessment) and allocating a match limit to each (daily for hockey, weekly for football and rugby union and seasonal for cricket).

The FA, RFU, ECB and EH all recommend a number of matches that pitches should take based on quality, as seen in the table below. For other grass pitch sports, no guidelines are set by the NGBs although it can be assumed that a similar trend should be followed.

Table 5.3: Capacity of pitches

Sport	Pitch type	No. of matches (Good quality)	No. of matches (Standard quality)	No. of matches (Poor quality)
Football	Adult pitches	3 per week	2 per week	1 per week
Football	Youth pitches	4 per week	2 per week	1 per week
Football	Mini pitches	6 per week	4 per week	2 per week
Rugby union	Natural Inadequate (D0)	2 per week	1.5 per week	0.5 per week
Rugby union	Natural Adequate (D1)	3 per week	2 per week	1.5 per week
Rugby union	Pipe Drained (D2)	3.25 per week	2.5 per week	1.75 per week

## BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Sport	Pitch type	No. of matches (Good quality)	No. of matches (Standard quality)	No. of matches (Poor quality)
Rugby union	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	3.5 per week	3 per week	2 per week
Cricket	1 grass wicket 1 synthetic wicket	5 per season 60 per season	4 per season	0 per season
Hockey	Full size AGP	4 per day	4 per day	4 per day

For non-pitch sports, capacity is not linked to the number of matches taking place but rather the number of members (and other users) attracted to a site. For example, for tennis, a hard court is said to have capacity for 60 members if it is serviced by sports lighting, whereas a non-lit has court has capacity for 40 members (this varies for grass courts). For bowls, a green is considered at capacity if it has over 80 members, whilst a membership of under 20 could be unsustainable.

It is imperative to engage with clubs to ensure that sites are not played beyond their capacity. Where overplay is identified, play should be encouraged, to transfer to alternative venues that are not operating at capacity. Alternatively, quality should be improved to increase capacity to appropriate levels. Where play is transferred, this may include transferring play to 3G pitches or to sites not currently available for community use but which may be in the future.

For cricket, an increase in the usage of NTPs (or hybrid wickets when suitable) is key to alleviating overplay as this allows for the transfer of junior demand from grass wickets. It also does not require any additional playing pitch space as NTPs can be installed adjacent to existing squares.

For rugby union, additional sports lighting, in conjunction with quality improvements, can further reduce levels of overplay at club sites as it allows clubs to spread training demand across a greater number of pitches or unmarked areas. If permanent sports lighting is not possible, portable sports lighting can be provided as an alternative.

Similarly, additional sports lighting can help resolve capacity issues for tennis, netball and bowls as it can allow for greater court/green usage, especially during winter months.

As mentioned earlier, there are also sites that are poor quality that are not overplayed. These should not be overlooked as often poor-quality sites have less demand than others but demand could increase if the quality were improved. It does, however, work both ways as potential improvements may make sites more attractive and therefore more popular, which in the long run can lead again to them becoming poor quality pitches if not properly maintained.

### **Recommendation (e) – Adopt a tiered approach (hierarchy of provision) to the management and improvement of sites**

To allow for facility developments to be programmed within a phased approach, the Council should adopt a tiered approach to the management and improvement of outdoor sport sites and associated facilities. This should be based on their strategic importance in a District-wide and sporting context, taking into account the level of demand accommodated and the potential impact the recommended actions will have on addressing the identified shortfalls/issues.

The site-hierarchy for Braintree District is summarised below.

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Table 5.4: Tiered site criteria

Criteria	Hub sites	Key centres	Local sites
Site location	Strategically located in the District. Priority sites for NGBs.	Strategically located within the analysis area.	Serves the local community.
Site layout	Accommodates three or more grass pitches, generally including provision of an AGP (or with the potential).	Accommodates two or more grass pitches.	Accommodates one or two pitches.
Type of sport	Multi-sport provision. Could also operate as a central venue.	Single or multi-sport provision.	Generally single sport provision but may cater for two.
Management	Management control allows for wide community use, i.e., through the local authority, a leisure operator or a school with a community use agreement.	Management control generally allows for wide community use but may include sites that are owned or leased by clubs/other organisations.	Management control can be via the local authority, schools, clubs and other providers such as town or parish councils
Maintenance regime	Maintenance regime aligns or could align with NGB guidelines.	Maintenance regime aligns or could align with NGB guidelines.	Standard maintenance regime or an in-house maintenance contract.
Ancillary facilities	Good quality ancillary facilities on site (or potential), with sufficient changing rooms and car parking to serve the number of pitches; may include wider social/function facilities.	Good quality ancillary facility on site (or potential), with sufficient changing rooms and car parking to serve the number of pitches.	Limited or no changing room access on site.

**Hub sites** are of an District wide importance where users are willing to travel to access the range and high quality of facilities offered and are likely to be multi-sport. Actions at these sites are likely to have a greater impact on addressing the issues identified in the PPOSS.

**Key centres** are more community focused, although some are still likely to service a wider analysis area (or slightly wider); however, there may be more of a focus on a specific sport i.e., a dedicated site.

It is considered that some financial investment may be necessary to improve the facilities at both hub sites and key sites. This could be to improve the provision, create additional provision (e.g., a 3G pitch) or to enhance the ancillary facilities in terms of access, flexibility (i.e., single-sex changing if necessary) and quality as well as ensuring that they meet the rules and regulations of local competitions.

**Local sites** refer to those sites offering minimal provision or that are of minimal value to the wider community. Primarily they are sites with one pitch/facility or a low number of pitches/facilities that service just one or two sports (e.g., bowling green sites).

For Council sites in this tier, consideration should be given, on a site-by-site basis, to the feasibility of a club taking on a long-term lease (if not already present), in order that external funding can be sought. Such sites will require some level of investment, either to the outdoor sport facilities or ancillary facilities, and it is anticipated that one of the conditions of offering a hire/lease is that clubs are able to source external funding to improve/extend the provision.

## **BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

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Other sites considered in this tier may be primary school sites or secondary school sites that are not widely used by the community or that do not offer community availability.

### **Recommendation (f) – Work in partnership with stakeholders to secure funding**

Partners, in collaboration with the Council, should ensure that appropriate funding is secured for improved sports provision and directed to areas of need. This should be underpinned by a robust strategy for improvement in outdoor sport provision and accompanying ancillary facilities, with the PPOSS able to be used as an evidence base for attracting investment.

Furthermore, to address community need, target priority areas and reduce provision duplication, a coordinated approach to strategic investment is required. In delivering this recommendation, the Council should maintain a regular dialogue with local partners through the PPOSS Steering Group as well as with neighbouring local authorities. Cross-boundary developments can accommodate demand from within the Braintree District (and vice versa) and lessen requirements within the District.

To attract investment, the Council should stay informed in relation to relevant and appropriate funding pots, both in regard to what it can directly attract as well as to what clubs could attract independently (with the Council able to assist with this process). This can also be helped through the PPOSS Steering Group signposting partners to what could be available.

Although some investment in new provision will not be made by the Council directly, it is important that the Steering Group seeks to direct and lead a strategic and co-ordinated approach to facility development. This includes delivery from education sites, NGBs, sports clubs and the commercial sector and can be informed via the Stage E process, with the Steering Group to continue to meet following adoption of this study (see Part 8 for further details).

One of sport's key contributions is its positive impact on public health. It is therefore important to lever in investment from other sectors such as, for example, health and wellbeing. Sport and physical activity can have a profound effect on peoples' lives, and plays a crucial role in improving community cohesion, educational attainment and self-confidence.

### **Recommendation (g) – Secure developer contributions**

It is important that this strategy informs policies and supplementary planning documents by setting out the approach to securing sport and recreational facilities through new housing development contributions.

For playing pitches, it is recommended the Council uses Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator as a tool for helping to determine the additional demand for pitches and to estimate the likely developer contribution required. This should form the basis of the Council working with Sport England to develop a process and guidance for obtaining developer contributions and should aid the negotiation process with developers.

The calculator uses the current number of teams by sports pitch type contained within the Assessment Report and calculates the percentage within each age group that play that sport. That percentage is then applied to the population growth. The additional teams likely to be generated are then converted into match equivalent sessions and associated pitch requirements in the peak period, with the associated costs (both for providing the pitch/facility and for its life cycle) then given. The calculator splits the requirement into peak time demand for natural turf pitches, training demand for artificial grass pitches, and the number of new changing rooms required.

## BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

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For tennis, Sport England has been working with the LTA to add outdoor tennis courts to its Sports Facilities Calculator. This works by turning an estimation of demand (visits per week) into the equivalent number of courts which will be needed to meet this. It helps quantify additional demand for new growth populations, development, and regeneration areas, and is used to estimate facility needs for whole area populations.

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.

Once the calculators have been utilised, the PPOSS should be used to help determine the likely impact of a new development (or group of developments) on demand and the capacity of existing sites in the area, and whether there is a need for contributions to be put towards improvements to increase the capacity of existing provision, or if new provision is required (or a combination of both).

Where a development is located within access of existing high-quality provision, this does not necessarily mean that there is no need for further provision or improvement to existing provision, as additional demand arising from the development is likely to result in increased usage (which can result in overplay or quality deterioration).

Where it is determined that new provision is required to accompany development, priority should be placed on providing facilities that also contribute towards alleviating existing shortfalls within the locality. To determine what supply of provision is provided, it is imperative that the PPOSS findings are taken into consideration and that for particularly large developments consultation takes place with the relevant NGBs and Sport England. This is due to the importance of ensuring that the stock of facilities provided is correct to avoid provision becoming unsustainable and unused.

The preference from the Council, Sport England and the NGBs is generally for multi-pitch (or multi-facility) and potentially multi-sport sites to be developed, supported by a clubhouse and adequate parking facilities which consider the potential for further development in the future. This is because single pitches/facilities are more likely to become under-used (or unused), unviable and unsustainable.

Where new provision is agreed as not appropriate but where contributions to existing sites are instead sought, the PPOSS Action Plan should be used to identify suitable sites within the locality that should receive the funding. This may involve directing investment into provision most likely to receive demand from the housing development, or into provision that is most in need (e.g., due to quality issues).

Sport England recommends that a number of objectives should be implemented to enable the above to be delivered:

- ◀ Planning consent should include appropriate conditions and/or be subject to specific planning obligations. Where developer contributions are applicable, a S106 agreement or equivalent must be completed that should specify, when applied, the amount that will be linked to Sport England's Building Cost Information Service from the date of the permission and timing of the contribution/s to be made.

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

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- ◀ Contributions should also be secured towards the first ten years of maintenance on new pitches (lifecycle costs), the cost of which is indicated by the Sport England Playing Pitch Calculator. NGBs and Sport England can provide further and up-to-date information on the associated costs.
- ◀ External funding should be sought/secured to achieve maximum benefit from the investment into appropriate facility enhancement, alongside other open space provision, and its subsequent maintenance.
- ◀ Where new provision is provided, appropriate changing rooms and associated car parking should be located on site.
- ◀ All new or improved outdoor sports facilities on school sites should be subject to community use agreements.

For further information, please see Part 7 of this report.

Whilst neither the Playing Pitch Calculator nor the Sports Facilities Calculator identify demand for other types of pitches (outside of football, rugby, cricket and hockey) or non-pitch provision (outside of tennis), a similar assessment of need process can still be undertaken. As with the sports that are covered, this should entail utilisation of the PPOSS and engagement with the NGBs.

## **Developer contributions - step by step guide**

For any application warranting a developer contribution the following processes should be followed in order to help inform the potential needs a new housing development may require and/or should look to consider. In accordance with National Planning Policy Guidance, contributions should not be sought from developments of 10 units or less, and which have a maximum combined gross floor space of no more than 1,000 square metres (gross internal area).

Any obligations sought should be based on a tailored approach to each development, considering the population derived from the development, determining if the demand can be met by existing facilities and identifying the project/s that any required contribution will be used towards. All of this should be carried out using the robust evidence base provided as part of the PPOSS to help with clearly justifying the needs arising and how they are to be met.

<b>Step 1</b>	<b>Determine the playing pitch requirement resulting from the development</b>
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The main tool for determining this is Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator, which is a Sport England tool provided on completion of the Strategy. The calculator will be pre-populated with the current population of the local authority and the current demand data from the PPOSS. Until this requires updating, to determine the playing pitch requirement resulting from a development, all that is required is the input of the new population that will derive from a proposal.

The calculator provides an estimation of the number of new pitches that would be required to meet the match equivalent sessions that will derive from the development. The associated costs for providing these new pitches are also identified (although please note that these are indicative costs only and appropriate local work should be undertaken to determine the true costs involved).

## BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

<b>Step 2</b>	<b>Determine whether new provision is required and whether this should be on or off site</b>
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For large-scale developments that generate high levels of demand, new pitch provision may be required to meet the population growth. This is particularly the case when the calculator identifies a need for multiple pitches and across multiple sports.

When on site provision is required, priority should be placed on the creation of multi-pitch and multi-sport sites with appropriate ancillary facilities such as a clubhouse and adequate car parking, as well as ensuring the provision contributes towards reducing current shortfalls. This will ensure that the provision is sustainable and attractive to potential users. Emphasis should also be on ensuring the site can accommodate an AGP given current sporting trends.

Other useful questions when deciding on new provision include:

- ◀ Are there any teams/clubs playing outside of the local area (displaced demand) which could utilise provision at the site?
- ◀ Do any local clubs identify existing plans/demand for access to new provision?
- ◀ Are there any overplayed sites in the local area where existing demand could be transferred to a new site?
- ◀ Do any local clubs identify any latent demand (i.e. if they had access to more pitches they could they field more teams)?

To further help determine the sustainability of establishing new provision, consideration should be given to the potential management opportunities which may be available onsite:

- ◀ Is the local authority (or town/parish council) in a position to take on further outdoor sports facilities from a financial point of view?
- ◀ Is an education establishment to be provided as part of the development which offers a potential management option of outdoor sports facilities?
- ◀ Is there a leisure trust in place which has the capacity to take on the management of outdoor sports facilities?
- ◀ Is there an opportunity for a trust based model of management, for example, by formation of a Community Interest Company (CIC) or Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)?
- ◀ Is there an existing sports club that has the capacity to take on the management of another site?

Where the calculator does not create demand for a whole pitch, which is often the case for smaller sized developments, it is recommended to make a contribution to increasing the capacity of an existing site to meet demand generated from the development. When identifying a site for off-site contributions, the proximity and location of existing playing pitch sites should be considered and whether they could help serve the new development – this could be informed by identifying the analysis area in which the development sits and if there are any hub sites or key centres within the locality.

Initially, a one-mile radius could be drawn around the site in order to help identify the nearest priority sites, which may require consultation with neighbouring authorities when the development sites to close to the boundary.

## BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

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The off-site decision should be based on the potential to improve existing facilities within an appropriate catchment of a development to create additional capacity, and how realistic it is given the nature of the local area to provide new provision. For example, there may be some poor quality playing fields that could potentially be improved with additional drainage and long-term maintenance works, along with enhanced changing provision, to enable use to be increased, thereby creating additional capacity to meet the increased demand generated from the development.

Discussions should be held with relevant parties (e.g. NGBs, landowners, facility operators and user groups), and any further necessary evidence gathered (e.g. a feasibility study) to help identify the specific works that are required, and to ensure they will provide the necessary additional capacity to meet the needs. It will also be important to demonstrate that the specific works can be delivered within an appropriate timescale in relation to the occupation of the development site.

<b>Step 3</b>	<b>Determine the other pitch and non-pitch requirements resulting from the development</b>
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The Sports Facility Calculator now calculates tennis demand so this can therefore be used to inform tennis requirements; however, neither this nor the Playing Pitch Calculator determine needs for any other sports. That being said, the PPOSS identifies (where relevant) current and future demand requirements and can therefore still be used to determine if contributions are required towards these sports or if new provision is required, in conjunction with NGB discussions.

Where there is no identified shortfall in provision or future demand for new provision within an area relevant to the development (e.g. an analysis area or settlement), consideration should be given to the nearest site to the development containing that type of provision. If this could accommodate the increased demand from the development, no action is required; if it could not accommodate the demand, consider if the site could benefit from a contribution towards increasing capacity to meet likely need. For example, this could include increasing quality and/or addition of ancillary facilities such as floodlighting, changing rooms or car parking. The PPOSS Action Plan should be used as a starting point to identify site by site recommendations.

Where there is an identified shortfall that could not be overcome through contributions, new provision may be required within or nearby to the development as part a multi-sport development.

<b>Step 4</b>	<b>Consider design principles for new provision</b>
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The exact nature and location of provision associated with onsite developments should be fully determined in partnership with each relevant NGB. Further to this, each pitch sport NGB provides national guidance in relation to provision of new pitches.

There is also a need to ensure that the location of outdoor sports pitches and ancillary facilities are appropriately located in the context of indoor sports provision (if also being provided onsite) to ensure a cohesive approach to the whole sporting offer.

## BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

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<b>Step 5</b>	<b>Calculate the financial contribution required</b>
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After using the PPOSS Playing Pitch Calculator and the PPOSS as a starting point, the local cost of provision should be fully determined in order to calculate the financial contributions required.

A clear and transparent methodology for calculating up to date costs for the specific works, including appropriate ancillary provision, should be presented. Where appropriate, depending on how the needs are to be met, the cost of any required land purchase should be included in the financial contribution. If an obligation will be directed to an off-site project it should be ensured the costs are limited to meet the needs of the individual development.

Along with any capital costs for the works, an obligation should ensure an appropriate level of lifecycle costs towards the new or enhanced provision. This is required to cover the day to day maintenance for an agreed long-term period and to help ensure a sinking fund exists for any major replacement work, e.g. the future resurfacing of an artificial grass pitch.

Wherever possible, specific local costs should be used, especially if the works are to improve the existing quality of a site to increase capacity as there may be a number of site specifics to consider. Sport England does provide indicative costs for new provision: <https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/cost-guidance/>

For all developments community use agreements between providers and users would ensure that such demand continues to be provided for in the long-term.

## OBJECTIVE 3

To provide new outdoor sport provision and ancillary facilities where there is current or future demand to do so

### Recommendations:

- h) Rectify quantitative shortfalls through the current facility stock.
- i) Identify opportunities to increase to the overall stock to accommodate both current and future demand.

### Recommendation (h) - Rectify quantitative shortfalls through the current stock

The Council and its partners should work to rectify identified inadequacies and meet identified shortfalls as outlined in the preceding Assessment Report and the sport-by-sport specific recommendations (Part 4) as well as the following Action Plan (Part 6). In addition, first and foremost, it is imperative that the current levels of provision are protected and maintained to ensure that the overall picture does not worsen in the future.

To reduce the identified shortfalls, there is not necessarily a need for a significant level of new provision, with the current provision instead able to be better utilised to overcome most deficits. Maximising use of existing provision through a combination of the following will help to reduce shortfalls and accommodate future demand:

- ◀ Improving quality in order to improve the capacity to accommodate more demand.
- ◀ Transferring demand from overplayed sites to sites with spare capacity.
- ◀ The re-designation of facilities e.g. converting an unused pitch (or pitch type) for one sport to instead cater for another sport (or another pitch type).
- ◀ Securing community use at school sites including those currently unavailable.
- ◀ Working with commercial and private providers to increase usage.
- ◀ Exploring lease/management arrangements with appropriate clubs/organisations.
- ◀ Establishing additional sports lighting.
- ◀ Installing artificial surfaces (e.g., 3G pitches and cricket NTPs).

The PPOSS identifies priority sites that should be focused upon, including those that are presently overplayed and/or poor quality as well as disused, unused and unsecure sites that are particularly large. It also advises how issues can be overcome. This is done on a site-by-site basis in the preceding Action Plan.

Unmet demand, changes in sport participation and trends, and proposed housing growth should be recognised and factored into future facility planning. Assuming an increase in participation and housing growth occurs, it will impact on the future need for certain types of sports facilities. Sports development work also approximates unmet demand which cannot currently be quantified (i.e. it is not being suppressed by a lack of facilities) but is likely to occur.

Furthermore, retaining some spare capacity allows some pitches to be rested to protect overall pitch quality in the long-term. Therefore, whilst in some instances it may be appropriate to redesignate a senior pitch where there is low demand identified a holistic approach should be taken to re-designation for the reasons cited. The site-by-site action planning will seek to provide further clarification on where re-designation is suitable.

## **BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

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### **Recommendation (i) - Identify opportunities to add to the overall stock to accommodate both current and future demand**

Better utilising the stock of provision across the Braintree District will lessen the need for new provision. Although there are identified shortfalls, most existing shortfalls can be addressed via quality improvements and/or improved access to sites that are presently used minimally or that are currently unavailable. Adding to the current stock is therefore not recommended as a priority solution, although for certain sports and in specific areas it is likely to be required. This is especially the case for rugby union pitches, cricket pitches, 3G pitches and padel courts.

Where new pitches/facilities are likely to be needed, consideration should be given to allocating land for new provision to meet existing need as part of the Local Plan process. This should be done in addition to residential allocations and their requirements (see Part 7), although it could be via providing additional land for playing fields as an extension to the playing fields required to service large-scale developments.

Where large scale housing developments may also necessitate the need for new provision, as will the establishment of any new schools. Where new schools are developed, there is an opportunity to combine the building of the School to the development of a new multi-sport site that can be of a benefit to the School as well as the wider community, subject to any design issues and providing that long-term security of tenure can be provided.

The Steering Group should use and regularly update the Action Plan within this Strategy. The Action Plan lists recommendations for each site, focused upon qualitative improvements. However, as evidenced in Part 4, although there is value in improving quality, installing additional sports lighting, improving ancillary facilities, and enabling access to existing unused provision, capacity improvements may not offer significant capacity gains in the peak period to meet all shortfalls expressed, particularly for football and cricket.

For housing developments, as outlined in Recommendation (g), Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator and Sports Facilities Calculator can be used as a guide to inform requirements. See Part 7: Housing Growth Scenarios for further information, which uses the increase in population derived from housing growth and gives the associated costs of supplying the increased pitch provision.

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

## PART 6: ACTION PLAN

The site-by-site action plan seeks to address key issues identified in the preceding Assessment Report. It provides recommendations based on current levels of usage, quality and future demand, as well as the potential of each site for enhancement. It is separated by analysis area and includes information pertaining to the sub sections below.

### Site hierarchy

The Council should make it a high priority to work with NGBs and other partners to comprise a priority list of actions based on local priorities, NGB priorities and available funding. As stated in Recommendation (e) to allow for facility developments to be programmed within a phased approach, the Council should adopt a tiered approach to the management and improvement of playing pitch sites and associated facilities. This is done via classifying sites as hub sites, key centres or local sites.

The identification of sites is based on their strategic importance in a regional context i.e., they accommodate the majority of demand, or the recommended action has the greatest impact on addressing shortfalls identified either on a sport-by-sport basis or across the Local Authority area as a whole.

Table 6.1: Proposed tiered site criteria

Criteria	Hub sites	Key centres	Local sites
Site location	Strategically located in the Authority. Priority sites for NGBs.	Strategically located within the analysis area.	Serves the local community.
Site layout	Accommodates three or more grass pitches, generally including provision of an AGP (or with the potential).	Accommodates two or more grass pitches.	Accommodates one or two pitches.
Type of sport	Multi-sport provision. Could also operate as a central venue.	Single or multi-sport provision.	Generally single sport provision but may cater for two.
Management	Management control allows for wide community use, i.e., through the local authority, a leisure operator or a school with a community use agreement.	Management control generally allows for wide community use but may include sites that are owned or leased by clubs/other organisations.	Management control can be via the local authority, schools, clubs and other providers such as town or parish councils
Maintenance regime	Maintenance regime aligns or could align with NGB guidelines.	Maintenance regime aligns or could align with NGB guidelines.	Standard maintenance regime or an in-house maintenance contract.
Ancillary facilities	Good quality ancillary facilities on site (or potential), with sufficient changing rooms and car parking to serve the number of pitches; may include wider social/function facilities.	Good quality ancillary facility on site (or potential), with sufficient changing rooms and car parking to serve the number of pitches.	Limited or no changing room access on site.

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**Hub sites** are of an District wide importance where users are willing to travel to access the range and high quality of facilities offered and are likely to be multi-sport. These have been identified on the basis of the impact that the site will have on addressing the issues identified in the assessment.

**Key centres** are more community focused, although some are still likely to service a wider analysis area (or slightly wider); however, there may be more of a focus on a specific sport i.e., a dedicated site.

It is considered that some financial investment may be necessary to improve the facilities at both hub sites and key sites. This could be to improve the provision, create additional provision (e.g., a 3G pitch) or to enhance the ancillary facilities in terms of access, flexibility (i.e., single-sex changing if necessary) and quality as well as ensuring that they meet the rules and regulations of local competitions.

**Local sites** refer to those sites offering minimal provision or that are of minimal value to the wider community. Primarily they are sites with one pitch/facility or a low number of pitches/facilities that service just one or two sports (e.g., bowling green sites).

For local sites, consideration should be given, on a site-by-site basis, to the feasibility of a club taking on a long-term lease (if not already present), in order that external funding can be sought. Such sites will require some level of investment, either to the outdoor sport facilities or ancillary facilities and is it anticipated that one of the conditions of offering a hire/lease is that the Club would be in a position to source external funding to improve/extend the provision.

Other sites considered in this tier may be primary school sites or secondary school sites that are not widely used by the community or that do not offer community availability.

### Partners

The column indicating partners in the Action Plans below refers to the main organisations that the Local Authority (or the relevant provider) would look to work with to support delivery of the actions.

Given the extent of potential actions, it is reasonable to assume that partners will not necessarily be able to support all the actions identified but where the action is a priority and resource is available the partner will endeavour to assist.

As all sites sit within the local authority area, the Local Authority is considered to be a partner for each identified action (as the column indicates partners for the Local Authority) and is therefore not included. However, it is acknowledged that it will take on more of a leading role for some specific sites and some specific actions (e.g., at council operated venues).

### Priority

Although hub sites are mostly likely to have a **high** level actions, as they have wide importance, high priority sites have been identified on the basis of the impact that the site will have on addressing the key issues identified in the assessment. Therefore, some key centres and local sites are also identified as having a high priority level. It is these projects/sites which should generally, if possible, be addressed within the short term (1-2 years).

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

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The majority of key centres have **medium** priority actions. These have analysis area importance and are identified on the basis of the impact that they will have on addressing the issues identified in the assessment, although not to the same extent as high priority actions.

The **low** priority actions tend to be for single pitch or single sport sites and often club or education sites with local specific importance but that may also contribute to addressing the issues identified in the assessment for specific users. Whilst low priority, there may be opportunities to action some of the recommendations made against such sites relatively quickly e.g., through S106 funding.

### Costs

The strategic actions have also been ranked as low, medium, or high based on cost. The brackets are:

- ◀ (L) - Low - less than £150k.
- ◀ (M) - Medium - £150k-£750k.
- ◀ (H) - High £750k and above.

These are based on Sport England's estimated facility costs which can be found at: [Facility cost guidance | Sport England](#)

### Timescales

The Action Plan has been created to be delivered over a ten-year period and the information within the Assessment Report, Strategy and Action Plan will require updating as developments occur. The indicative timescales relate to delivery times and are not priority based:

- ◀ (S) -Short (1-2 years).
- ◀ (M) - Medium (3-5 years).
- ◀ (L) - Long (6+ years).

### Aim

Each action seeks to meet at least one of the three Sport England aims of the Strategy; **Enhance, Provide, Protect.**

The site-by-site action plan seeks to address key issues identified in the preceding Assessment Report. It provides recommendations based on current levels of usage, quality and future demand, as well as the potential of each site for enhancement. It is separated by analysis area and includes information pertaining to the sub sections below.

Please note the Action Plan recommends a number of priority projects relating to sports provision which should be realised over the Local Plan period. As such, many of the objectives and actions within this document need to be delivered and implemented by a wide range of bodies such as NGBs, sports organisations and education establishments. In many instances, Braintree District Council will not be the organisation which delivers these actions or recommendations as the PPOSS is not solely just for the Local Authority to act upon. It applies to/for all the stakeholders and partners involved.

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

## CENTRAL ANALYSIS AREA

### Summary pitch sports (Central Analysis Area)

Analysis area	Pitch type	Current capacity total in MES per week <sup>[1]</sup>	Future capacity total in MES per week (2041) <sup>8</sup>
<b>Football – grass pitches</b>	-	-	-
Central	Adult	Actual spare capacity of 2 match equivalent sessions	Actual spare capacity of 1.5 match equivalent sessions
Central	Youth 11v11	Shortfall of 0.5 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 1.5 match equivalent sessions
Central	Youth 9v9	Shortfall of 5.5 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 6 match equivalent sessions
Central	Mini 7v7	Actual spare capacity of 0.5 match equivalent sessions	Played to capacity
Central	Mini 5v5	Actual spare capacity of 3.5 match equivalent sessions	Actual spare capacity of 3.5 match equivalent sessions
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Adult</b>	<b>Shortfall of 14.5 match equivalent sessions</b>	<b>Shortfall of 17.5 match equivalent sessions</b>
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Youth 11v11</b>	<b>Shortfall of 1.5 match equivalent sessions</b>	<b>Shortfall of 4 match equivalent sessions</b>
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Youth 9v9</b>	<b>Shortfall of 9.5 match equivalent sessions</b>	<b>Shortfall of 11 match equivalent sessions</b>
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Mini 7v7</b>	<b>Played to capacity</b>	<b>Shortfall of 1.5 match equivalent sessions</b>
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Mini 5v5</b>	<b>Actual spare capacity of 6.5 match equivalent sessions</b>	<b>Actual spare capacity of 6 match equivalent sessions</b>
<b>Football – 3G pitches</b>	-	-	-
Central	11v11, floodlit	Actual spare capacity of 0.25 pitches	-
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>11v11, floodlit</b>	<b>Shortfall of 2 pitches</b>	<b>Shortfall of 2 pitches</b>
<b>Rugby union</b>	-	-	-
Central	Senior	Shortfall of 7.5	-
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Senior</b>	<b>Shortfall of 12.5</b>	<b>Shortfall of 13</b>
<b>Hockey</b>	-	-	-
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Full size, floodlit</b>	<b>Played to capacity</b>	<b>Played to capacity</b>
<b>Cricket pitches</b>	-	-	-
Central	Saturday	Shortfall of 37 match equivalent sessions	-
Central	Sunday	Shortfall of 37 match equivalent sessions	-
Central	Midweek	Shortfall of 27 match equivalent sessions	-
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Shortfall of 3 match equivalent sessions</b>	<b>Shortfall of 27 match equivalent sessions</b>

<sup>[1]</sup> MES – match equivalent sessions per week (per season for cricket)

<sup>8</sup> Future demand (2041) is determined via Local Plan forecasts and club aspirations identified in PPOSS Assessment Report (2024).

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Analysis area	Pitch type	Current capacity total in MES per week <sup>(1)</sup>	Future capacity total in MES per week (2041) <sup>8</sup>
Braintree District	Sunday	Actual spare capacity of 45 match equivalent sessions	Actual spare capacity of 45 match equivalent sessions
Braintree District	Midweek	Shortfall of 13 match equivalent sessions	Actual spare capacity of five match equivalent sessions

## Area recommendations

Sport	Headline findings
<b>Football</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Improve pitch quality to reduce/alleviate overplay at sites (e.g. at Braintree Sport &amp; Heath Club, Deanery Hill- Queen Elizabeth II Foundation Field, John Ray Recreation Ground, Notley Green and The Crops).</li> <li>◀ Improve ancillary facilities where required and at key sites for the growth of female and adult participation (e.g. at Braintree Town FC- Crossing Road, Braintree Sport &amp; Health Club, Deanery Hill- Queen Elizabeth II Foundation Field, John Ray Recreation Ground and Releet Sports Ground).</li> <li>◀ Seek to provide security of tenure for clubs, enabling actual spare capacity.</li> <li>◀ Explore opportunities to bring lost provision back into use given local shortfalls, whilst as a minimum retaining the site as strategic reserve (e.g. at Burches Meadow).</li> </ul>
<b>3G pitches</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Ensure sinking funds are in place for long-term sustainability and pitch resurfacing when required (e.g. at Alec Hunter Academy, Braintree Sport &amp; Health Club and Notley Sports Centre).</li> <li>◀ Explore creation of 3G pitches that are both football and rugby compliant when alleviating shortfalls (e.g. Braintree RUFC).</li> <li>◀ Explore potential development of 3G pitches (e.g. Braintree Sport &amp; Health Club (second 3G pitch), Honywood Community Science School, John Ray Recreation Ground and Releet Sports Ground).</li> </ul>
<b>Rugby union</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Improve pitch quality to reduce/alleviate overplay at Braintree Rugby Union Football Club.</li> <li>◀ Improve ancillary facilities at Braintree Rugby Union Football Club.</li> </ul>
<b>Hockey</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Encourage football users to transfer to 3G pitch provision as and when new 3G pitches are provided to free up capacity for hockey (e.g. at Releet Sports Ground).</li> <li>◀ Resurface pitch at Releet Sports Ground to improve quality and ensure sinking fun is in place for long-term sustainability.</li> <li>◀ Improve quality of ancillary facilities at Releet Sports Ground.</li> <li>◀ Upgrade sports lighting to LED at Releet Sports Ground.</li> </ul>
<b>Cricket</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Sustain quality of squares through dedicated maintenance regimes.</li> <li>◀ Reduce overplay at Coggeshall Town Cricket Club.</li> <li>◀ Improve changing facilities at Coggeshall Town Cricket Club, Coggeshall Town Cricket Club (Airfield Ground) and Rayne Village Hall.</li> </ul>
<b>Tennis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Seek to improve park courts such as Great Notley Country Park and John Ray Recreation Ground.</li> </ul>
<b>Netball</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> </ul>
<b>Bowls</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision and sustain quality to adequately meet demand.</li> </ul>
<b>Golf</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> </ul>

## BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

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Sport	Headline findings
<b>Athletics</b>	◀ Protect provision.
<b>Cycling</b>	◀ Protect provision.
<b>Basketball</b>	◀ Protect provision.
<b>Other grass pitch sports</b>	◀ Protect provision.

**BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

**CENTRAL ANALYSIS AREA**

Site ID	Site	Postcode	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
1	Alec Hunter Academy	CM7 3NR	Football	Education	One youth 11v11, two youth 9v9 and one mini 7v7 pitches which are unavailable for community use.	Explore community use options given local shortfalls.	Education FA FF	Local	L	L	L	Protect
1	Alec Hunter Academy	CM7 3NR	3G	Education	One good quality 11v11 3G pitch, which is available for community use, serviced by sports lighting and FA approved. The pitch was installed in 2025.	Sustain quality and ensure sinking funds are in place for long term sustainability and that FA testing takes place every three years.	Education FA FF	Local	M	S	L	Protect
1	Alec Hunter Academy	CM7 3NR	Tennis	Education	Four poor quality macadam courts which are neither available for community use nor serviced by sports lighting.	Improve court quality for curricular use.	Education LTA	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
1	Alec Hunter Academy	CM7 3NR	Netball	Education	Three poor quality macadam courts which are neither available for community use nor serviced by sports lighting.	Improve court quality for curricular use.	Education EN	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
5	Bocking Sports Club	CM7 5JY	Football	Sports Club	Two standard quality adult pitches which have actual spare capacity. Serviced by standard quality ancillary provision.	Seek to utilise actual spare capacity through the transfer of demand from overplayed sites. Improve quality of ancillary provision.	Club FA FF	Local	L	M	L	Protect Enhance
5	Bocking Sports Club	CM7 5JY	Bowls	Sports Club	One good quality bowling green, accessed by Bocking Alliance BC.	Sustain green quality.	Bowls England	Local	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
6	Braintree Cricket Club	CM7 9AW	Cricket	Sports Club	One good quality grass wicket square, accessed by Braintree CC. The square has three match equivalent sessions of spare capacity (but none at peak time for any playing format). Serviced by standard quality ancillary provision.	Sustain quality. Improve quality of ancillary provision.	Essex Cricket ECB	Local	L	M	L	Protect Enhance
7	Braintree Rugby Union Football Club	CM7 3PR	Rugby union	Sports Club	Three standard quality senior pitches. Only one of the senior pitches is serviced by sports lighting and is overplayed and on one of the non-lit pitches. Braintree RUFC has an aspiration to install a full size World Rugby compliant 3G pitch on site. This is due to the club's high usage of the grass pitch provision on site and the overplay identified. Serviced by standard quality ancillary provision.	Improve quality to reduce overplay and consider the installation of additional sports lighting to further alleviate it. Explore the feasibility of a full size World Rugby compliant 3G pitch installation given shortfalls on site and when considered against other options in the area (it should be acknowledged that any proposal on this site would need to protect/replace any rugby pitches that would be affected). Improve quality of ancillary provision.	Club RFU	Key centre	M	M-L	H	Protect Enhance

**BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Postcode	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
8	Braintree Sport & Health Club	CM7 1FF	Football	Council	Two youth 11v11, one youth 9v9, one mini 7v7 and one mini 5v5 pitches, which are assessed as standard quality. The mini 5v5 pitch has actual spare capacity and the youth pitches are overplayed.	Improve pitch quality to eradicate overplay and create actual spare capacity.	FA FF	Hub site	M	S	M	Protect Enhance
8	Braintree Sport & Health Club	CM7 1FF	3G	Council	One good quality 11v11 3G pitch, which is available for community use, serviced by sports lighting and FA approved. The pitch was installed in 2022. Potential option to install a second 11v11 3G pitch on site.	Sustain quality and ensure sinking funds are in place for long term sustainability and that FA testing takes place every three years. Explore feasibility of 3G pitch installation.	FA FF	Hub site	M	S	L	Protect
8	Braintree Sport & Health Club	CM7 1FF	Tennis	Council	Four standard quality macadam courts which are available for community use and serviced by sports lighting.	Improve court quality to better accommodate recreational demand.	LTA	Hub site	M	L	L	Protect Enhance
8	Braintree Sport & Health Club	CM7 1FF	Netball	Council	Three standard quality macadam courts which are available for community use and serviced by sports lighting.	Improve court quality to better accommodate club and recreational demand.	EN	Hub site	M	L	L	Protect Enhance
8	Braintree Sport & Health Club	CM7 1FF	Athletics	Council	One eight lane 400-metre track assessed as standard quality and serviced by sports lighting. Used by Braintree & District AC. The main track and field provision in the Authority and used as a competition venue.	Resurface the track within the lifespan of this study to better accommodate club and community demand and to attract increased usage. Also ensure it remains TrackMark accredited.	EA	Hub site	H	M	M	Protect Enhance
9	Braintree Town FC-Cressing Road (stadia pitch)	CM7 3DE	Football	Sports Club	One good quality adult pitch which has spare capacity discounted due to being a stadia pitch. Serviced by poor quality ancillary facilities.	Sustain quality of the pitch. Improve quality of ancillary facilities.	Club FA FF	Key centre	M	S	M	Protect
9	Braintree Town FC-Cressing Road (training pitch)	CM7 3DE	Football	Sports Club	One good quality adult pitch which has actual spare capacity.	Sustain quality.	Club FA FF	Key centre	M	S	M	Protect
9	Braintree Town FC-Cressing Road	CM7 3DE	Tennis	Sports Club	Four good quality courts, of which two are macadam and the remaining four have an artificial surface. Only the macadam courts are surfaced by sports lighting.	Sustain court quality and explore options of additional installing sports lighting to increase capacity.	Club LTA	Key centre	M	S	M	Protect Enhance
12	Coggeshall Town Cricket Club	CO6 2JT	Cricket	Sports Club	One good quality grass wicket square, which is used by Coggeshall Town CC and Braintree CC. The square is overplayed by 37 match equivalent sessions. Serviced by standard quality ancillary provision.	Sustain quality and explore options to provide the Club with increased capacity (e.g., via additional provision) to meet its current and future demand. Improve quality of ancillary provision.	Club Essex Cricket ECB	Key centre	M	M	M	Protect Provide

**BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Postcode	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
13	Coggeshall Town Cricket Club (Airfield Ground)	CO6 1RQ	Cricket	Sports Club	One good quality grass wicket square, which is used by Coggeshall Town CC and Braintree CC. The square has 10 match equivalent sessions of spare capacity. The Club would like to install practice nets. Serviced by standard quality ancillary provision.	Sustain quality. Support aspirations for the creation of practice nets on site. Improve quality of ancillary provision.	Club Essex Cricket ECB	Key centre	M	M	M	Protect Provide
17	Deanery Hill (Queen Elizabeth II Foundation Field)	CM7 5SS	Football	Council	One youth 9v9, two mini 7v7 and one mini 5v5 pitch, which are assessed as poor quality. The youth 9v9 pitch is overplayed. Serviced by poor quality ancillary provision.	Improve pitch quality to eradicate overplay and create actual spare capacity. Improve quality of ancillary provision.	FA FF	Key centre	M	S	M	Protect Enhance
17	Deanery Hill (Queen Elizabeth II Foundation Field)	CM7 5SS	Cycling	Council	One standard quality BMX pump track, used by Braintree BMX Club.	Improve quality to better accommodate club and recreational demand.	British Cycling	Key centre	M	M	M	Protect Enhance
18	Discovery Centre (Great Notley)	CM77 7FS	Football	Council	One youth 11v11 and one youth 9v9, assessed as standard quality. The youth 9v9 pitch has actual spare capacity whilst the youth 11v11 pitch is played to capacity at peak time.	Improve pitch quality to create actual spare capacity. Utilise the actual spare capacity through future demand or via the transfer of activity from an overplayed site.	FA FF	Key centre	M	M	M	Protect Enhance
18	Discovery Centre (Great Notley)	CM77 7FS	3G	Council	One standard quality smaller size 3G pitch which is available for community use, serviced by sports lighting and FA approved. The pitch was resurfaced in 2020.	Sustain quality and ensure sinking funds are in place for long term sustainability and that FA testing takes place every three years.	FA FF	Key centre	M	S	L	Protect
27	Great Notley Country Park	CM77 7FS	Tennis	Council	One poor quality macadam court which is available for community use but not serviced by sports lighting.	Improve quality and explore options of installing sports lighting to increase capacity and attract recreational demand.	LTA	Local	L	S	M	Protect Enhance
27	Great Notley Country Park	CM77 7FS	Netball	Council	One poor quality macadam court which is available for community use but not serviced by sports lighting.	Improve quality and explore options of installing sports lighting to increase capacity and attract recreational demand.	EN	Local	L	S	M	Protect Enhance
27	Great Notley Country Park	CM77 7FS	Basketball	Council	One poor quality court which is available for community use but not serviced by sports lighting.	Improve quality and explore options of installing sports lighting to increase capacity and attract recreational demand.	Basketball England	Local	L	S	M	Protect Enhance
27	Great Notley Country Park	CM77 7FS	Athletics	Council	Parkrun event held on site.	Ensure continued activity and seek to maximise participation.	England Athletics	Local	M	L	L	Protect
33	Honywood Community Science School	CO6 1PZ	Football	Education	Two standard quality youth 11v11 pitches, which are available for community use. Spare capacity is discounted due to unsecure tenure.	Improve quality to eradicate overplay and ensure long term security of tenure is provided to users via a community use agreement.	Education FA FF	Local	M	S	M	Protect Enhance

**BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Postcode	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
33	Honywood Community Science School	CO6 1PZ	3G	Education	Potential option to install a 11v11 3G pitch on site.	Explore feasibility of 3G pitch installation given local shortfalls.	Education FA FF	Local	M	M	H	Protect Provide Enhance
33	Honywood Community Science School	CO6 1PZ	Cricket	Education	One standalone NTP which is available for community use but unused.	Retain as community available should demand exist in the future.	Education Essex Cricket ECB	Local	L	L	L	Protect
33	Honywood Community Science School	CO6 1PZ	Netball	Education	Three poor quality macadam courts which are available for community use but not serviced by sports lighting.	Improve court quality for curricular use.	Education EN	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
35	John Ray Recreation Ground	CM7 9DZ	Football	Council	Four adult, one youth 9v9, two mini 7v7 and one mini 5v5 pitches, which are assessed as standard quality. The adult pitch has actual spare capacity. Serviced by poor quality ancillary provision.	Seek to utilise actual spare capacity through the transfer of demand from overplayed sites. Improve quality of ancillary provision.	FA FF	Local	L	M	L	Protect Enhance
35	John Ray Recreation Ground	CM7 9DZ	3G	Council	Potential option to install a 11v11 3G pitch on site.	Explore feasibility of 3G pitch installation given local shortfalls.	Education FA FF	Local	M	M	H	Protect Provide Enhance
35	John Ray Recreation Ground	CM7 9DZ	Tennis	Council	Three poor quality macadam courts which are available for community use but not serviced by sports lighting.	Improve court quality and explore providing sports lighting to better accommodate recreational demand and to increase capacity.	LTA	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
35	John Ray Recreation Ground	CM7 9DZ	Netball	Council	Two standard quality macadam courts which are available for community use but not serviced by sports lighting.	Improve court quality and explore providing sports lighting to better accommodate recreational demand and to increase capacity.	EN	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
41	Kings Lane Playing Field	CM77 8AQ	Football	Council	One standard quality youth 9v9 pitch, which has actual spare capacity.	Seek to utilise actual spare capacity through the transfer of demand from overplayed sites.	FA FF	Local	L	M	L	Protect Enhance
41	Kings Lane Playing Field	CM77 8AQ	Tennis	Council	One standard quality macadam court, which is not serviced by sports lighting.	Improve court quality and explore options of installing sports lighting to better accommodate recreational demand.	LTA	Local	L	L	M	Protect Enhance
43	Lyons Hall Primary School	CM7 9FH	3G	Education	One standard quality smaller size 3G pitch which is available for community use, serviced by sports lighting. The pitch was resurfaced in 2016.	Sustain quality and ensure sinking funds are in place for long term sustainability and that FA testing takes place every three years.	FA FF	Local	L	S	L	Protect
46	Notley Green	CM77 7US	Football	Council	One youth 9v9 and one mini 5v5 pitch, which are assessed as standard quality. The mini 5v5 pitch has actual spare capacity, whilst the youth 9v9 pitch is overplayed. No ancillary facilities are available on site.	Improve pitch quality to eradicate overplay and create actual spare capacity. Utilise the actual spare capacity through future demand or via the transfer of activity from an overplayed site.	FA FF	Local	L	M	M	Protect Enhance
47	Notley Green Primary School	CM77 7ZJ	3G	Education	One standard quality smaller size 3G pitch which is neither available for community use nor serviced by sports lighting.	Improve pitch quality for curricular use.	FA FF	Local	L	L	L	Protect

**BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Postcode	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
47	Notley Green Primary School	CM77 7ZJ	Netball	Education	Two standard quality macadam courts which are neither available for community nor serviced by sports lighting.	Improve court quality for curricular use.	Education EN	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
48	Notley Sports Centre	CM7 1WY	Football	Education	One adult and one youth 9v9, which are assessed as poor quality and available for community use. The pitches are overplayed.	Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay.	Education FA FF	Key centre	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
48	Notley Sports Centre	CM7 1WY	3G	Education	One good quality 11v11 3G pitch, which is available for community use, serviced by sports lighting and FA approved. The pitch was installed in 2025.	Sustain quality and ensure sinking funds are in place for long term sustainability and that FA testing takes place every three years.	Club FA FF	Local	M	S	L	Protect
48	Notley Sports Centre	CM7 1WY	Tennis	Education	One standard quality macadam court which is available for community use but not serviced by sports lighting.	Improve court quality and explore options of providing sports lighting to better cater for community use.	Education LTA	Local	L	S	M	Protect Enhance
48	Notley Sports Centre	CM7 1WY	Netball	Education	Six standard quality macadam courts, which are available for community use but no serviced by sports lighting.	Improve court quality and explore opportunities to install sports lighting to increase capacity and help attract demand.	Education EN	Local	M	M	M	Protect Enhance
48	Notley Sports Centre	CM7 1WY	Basketball	Education	One standard quality and one poor quality basketball court, which are available for community use.	Improve court quality for curricular use.	Education Basketball England	Local	L	S	L	Protect
50	Rayne Village Hall	CM77 6TX	Football	Council	One adult and, one mini 7v7 and two mini 5v5 pitches assessed as standard quality. The mini pitches have actual spare capacity whilst the adult pitch is overplayed. Serviced by standard quality ancillary provision.	Improve pitch quality to create actual spare capacity and/or alleviate overplay. Improve quality of ancillary provision.	FA FF	Local	L	S	M	Protect Provide Enhance
50	Rayne Village Hall	CM77 6TX	Cricket	Council	One standard quality grass wicket square, used by Rayne CC. The square is played to capacity. Serviced by standard quality ancillary provision. The Club reports that it would like to install non-turf practice nets.	Improve pitch quality. Improve quality of ancillary facilities. Support aspirations to install non-turf nets.	Essex Cricket ECB	Local	L	S	M	Protect Enhance
50	Rayne Village Hall	CM77 6TX	Cycling	Council	One standard quality BMX pump track.	Improve quality to better accommodate recreational demand.	British Cycling	Local	L	M	M	Protect Enhance
50	Rayne Village Hall	CM77 6TX	Rounders	Council	One rounders diamond.	Sustain quality.	Rounders England	Local	L	L	L	Protect
51	Releet Sports Ground	CM7 5LJ	Football	Sports Club	Two adult, one youth 9v9 and one mini 5v5 pitches assessed as good quality. Only the adult pitches have actual spare	Sustain pitch quality and utilise the actual spare capacity through future demand or via the transfer of activity from an overplayed site.	Club FA FF	Key centre	M	M	M	Protect Enhance

**BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Postcode	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
					capacity and the remaining pitches are played to capacity at peak time. Serviced by standard quality ancillary facilities.	Improve quality of ancillary facilities.						
51	Releet Sports Ground	CM7 5LJ	3G	Sports Club	Potential option to install a 11v11 3G pitch on site.	Explore feasibility of 3G pitch installation given local shortfalls.	Education FA FF	Local	M	M	H	Protect Provide Enhance
51	Releet Sports Ground	CM7 5LJ	Hockey	Sports Club	One sand-based standard quality pitch, which is available for community use and serviced by sports lighting. The pitch was last resurfaced in 2015. Used by Braintree HC for match play and training activity. Serviced by standard quality ancillary facilities.	Protect for continued hockey use. Resurface pitch when required and ensure a sinking fund is in place for long-term sustainability. Seek transfer of some football demand to 3G provision to build increased hockey capacity. Upgrade the sports lighting to LED. Improve quality of ancillary facilities and car parking provision.	Club EH	Key centre	H	S	M	Protect Enhance
67	The Crops	CO6 1NT	Football	Council	One good quality adult and one standard quality mini 5v5 pitch. The adult pitch is overplayed whilst the mini pitch is played to capacity at peak time.	Improve quality to eradicate overplay and to create actual spare capacity.	FA FF	Local	L	S	M	Protect Enhance
79	Meadowside Open Space	CM7 5UG	Basketball	Council	One poor quality basketball court, which is available for community use.	Improve court quality for recreational use.	Basketball England	Local	L	S	L	Protect
84	Great Bradford Junior School	CM7 9LW	Football	Education	One poor quality youth 9v9 pitch which is unavailable for community use.	Explore community use options given local shortfalls.	Education FA FF	Local	L	L	L	Protect
94	Braintree Bowling Club	CM7 2PA	Bowls	Sports Club	One good quality bowling green accessed by Braintree BC.	Sustain green quality.	Bowls England	Local	L	L	L	Protect
104	Braintree Golf Club	CM77 8DD	Golf	Private	One standard 18-hole course.	Retain course and ensure quality is maintained appropriately.	England Golf	Local	L	L	L	Protect
111	Braintree & Bocking Public Gardens	CM7 9AE	Tennis	Council	Two poor quality macadam courts which are available for community use but not sports lit.	Improve court quality to better accommodate recreational demand. Explore options of providing sports lighting to increase capacity.	LTA	Local	L	S	M	Protect Enhance

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORTS STRATEGY

## RURAL NORTH ANALYSIS AREA

### Summary pitch sports (Rural North Analysis Area)

Analysis area	Pitch type	Current capacity total in MES per week <sup>[1]</sup>	Future capacity total in MES per week (2041) <sup>9</sup>
<b>Football – grass pitches</b>	-	-	-
Rural North	Adult	Shortfall of 7 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 8 match equivalent sessions
Rural North	Youth 11v11	Played to capacity	Shortfall of 0.5 match equivalent sessions
Rural North	Youth 9v9	Actual spare capacity of 1 match equivalent sessions	Actual spare capacity of 1 match equivalent sessions
Rural North	Mini 7v7	Played to capacity	Shortfall of 0.5 match equivalent sessions
Rural North	Mini 5v5	Actual spare capacity of 0.5 match equivalent sessions	Actual spare capacity of 0.5 match equivalent sessions
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Adult</b>	<b>Shortfall of 14.5 match equivalent sessions</b>	<b>Shortfall of 17.5 match equivalent sessions</b>
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Youth 11v11</b>	<b>Shortfall of 1.5 match equivalent sessions</b>	<b>Shortfall of 4 match equivalent sessions</b>
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Youth 9v9</b>	<b>Shortfall of 9.5 match equivalent sessions</b>	<b>Shortfall of 11 match equivalent sessions</b>
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Mini 7v7</b>	<b>Played to capacity</b>	<b>Shortfall of 1.5 match equivalent sessions</b>
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Mini 5v5</b>	<b>Actual spare capacity of 6.5 match equivalent sessions</b>	<b>Actual spare capacity of 6 match equivalent sessions</b>
<b>Football – 3G pitches</b>	-	-	-
Rural North	11v11, floodlit	Shortfall of 0.25 pitches	-
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>11v11, floodlit</b>	<b>Shortfall of 2 pitches</b>	<b>Shortfall of 2 pitches</b>
<b>Rugby union</b>	-	-	-
Rural North	Senior	Played to capacity	-
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Senior</b>	<b>Shortfall of 12.5</b>	<b>Shortfall of 13</b>
<b>Hockey</b>	-	-	-
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Full size, floodlit</b>	<b>Played to capacity</b>	<b>Played to capacity</b>
<b>Cricket pitches</b>	-	-	-
Rural North	Saturday	Actual spare capacity of 96 match equivalent sessions	N/A
Rural North	Sunday	Actual spare capacity of 120 match equivalent sessions	N/A
Rural North	Midweek	Actual spare capacity of 96 match equivalent sessions	N/A
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Shortfall of 3 match equivalent sessions</b>	<b>Shortfall of 27 match equivalent sessions</b>

<sup>[1]</sup> MES – match equivalent sessions per week (per season for cricket)

<sup>9</sup> Future demand (2041) is determined via Local Plan forecasts and club aspirations identified in PPOSS Assessment Report (2024).

## BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORTS STRATEGY

Analysis area	Pitch type	Current capacity total in MES per week <sup>[1]</sup>	Future capacity total in MES per week (2041) <sup>9</sup>
Braintree District	Sunday	Actual spare capacity of 45 match equivalent sessions	Actual spare capacity of 45 match equivalent sessions
Braintree District	Midweek	Shortfall of 13 match equivalent sessions	Actual spare capacity of five match equivalent sessions

### Area recommendations

Sport	Headline findings
<b>Football</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Improve pitch quality to reduce/alleviate overplay at sites (e.g. at Blackmore End Playing Fields, Church Road Playing Fields, Courtauld Sports Ground, Great Yeldham Recreation Ground, Lawn Meadow and Steeple Bumpstead Recreation Ground).</li> <li>◀ Improve ancillary facilities at sites where to lack of changing facilities is affecting growth of clubs (e.g. at Blackmore End Playing Fields, Courtauld Sports Ground, Great Yeldham Recreation Ground and Steeple Bumpstead Recreation Ground).</li> <li>◀ Seek to provide community use for clubs, enabling actual spare capacity.</li> <li>◀ Improve quality to establish actual spare capacity (e.g. at Clayhills).</li> <li>◀ Explore the potential reinstatement of pitches at Burches Meadow and Strutt Memorial Recreation Ground, given local shortfalls.</li> </ul>
<b>3G pitches</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Ensure sinking funds are in place for long-term sustainability and pitch resurfacing when required (e.g. at Halstead Leisure Centre).</li> </ul>
<b>Rugby union</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Improve pitch quality at Courtauld Sports Ground.</li> <li>◀ Improve ancillary facilities at Courtauld Sports Ground.</li> </ul>
<b>Hockey</b>	◀ N/A.
<b>Cricket</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Sustain quality of squares through dedicated maintenance regimes.</li> <li>◀ Improve changing facilities at Gestingthorpe Playing Field, Halstead Cricket Club and Terling Cricket Club.</li> </ul>
<b>Tennis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Sustain quality of courts.</li> <li>◀ Seek to improve park courts such as Finchingfield Playing Fields, Shalford Village Hall Playing Field and Wethersfield Playing Field</li> </ul>
<b>Netball</b>	◀ Protect provision.
<b>Bowls</b>	◀ Protect provision and sustain quality to adequately meet demand.
<b>Golf</b>	◀ Protect provision.
<b>Athletics</b>	◀ Protect provision.
<b>Cycling</b>	◀ Protect provision.
<b>Basketball</b>	◀ Protect provision.
<b>Other grass pitch sports</b>	◀ Protect provision.

**BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

**RURAL NORTH ANALYSIS AREA**

Site ID	Site	Postcode	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
2	Belchamp St Paul Playing Field	CO10 7BU	Tennis	Council	Two standard quality macadam courts which are available for community use but not sports lit.	Improve court quality for continued recreational usage.	LTA	Local	L	S	M	Protect Enhance
2	Belchamp St Paul Playing Field	CO10 7BU	Basketball	Council	One poor quality basketball court which is available for community use.	Improve court quality to better accommodate recreational demand.	Basketball England	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
2	Belchamp St Paul Playing Field	CO10 7BU	Rounders	Council	One rounders diamond.	Sustain quality.	Rounders England	Local	L	L	L	Protect
4	Blackmore End Playing Fields	CM7 4DN	Football	Council	One adult, one youth 9v9, one mini 7v7 and one mini 5v5 pitches which are assessed as poor quality. The adult and youth 9v9 pitches are overplayed, whilst the remaining pitches are played to capacity. Serviced by poor quality ancillary facilities.	Improve quality to eradicate overplay and to create actual spare capacity. Improve quality of ancillary facilities.	FA FF	Local	L	S	M	Protect Enhance
10	Church Road Playing Fields	CO9 1TL	Football	Council	One poor quality adult pitch which has spare capacity discounted due to poor quality.	Improve pitch quality to provide actual spare capacity.	FA FF	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
10	Church Road Playing Fields	CO9 1TL	Rounders	Council	One rounders diamond.	Sustain quality.	Rounders England	Local	L	L	L	Protect
11	Clayhills	CO9 2NG	Football	Sports Club	One poor quality youth 9v9 pitch which has spare capacity discounted due to poor quality.	Improve pitch quality to provide actual spare capacity.	FA FF	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
15	Courtauld Sports Ground	CO9 2ES	Football	Sports Club	One adult and one mini 7v7 pitch assessed as poor quality. The adult pitch is overplayed and mini 7v7 pitch has spare capacity discounted due to poor quality. Serviced by standard quality ancillary facilities.	Improve quality to eradicate overplay and to create actual spare capacity. Improve quality of ancillary facilities.	Club FA FF	Key centre	M	S	M	Protect Enhance
15	Courtauld Sports Ground	CO9 2ES	Rugby union	Sports Club	One poor quality senior pitch. The pitch is not serviced by sports lighting and is overplayed.	Improve quality to reduce overplay and consider installing sports lighting to allow training demand to be accommodated.	Club RFU	Key centre	M	S	M	Protect Enhance
15	Courtauld Sports Ground	CO9 2ES	Tennis	Sports Club	Site has recently received planning permission for two new courts which will be serviced by sports lighting.	Support development of tennis courts.	Club LTA	Key centre	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
15	Courtauld Sports Ground	CO9 2ES	Bowls	Sports Club	One standard quality bowling green, accessed by Courtauld Halstead BC.	Improve green quality.	Club Bowls England	Key centre	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
15	Courtauld Sports Ground	CO9 2ES	Rounders	Sports Club	One rounders diamond.	Sustain quality.	Club Rounders England	Key centre	L	L	L	Protect
20	Earls Colne Recreation Club	CO6 2NG	Football	Community association	One adult and one youth 9v9 pitch assessed as good quality. The youth pitch has actual spare capacity.	Seek to utilise actual spare capacity through the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or via future demand.	FA FF	Key centre	M	S	L	Protect Enhance

**BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Postcode	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
					Serviced by standard quality ancillary facilities.	Improve quality of ancillary facilities.						
20	Earls Colne Recreation Club	CO6 2NG	Cricket	Community association	One standard quality grass wicket square with an accompanying NTP, accessed by Earls Colne CC. The square has six match equivalent sessions of actual spare capacity. Serviced by poor quality ancillary provision.	Improve quality of the square to provide additional capacity and ensure no future overplay. Improve quality of ancillary provision	Essex Cricket ECB	Key centre	M	M	L	Protect Enhance
20	Earls Colne Recreation Club	CO6 2NG	Tennis	Community association	Four good quality macadam courts which are available for community use and serviced by sports lighting.	Sustain court quality.	LTA	Key centre	M	L	L	Protect
22	Finchingfield Playing Fields	CM7 4LZ	Football	Council	One standard quality youth 9v9 pitch which has actual spare capacity.	Seek to utilise actual spare capacity through the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or via future demand.	FA FF	Local	L	M	L	Protect
22	Finchingfield Playing Fields	CM7 4LZ	Tennis	Council	One good quality macadam court which is available for community use but not sports lit.	Sustain court quality and explore providing sports lighting to better accommodate recreational demand.	LTA	Local	L	S	M	Protect Enhance
22	Finchingfield Playing Fields	CM7 4LZ	Football/Cycling	Council	Site has recently received planning permission to extend the site to create a youth 11v11 pitch and a BMX track	Support development of football pitches and BMX track	FA FF British Cycling	Local	M	M	H	Protect Enhance
23	Gestingthorpe Playing Field	CO9 3BB	Football	Council	One standard quality adult pitch which has actual spare capacity.	Seek to utilise actual spare capacity through the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or via future demand.	FA FF	Local	L	M	L	Protect
23	Gestingthorpe Playing Field	CO9 3BB	Cricket	Council	One standard quality grass wicket square, accessed by Gestingthorpe CC. The square has eight match equivalent sessions of spare capacity. Serviced by poor quality ancillary provision. The Club would like to replace the old surfaces on the nets in the next few years but is proving expensive.	Improve quality of the square to provide additional capacity and ensure no future overplay. Improve quality of ancillary provision. Support aspirations to replace the net surface.	Essex Cricket ECB	Local	L	M	L	Protect Enhance
24	Gosfield School	CO9 1PF	Football	Education	Two poor quality adult pitches which are available for community use. The pitches are overplayed.	Improve pitch quality to eradicate overplay and create actual spare capacity.	Education FA FF	Key centre	M	M	M	Protect Enhance
24	Gosfield School	CO9 1PF	Rugby union	Education	One poor quality senior pitch which is available for community but not serviced by sports lighting. Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure and poor quality.	Improve quality for curricular use and retain as community available should club demand exist in the future.	Education RFU	Key centre	L	L	L	Protect Provide
24	Gosfield School	CO9 1PF	Hockey	Education	One sand-based smaller size pitch, which is available for community use but not serviced by sports lighting.	Retain for continued recreational usage.	Education EH	Key centre	M	L	L	Protect

**BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Postcode	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
24	Gosfield School	CO9 1PF	Cricket	Education	One good quality grass wicket square accompanied by an NTP, which is unavailable for community use.	Explore community use options given significant local shortfalls. If provided, seek long term security of tenure for users.	Education ECB Essex Cricket	Key centre	M	S	L	Protect
24	Gosfield School	CO9 1PF	Tennis	Education	Three standard quality macadam courts, which are neither available for community use nor serviced by sports lighting.	Explore community use options with the School given quantity of courts provided.	Education LTA	Key centre	M	S	L	Protect
25	Great Bardfield Playing Fields	CM7 4RR	Football	Council	One poor quality adult pitch which has spare capacity discounted due to poor quality.	Improve pitch quality to provide actual spare capacity.	FA FF	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
28	Great Yeldham Recreation Ground	CO9 4HD	Football	Council	One adult, one youth 9v9, one mini 7v7 and one mini 5v5 pitches assessed as standard quality. The adult, youth 9v9 and mini 5v5 pitch have actual spare capacity. Serviced by standard quality ancillary provision.	Seek to utilise actual spare capacity through the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or via future demand. Improve quality of ancillary provision.	FA FF	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
29	Halstead Leisure Centre	CO9 2HR	3G	Council	One good quality 11v11 3G pitch, which is available for community use, serviced by sports lighting and FA approved. The pitch was last resurfaced in 2021.	Sustain quality and ensure sinking funds are in place for long term sustainability and that FA testing takes place every three years.	FA FF	Key centre	H	S	L	Protect
30	Hedingham School	CO9 3QH	Football	Education	Two standard quality adult pitches which are available for community and played to capacity.	Improve quality to better accommodate demand.	Education FA FF	Local	L	M	M	Protect Provide Enhance
30	Hedingham School	CO9 3QH	3G	Education	One poor quality smaller sized pitch, which is available for community use, serviced by sports lighting and FA approved. The pitch was last resurfaced in 2012.	Resurface the pitch to maximise competitive and recreational use. Ensure sinking funds are in place for long term sustainability and that FA testing takes place every three years.	Education FA FF	Local	M	S	H	Protect Provide Enhance
30	Hedingham School	CO9 3QH	Rugby union	Education	One standard quality senior pitch, which is available for community use but not serviced by sports lighting. Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.	Retain as community available should club demand exist in the future.	Education RFU	Local	L	L	L	Protect Provide
30	Hedingham School	CO9 3QH	Cricket	Education	One standalone NTP which is available for community use but unused.	Retain as community available should demand exist in the future.	Education ECB Essex Cricket	Local	L	L	L	Protect
30	Hedingham School	CO9 3QH	Netball	Education	Three poor quality macadam courts, which are available for community use but not sports lit.	Improve quality and explore potential of installing sports lighting to increase capacity and to attract community demand.	Education LTA	Local	L	S	M	Protect Enhance
31	Helions Bumpstead Recreation Ground	CB9 7AH	Cricket	Council	One standard quality grass wicket square, which is currently not used. The square has 16 match equivalent sessions of spare capacity.	Improve quality of the square to provide additional capacity and ensure no future overplay.	Essex Cricket ECB	Local	L	M	L	Protect Enhance

**BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Postcode	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
					Serviced by no ancillary provision on site.	Consider servicing site with ancillary provision if demand exists in the future.						
39	Kelvedon St Marys CE Primary Academy	CO5 9DS	Football	Education	One poor quality youth 9v9 pitch which is unavailable for community use.	Improve quality and retain for curricular use.	Education FA FF	Local	L	S	L	Protect
42	Lawn Meadow	CO9 3QL	Football	Sports Club	One standard quality adult pitch which is overplayed. Serviced by standard quality ancillary provision.	Improve pitch quality to reduce overplay. Improve quality of ancillary provision.	Club FA FF	Local	L	S	L	Protect
55	Shalford Village Hall Playing Field	CM7 5EZ	Football	Council	One standard quality adult pitch which has actual spare capacity.	Seek to utilise actual spare capacity through the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or via future demand.	FA FF	Local	L	S	L	Protect
55	Shalford Village Hall Playing Field	CM7 5EZ	Cricket	Council	One standard quality grass wicket square, accessed by Chelmsford Titans CC. The square is played to capacity.	Improve pitch quality. Improve quality of ancillary facilities.	Essex Cricket ECB	Local	L	S	M	Protect Enhance
55	Shalford Village Hall Playing Field	CM7 5EZ	Tennis	Council	One standard quality macadam court which is available for community use but not serviced by sports lighting.	Improve quality and explore potential of installing sports lighting to increase capacity and to attract community demand.	LTA	Local	L	S	M	Protect Enhance
62	St Margarets Prep School	CO9 1SE	Football	Education	One youth 9v9 and one mini 7v7 pitch, which are unavailable for community use.	Improve quality and retain for curricular use.	Education FA FF	Local	L	S	L	Protect
63	Steeple Bumpstead Primary School	CB9 7ED	Football	Education	One mini 7v7 pitch, which is unavailable for community use.	Improve quality and retain for curricular use.	Education FA, FF	Local	L	S	L	Protect
64	Steeple Bumpstead Recreation Ground	CB9 7ED	Football	Council	One youth 9v9 and one mini 7v7 pitch which are assessed as poor quality. The youth pitch is overplayed and the mini pitch has spare capacity discounted.	Improve pitch quality to eradicate overplay and create actual spare capacity.	FA FF	Local	L	S	L	Protect
64	Steeple Bumpstead Recreation Ground	CB9 7ED	Basketball	Council	One poor quality basketball court which is available for community use.	Improve court quality to better accommodate recreational demand.	Basketball England	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
66	The Bell Field	CM7 5AQ	Football	Council	One poor quality adult pitch which is overplayed.	Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay and create actual spare capacity.	FA FF	Local	L	M	M	Protect Enhance
69	The Millbank Stadium	CO9 1HR	Football	Sports Club	One good quality adult pitch which is played to capacity at peak time.	Seek to utilise actual spare capacity through the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or through future demand.	FA FF	Local	M	M	M	Protect Enhance
70	The Ramsey Academy	CO9 2HR	Tennis	Education	Six poor quality macadam courts, which are available for community but not sports lit.	Improve quality and explore potential of installing sports lighting to increase capacity and to attract community demand.	Education LTA	Local	M	S	M	Protect Enhance

**BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Postcode	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
70	The Ramsey Academy	CO9 2HR	Netball	Education	One standard quality macadam court which is available for community but not sports lit.	Improve court quality and explore options of installing additional sports lighting to increase capacity and attract demand.	Education EN	Local	M	S	M	Protect Enhance
72	Wethersfield Playing Field	CM7 4EQ	Cricket	Council	One standard quality grass wicket square, which is currently not used. The square has 20 match equivalent sessions of spare capacity. Serviced by standard quality ancillary facilities.	Improve quality of the square to provide additional capacity and ensure no future overplay. Improve quality of ancillary facilities.	Essex Cricket ECB	Local	L	M	L	Protect Enhance
72	Wethersfield Playing Field	CM7 4EQ	Tennis	Council	One standard quality macadam court which is available for community but not sports lit.	Improve court quality and explore options of installing additional sports lighting to increase capacity and attract demand.	LTA	Local	L	S	M	Protect Enhance
88	St Peter's C of E Primary School	CO9 3NR	Football	Education	Two poor quality mini 7v7 pitches which are unavailable for community use.	Improve quality and retain for curricular use.	Education FA FF	Local	L	S	L	Protect
89	Feering Community Centre Playing Field	CO5 9SA	Rugby union	Council	One standard quality senior pitch which is available for community use but not serviced by sports lighting. The pitch is played to capacity.	Improve pitch quality to create actual spare capacity.	RFU	Local	M	M	M	Protect Enhance
89	Feering Community Centre Playing Field	CO5 9SA	Basketball	Council	One poor quality basketball court which is available for community use.	Improve court quality to better accommodate recreational demand.	Basketball England	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
91	Gosfield Tennis Club	CO9 1PR	Tennis	Sports Club	Three standard quality and one poor quality macadam courts which are available for community use and sports lit.	Improve court quality for continued club usage.	Club LTA	Local	L	S	M	Protect Enhance
92	Castle Hedingham Tennis Club	CO9 3EW	Tennis	Sports Club	Three good quality macadam courts which are available for community use and serviced by sports lighting.	Sustain court quality.	Club LTA	Local	L	L	L	Protect
93	The Essex Golf and Country Club	CO6 2NS	Tennis	Commercial	One good quality macadam court which is not available for community use and serviced by sports lighting.	Sustain quality.	LTA	Local	L	L	L	Protect
93	The Essex Golf and Country Club	CO6 2NS	Golf	Commercial	One standard 18-hole course.	Retain course and ensure quality is maintained appropriately.	England Golf	Local	L	L	L	Protect
95	Castle Hedingham Bowls Club	CO9 3HB	Bowls	Sports Club	One good quality bowling green, accessed by Castle Hedingham BC.	Sustain green quality.	Club Bowls England	Local	L	L	L	Protect
98	Twinstead Cricket Club	CO10 7NA	Cricket	Sports Club	One good quality grass wicket square, accessed by Twinstead CC. The square has eight match equivalent sessions of spare capacity. Serviced by standard quality ancillary provision.	Sustain quality of square. Seek to utilise actual spare capacity through the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or via future demand. Improve quality of ancillary facilities.	Club Essex Cricket ECB	Local	L	L	L	Protect

**BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Postcode	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
99	Castle Hedingham Cricket Club	CO9 3AG	Cricket	Sports Club	One good quality grass wicket square, accessed by Castled Hedingham CC. The square has 33 match equivalent sessions of spare capacity. Serviced by standard quality ancillary provision.	Sustain quality of square. Seek to utilise actual spare capacity through the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or via future demand. Improve quality of ancillary facilities.	Club Essex Cricket ECB	Local	L	L	L	Protect
100	Halstead Cricket Club	CO9 2RP	Cricket	Sports Club	Two good quality grass wicket squares used by Halstead CC. The squares have actual spare capacity. Serviced by poor quality ancillary facilities.	Sustain quality of square. Seek to utilise actual spare capacity through the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or via future demand. Improve quality of ancillary facilities.	Club Essex Cricket ECB	Local	L	L	L	Protect
102	Wickham St Paul's Recreation Ground	CO9 2PL	Cricket	Council	One standard quality grass wicket square which is unused. The square has 16 match equivalent sessions of actual spare capacity. Serviced by standard quality ancillary facilities.	Improve quality of the square to provide additional capacity and ensure no future overplay. Improve quality of ancillary facilities.	Essex Cricket ECB	Local	L	M	L	Protect Enhance
103	Steeple Bumpstead Bowls Club	CB9 7DY	Bowls	Sports Club	One good quality bowling green, accessed by Steeple Bumpstead BC.	Sustain green quality.	Club Bowls England	Local	L	L	L	Protect
105	Colne Valley Golf Club	CO6 2LT	Golf	Private	One standard 18-hole course.	Retain course and ensure quality is maintained appropriately.	England Golf	Local	L	L	L	Protect
106	Gosfield Lake Golf Club	CO9 1SE	Golf	Private	One standard 18-hole course.	Retain course and ensure quality is maintained appropriately.	England Golf	Local	L	L	L	Protect
107	Haverhill Golf Club	CB9 7UW	Golf	Private	One standard 18-hole course.	Retain course and ensure quality is maintained appropriately.	England Golf	Local	L	L	L	Protect
-	Burches Meadow	Unknown	Football (disused)	Council	One adult pitch	Consider bringing pitch back into use given local shortfalls.	FA FF	Local	L	M	M	Protect Provide

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

## SOUTH ANALYSIS AREA

### Summary pitch sports (South Analysis Area)

Analysis area	Pitch type	Current capacity total in MES per week <sup>[1]</sup>	Future capacity total in MES per week (2041) <sup>10</sup>
<b>Football – grass pitches</b>	-	-	-
South	Adult	Shortfall of 9.5 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 10.5 match equivalent sessions
South	Youth 11v11	Shortfall of 1 match equivalent session	Shortfall of 2 match equivalent sessions
South	Youth 9v9	Shortfall of 5 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 6 match equivalent sessions
South	Mini 7v7	Shortfall of 0.5 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 1 match equivalent session
South	Mini 5v5	Actual spare capacity of 2.5 match equivalent sessions	Actual spare capacity of 2 match equivalent sessions
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Adult</b>	<b>Shortfall of 14.5 match equivalent sessions</b>	<b>Shortfall of 17.5 match equivalent sessions</b>
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Youth 11v11</b>	<b>Shortfall of 1.5 match equivalent sessions</b>	<b>Shortfall of 4 match equivalent sessions</b>
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Youth 9v9</b>	<b>Shortfall of 9.5 match equivalent sessions</b>	<b>Shortfall of 11 match equivalent sessions</b>
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Mini 7v7</b>	<b>Played to capacity</b>	<b>Shortfall of 1.5 match equivalent sessions</b>
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Mini 5v5</b>	<b>Actual spare capacity of 6.5 match equivalent sessions</b>	<b>Actual spare capacity of 6 match equivalent sessions</b>
<b>Football – 3G pitches</b>	-	-	-
South	11v11, floodlit	Shortfall of 3.75 pitches	-
Braintree District	11v11, floodlit	Shortfall of 2 pitches	Shortfall of 3 pitches
<b>Rugby union</b>	-	-	-
South	Senior		-
Braintree District	Senior	Shortfall of	Shortfall of
<b>Hockey</b>	-	-	-
Braintree District	Full size, floodlit	Played to capacity	Played to capacity
<b>Cricket pitches</b>	-		
South	Saturday	Shortfall of 62 match equivalent sessions	-
South	Sunday	Actual spare capacity of 38 match equivalent sessions	-
South	Midweek	Shortfall of 58 match equivalent sessions	-
<b>Braintree District</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Shortfall of 3 match equivalent sessions</b>	<b>Shortfall of 27 match equivalent sessions</b>

<sup>[1]</sup> MES – match equivalent sessions per week (per season for cricket)

<sup>10</sup> Future demand (2041) is determined via Local Plan forecasts and club aspirations identified in PPOSS Assessment Report (2024).

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Analysis area	Pitch type	Current capacity total in MES per week <sup>(1)</sup>	Future capacity total in MES per week (2041) <sup>10</sup>
Braintree District	Sunday	Actual spare capacity of 45 match equivalent sessions	Actual spare capacity of 45 match equivalent sessions
Braintree District	Midweek	Shortfall of 13 match equivalent sessions	Actual spare capacity of five match equivalent sessions

## Area recommendations

Sport	Headline findings
<b>Football</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Improve quality to eradicate overplay (e.g. at Keith Bigden Memorial Ground, Oak Farm, Silver Street Field and Witham Sports Ground).</li> <li>◀ Improve quality to establish actual spare capacity.</li> <li>◀ Seek to provide security of tenure for clubs, enabling actual spare capacity.</li> <li>◀ Improve ancillary facilities where required and at key sites for the growth of female and adult participation (e.g. at Keith Bigden Memorial Ground, Rickstones Sports Ground, Silver End Village Hall, Silver Street Field, Witham Sports Ground and Witham Town Football Club).</li> <li>◀ Utilise the actual spare capacity that exists via the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or via future demand (e.g. Crossing Sports &amp; Social Club).</li> <li>◀ Explore the potential reinstatement of the grass pitches at Kelvedon Recreation Ground and Strutt Memorial Ground given local shortfalls.</li> <li>◀ Ensure football pitches proposed as part of planned housing developments are fully operational at sites such as Maltings Lane Sports Ground, Haygreen Road.</li> </ul>
<b>3G pitches</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Ensure a sinking fund is in place for long-term sustainability (e.g. at New Rickstones Academy and Witham Sports Ground).</li> <li>◀ Explore potential development of 3G pitches (e.g. at Keith Bigden Recreation Ground (Hatfield Peverel FC) and Witham Town Football Club).</li> </ul>
<b>Rugby union</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Improve quality to reduce overplay and consider installing sports lighting to allow for training demand to be dispersed (e.g. at Witham Rugby Union Football Club).</li> </ul>
<b>Hockey</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision</li> <li>◀ Ensure sinking is in place for long-term sustainability (e.g. at Witham Sports Ground).</li> <li>◀ Upgrade sports lighting to LED at Witham Sports Ground.</li> <li>◀ Improve quality of ancillary facilities at Witham Sports Ground.</li> </ul>
<b>Cricket</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Sustain quality of squares through dedicated maintenance regimes.</li> <li>◀ Reduce overplay at Hatfield Peverel Cricket Club, Kelvedon and Feering Cricket Club, Sauls Bridge Sports Ground and Terling Cricket Club.</li> <li>◀ Improve changing facilities at Hatfield Peverel Cricket Club, Sauls Bridge Sports Ground and Terling Cricket Club</li> </ul>
<b>Tennis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Seek to improve park courts such as Silver End Village Hall.</li> </ul>
<b>Netball</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> </ul>
<b>Bowls</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision and sustain quality to adequately meet demand.</li> </ul>

## BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

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<b>Sport</b>	<b>Headline findings</b>
<b>Golf</b>	◀ Protect provision.
<b>Athletics</b>	◀ Protect provision.
<b>Cycling</b>	◀ Protect provision.
<b>Basketball</b>	◀ Protect provision.
<b>Other grass pitch sports</b>	◀ Protect provision.

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**SOUTH ANALYSIS AREA**

Site ID	Site	Postcode	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
16	Cressing Sports and Social Club	CM77 8JQ	Football	Sports Club	One standard quality adult pitch which is played to capacity at peak time.	Seek to utilise actual spare capacity through the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or via future demand.	Club FA FF	Local	L	S	L	Protect
21	Fairstead Road Recreation Ground	CM3 2BU	Football	Council	One adult and one mini 5v5 pitch assessed as standard quality. The pitches have actual spare capacity.	Seek to utilise actual spare capacity through the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or via future demand.	FA FF	Local	L	S	L	Protect
34	Howbridge Church of England Junior School	CM8 1BZ	Football	Education	One youth 9v9 and one mini 7v7 pitch which are unavailable for community use.	Retain for continued curricular use.	Education FA FF	Local	L	L	L	Protect
36	Keith Bigden Memorial Ground	CM3 2JL	Football	Sports Club	Two adult, one youth 11v11, one youth 9v9, two mini 7v7 and two mini 5v5 pitches assessed as good quality. The adult and mini pitches have actual spare capacity, whilst the youth 11v11 pitch is overplayed. Serviced by good quality ancillary facilities.	Improve pitch quality to reduce overplay. Sustain quality of ancillary facilities.	Club FA FF	Key centre	M	S	M	Protect Provide Enhance
36	Keith Bigden Memorial Ground	CM3 2JL	3G	Sports Club	Potential option to install a 11v11 3G pitch on site.	Explore feasibility of 3G pitch installation given local shortfalls.	Club FA FF	Key centre	M	M	H	Protect Provide Enhance
36	Keith Bigden Memorial Ground	CM3 2JL	Bowls	Sports Club	One good quality bowling green which is unused.	Sustain green quality.	Bowls England	Key centre	L	L	L	Protect
37	Kelvedon and Feering Cricket Club	CO5 9SB	Cricket	Sports Club	Two good quality grass wicket squares which are used by Kelvedon & Feering CC. The squares are overplayed. Serviced by good quality ancillary provision.	Consider the installation of an NTP to eradicate overplay through the transfer of demand away from the grass wickets. Alternatively (or additionally), explore creation of hybrid provision on site. Sustain quality of ancillary facilities.	Club ECB Essex Cricket	Key centre	M	M	H	Protect Enhance
38	Kelvedon Recreation Ground	CO5 9AB	Football	Council	Disused football pitches (last marked xx).	Explore reinstating the grass football pitches, given local shortfalls.	FA FF	Local	L	M	M	Protect Provide
38	Kelvedon Recreation Ground	CO5 9AB	Basketball	Council	One poor quality basketball court which is available for community use.	Improve court quality to better accommodate recreational demand.	Basketball England	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
44	Maltings Academy	CM8 1EP	Football	Education	One youth 11v11 and one mini 5v5 pitch assessed as poor quality which are available for community use. The youth pitch is played to capacity whilst the mini pitch has spare capacity discounted due to poor quality and unsecure tenure.	Improve quality to eradicate overplay and ensure long term security of tenure is provided to users via a community use agreement.	Education FA FF	Local	M	S	M	Protect Enhance
44	Maltings Academy	CM8 1EP	Tennis	Education	Four standard quality macadam courts which are available for community use but not serviced by sports lighting.	Improve quality and explore options of installing sports lighting to increase capacity and attract demand.	Education LTA	Local	L	S	M	Protect Enhance

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Site ID	Site	Postcode	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
44	Maltings Academy	CM8 1EP	Netball	Education	One poor quality macadam court which is available for community use but not serviced by sports lighting.	Improve quality and explore options of installing sports lighting to increase capacity and attract demand.	Education EN	Local	L	S	M	Protect Enhance
45	New Rickstones Academy	CM8 2SD	Football	Education	Three youth 11v11, one youth 9v9 and one mini 7v7 pitches assessed as poor quality which are available for community use. The youth 11v11 pitches are overplayed.	Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay and create actual spare capacity.	Education FA FF	Key centre	M	M	M	Protect Provide
45	New Rickstones Academy	CM8 2SD	3G	Education	One good quality 11v11 3G pitch, which is available for community use, serviced by sports lighting and FA approved. The pitch was installed in 2025.	Sustain quality and ensure sinking funds are in place for long term sustainability and that FA testing takes place every three years.	Education FA FF	Local	M	S	L	Protect
45	New Rickstones Academy	CM8 2SD	Netball	Education	Four poor quality macadam courts which are neither available for community nor serviced by sports lighting.	Improve quality for curricular use and then explore community use options.	Education EN	Local	L	M	M	Protect Enhance
45	New Rickstones Academy	CM8 2SD	Basketball	Education	One poor quality basketball court which is available for community use.	Improve court quality to better accommodate recreational demand.	Education Basketball England	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
49	Oak Farm	CM8 1SF	Football	Sports Club	Two poor quality adult and one standard quality youth 9v9 pitch. The adult pitches are overplayed whilst the youth pitch has actual spare capacity. Serviced by standard quality ancillary facilities.	Improve pitch quality to create actual spare capacity and/or alleviate overplay. Improve quality of ancillary facilities.	Club FA FF	Local	M	S	M	Protect Provide Enhance
49	Oak Farm	CM8 1SF	Hockey	Sports Club	One sand-filled smaller size pitch, which is serviced by sports lighting.	Retain for continued recreational demand.	Club EH	Local	L	L	L	Protect
52	Rickstones Sports Ground	CM8 2LX	Football	Council	Two adult, one youth 9v9, one mini 7v7 and mini 5v5 pitch assessed as standard quality. The adult and youth pitches are overplayed with the remaining pitches played to capacity at peak time. Serviced by standard quality ancillary facilities.	Improve pitch quality and seek transfer play to sites with actual spare capacity in order to alleviate overplay. Improve quality of ancillary facilities.	FA FF	Key centre	M	S	M	Protect Enhance
52	Rickstones Sports Ground	CM8 2LX	Rounders	Council	One rounders diamond.	Sustain quality.	Rounders England	Local	L	L	L	Protect
53	Sauls Bridge Sports Ground	CM8 1FX	Football	Council	One standard quality adult pitch which is played to capacity at peak time.	Seek to utilise actual spare capacity through the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or via future demand.	FA FF	Local	L	S	L	Protect
53	Sauls Bridge Sports Ground	CM8 1FX	Cricket	Council	One standard quality grass wicket square used by Witham CC. The square is overplayed by four match equivalent sessions. Serviced by poor quality ancillary provision.	Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay. Improve quality of ancillary provision.	Essex Cricket ECB	Local	M	S	L	Protect Enhance Provide

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Site ID	Site	Postcode	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
56	Silver End Academy	CM8 3RZ	Football	Education	Two poor quality mini 5v5 pitches which are available for community use. Spare capacity is discounted due to poor quality and unsecure tenure.	Improve pitch quality to create actual spare capacity and seek to establish a community use agreement for club users to provide security of tenure.	Education FA FF	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
56	Silver End Academy	CM8 3RZ	Hockey	Education	One sand-filled smaller size pitch, which is serviced by sports lighting.	Retain for continued curricular use.	Education EH	Local	L	L	L	Protect
57	Silver End Village Hall	CM8 3RQ	Football	Council	One standard quality adult pitch which is played to capacity. Serviced by standard quality ancillary facilities.	Improve pitch quality to create actual spare capacity. Improve quality of ancillary facilities.	FA FF	Local	L	M	M	Protect Enhance
57	Silver End Village Hall	CM8 3RQ	Tennis	Council	Three poor quality macadam courts which are available for community use and not serviced by sports lighting.	Improve court quality to better accommodate demand and explore providing sports lighting to better accommodate recreational demand and to increase capacity.	LTA	Local	M	S	M	Protect Enhance
57	Silver End Village Hall	CM8 3RQ	Bowls	Council	One standard quality bowling green used by Silver End BC.	Improve green quality.	Bowls England	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
57	Silver End Village Hall	CM8 3RQ	Basketball	Council	One poor quality basketball court which is available for community use.	Improve court quality to better accommodate recreational demand.	Basketball England	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
58	Silver Street Field	CM8 3QG	Football	Council	One adult, one youth 9v9, one mini 7v7 and one mini 5v5 pitches assessed as standard quality. The mini 5v5 pitch has actual spare capacity with remaining pitches played to capacity at peak time. Serviced by standard quality ancillary facilities.	Improve pitch quality to create actual spare capacity. Utilise the actual spare capacity through future demand or via the transfer of activity from an overplayed site. Improve quality of ancillary facilities.	FA FF	Local	L	M	M	Protect Enhance
59	Southview School	CM8 2TA	Football	Education	One youth 9v9 pitch which is unavailable for community use.	Retain for continued curricular use.	Education FA FF	Local	L	L	L	Protect
59	Southview School	CM8 2TA	Netball	Education	Two poor quality macadam courts which are neither available for community use nor sports lit.	Improve quality for curricular use and then explore community use options.	Education EN	Key centre	L	M	M	Protect Enhance
65	Terling Cricket Club	CM3 2PN	Cricket	Sports Club	One good quality grass wicket square accessed by Terling CC. The square is overplayed by 19 match equivalent sessions. Serviced by standard quality ancillary facilities.	Consider the installation of an NTP to eradicate overplay through the transfer of demand away from the grass wickets. Alternatively (or additionally), explore creation of hybrid provision on site. Improve quality of ancillary facilities.	Club ECB Essex Cricket	Local	M	M	H	Protect Enhance
73	Witham Oaks Academy	CM8 1NA	Football	Education	One youth 9v9 and one mini 7v7 pitch which are unavailable for community use.	Retain for continued curricular use.	Education FA, FF	Local	L	L	L	Protect

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Site ID	Site	Postcode	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
74	Witham Rugby Union Football Club	CM8 1UN	Rugby union	Sports Club	Two senior and two age grade pitches assessed as standard quality. Only one of the senior pitches is serviced by sports lighting and is overplayed as well as one of the age grade pitches. Serviced by standard quality ancillary facilities.	Improve quality to increase actual spare capacity and consider installing additional sports lighting for training demand to be dispersed equally. Improve quality of ancillary facilities.	Club RFU	Key centre	M	M	M	Protect Provide
75	Witham Sports Ground	CM8 1EP	Football	Council	Three standard quality adult, one poor quality adult and one poor quality youth 9v9 pitch. The standard quality adult pitches have actual spare capacity whilst the youth 9v9 pitch is overplayed. Serviced by standard quality ancillary facilities.	Improve pitch quality to create actual spare capacity and/or alleviate overplay. Improve quality of ancillary facilities.	FA FF	Hub site	M	M	M	Protect Enhance
75	Witham Sports Ground	CM8 1EP	3G	Council	One good quality 11v11 3G pitch, which is available for community use, serviced by sports lighting and FA approved. The pitch was installed in 2025.	Sustain quality and ensure sinking funds are in place for long term sustainability and that FA testing takes place every three years.	FA FF	Hub site	H	S	L	Protect
75	Witham Sports Ground	CM8 1EP	Hockey	Council	One full size sand-based pitch which is available for community use and serviced by sports lighting. Used by Witham HC for match play and training activity and assessed as good quality having been last resurfaced in 2021. Serviced by standard quality ancillary facilities.	Resurface pitch for hockey usage and ensure a sinking fund is in place for long-term sustainability. Upgrade lighting to LED. Improve quality of ancillary facilities to make it suitable for women's and girls' access.	EH	Hub site	H	S	M	Protect Enhance
75	Witham Sports Ground	CM8 1EP	Netball	Council	Two standard quality macadam courts which are available for community use and serviced by sports lighting.	Improve court quality to better accommodate recreational demand.	EN	Hub site	M	S	M	Protect Enhance
76	Witham Town Football Club	CM8 1UN	Football	Sports Club	One adult, one youth 9v9, one mini 7v7 and one mini 5v5 pitch. All are assessed as standard quality with the exception of the adult pitch which is good quality. All pitches with the exception of mini 5v5 pitch are overplayed. Serviced by standard quality ancillary provision.	Improve pitch quality to create actual spare capacity and/or alleviate overplay. Improve quality of ancillary facilities.	Club FA FF	Key centre	H	M	M	Protect Enhance
76	Witham Town Football Club	CM8 1UN	3G	Sports Club	Potential option to install a 11v11 3G pitch on site.	Explore feasibility of 3G pitch installation given local shortfalls.	Club FA FF	Key centre	M	M	H	Protect Provide Enhance
81	Strutt Memorial Ground	CM3 2LS	Football (disused)	Council	Open space site, which was previously marked out for two adult pitches (circa 2012).	Consider bringing adult pitches back into use given local shortfalls.	FA FF	Local	M	S	M	Protect Provide
81	Strutt Memorial Ground	CM3 2LS	Tennis	Council	Two good quality macadam courts which are available for community use and serviced by sports lighting.	Sustain court quality.	LTA	Local	L	L	L	Protect

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Site ID	Site	Postcode	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
81	Strutt Memorial Ground	CM3 2LS	Basketball	Council	One poor quality basketball court which is available for community use.	Improve court quality to better accommodate recreational demand.	Basketball England	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
82	The Albert Moss Playing Field	CM8 3PH	Basketball	Council	One poor quality basketball court which is available for community use.	Improve court quality to better accommodate recreational demand.	Basketball England	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
83	Powers Hall Academy	CM8 1NA	Football	Education	One youth 9v9 pitch which is unavailable for community use.	Retain for continued curricular use.	Education FA, FF	Local	L	L	L	Protect
85	Holy Family Catholic Primary School	CM8 1DX	Football	Education	Two mini 7v7 pitches which are unavailable for community use.	Retain for continued curricular use.	Education FA, FF	Local	L	L	L	Protect
90	Prested Hall Hotel and Sports Club	CO5 9EE	Tennis	Commercial	Two good quality macadam courts which are not available for community use but serviced by sports lighting.	Sustain quality.	LTA	Local	L	L	L	Protect
96	Witham Bowls Club	CM8 2DZ	Bowls	Sports Club	One good quality bowling green used by Witham BC.	Sustain green quality.	Bowls England	Local	L	L	L	Protect
97	Hatfield Peverel Cricket Club	CM3 2LB	Cricket	Sports Club	One good quality grass wicket square used by Hatfield Peverel CC. The square is overplayed by nine match equivalent sessions. Serviced by standard quality ancillary provision. The Club would like to install an NTP and practice nets.	Consider the installation of an NTP to eradicate overplay through the transfer of demand away from the grass wickets. Alternatively (or additionally), explore creation of hybrid provision on site. Improve quality of ancillary facilities. Support aspirations to install an NTP and practice nets.	Club ECB Essex Cricket	Local	M	M	H	Protect Enhance
101	Witham Cricket Club	CM8 1HN	Cricket	Sports Club	One good quality grass wicket square accompanied by an NTP, used by Witham CC. The square has 69 match equivalent sessions of actual spare capacity. Serviced by standard quality ancillary facilities.	Sustain quality of the square and seek to utilise actual spare capacity through the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or via future demand. Improve quality of ancillary facilities.	Club Essex Cricket ECB	Local	L	M	L	Protect Enhance
108	Benton Hall Golf & Country Club	CM8 3LH	Golf	Private	One standard 18-hole course.	Retain course and ensure quality is maintained appropriately.	England Golf	Local	L	L	L	Protect
109	Rivenhall Oaks Golf Centre	CM8 2FX	Golf	Private	One standard 9-hole course.	Retain course and ensure quality is maintained appropriately.	England Golf	Local	L	L	L	Protect
110	The Notleys Golf Club	CM8 1ST	Golf	Private	One standard 18-hole course.	Retain course and ensure quality is maintained appropriately.	England Golf	Local	L	L	L	Protect
112	Witham Mill Lane Bowls Club	CM8 1BW	Bowls	Sports Club	One standard quality bowling green used by Witham Mill Lane BC.	Improve green quality.	Club Bowls England	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
-	Maltings Lane, Haygreen Road	CM8 1GR	Football	Council	Planned housing development is set to provide one adult and two mini 7v7 pitches.	Progress site development relative to on-going work with partners.	Sport England NGBs	Key centre	M	M	H	Provide

**PART 7: HOUSING GROWTH SCENARIOS**

The PPOSS provides an estimate of demand for pitch sport based on population forecasts and club consultation to 2041 (in line with the emerging Local Plan), with this future demand then translated into teams likely to be generated. Sport England’s Playing Pitch Calculator adds to this, updating the likely demand generated for pitch sports based on housing increases before converting the demand into match equivalent sessions and the number of pitches that may be required to meet the growth. It also gives the associated costs of supplying the increased pitch provision and splits the total pitch requirement into natural turf pitches to meet peak period demand, artificial grass pitches to meet training demand, and the additional number of changing rooms required.

Similarly, the Sports Facilities Calculator identifies the potential need for tennis courts from the population growth associated to housing developments.

For the playing pitch sports, the demand is shown in match equivalent sessions per week for most sports, except for cricket, where match equivalent sessions are by season. Training demand is expressed in either hours or match equivalent sessions; where expressed in hours, it is expected that demand will use either a 3G pitch (football demand) or an AGP (hockey demand). Where expressed in match equivalent sessions, it is expected training will take place on sports-lit grass pitches (i.e., for rugby union).

The indicative figures are based on the assumption that population growth will average 2.4 per dwelling. This is based on the national average.

Braintree District’s Local Plan will make allocations for housing growth, and its policies will also be used to determine proposals for any housing proposals over the plan period. To therefore understand how the PPOSS can be used alongside the Playing Pitch Calculator, this section is provided as a guide to show the additional demand for pitch sports and tennis that could be generated from housing growth in Braintree District, thus showing how the calculators work and what they can provide. Please note that the scenarios can be updated as required over the Local Plan period and throughout the lifespan of the PPOSS to reflect population projections, team generation rates and change in the average household size.

**Scenario 1: Likely demand generated for pitch sports from housing growth requirement over the Local Plan period (2041)**

The current housing growth requirement in Braintree District across the Local Plan period to 2033 is for 18,959 new dwellings. This equates to a population growth of 45,501. The table below identifies what this equates to in terms of pitch demand.

Table 7.1: Likely demand for grass pitch sports from 18,959 dwellings

Pitch sport	Match demand per week <sup>11</sup>	Training demand <sup>12</sup>
Adult football	9.75	96.95 hours
Youth football	25.73	As above
Mini soccer	13	As above
Rugby union	3.69	4.14 match equivalent sessions
Rugby league	0.00	0.00 match equivalent sessions

<sup>11</sup> As per the PPS Guidance, demand for cricket is considered in terms of match equivalent sessions per season rather than per week.

<sup>12</sup> Hours equate to access to a full size sports lit 3G pitch or hockey suitable AGP.

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Pitch sport	Match demand per week <sup>11</sup>	Training demand <sup>12</sup>
Adult hockey	2.81	8.42 hours
Junior & mixed hockey	1.48	1.87 hours
Cricket	238.1	-

This population increase equates to 52.17 match equivalent sessions of demand per week for grass pitch sports, 4.29 match equivalent sessions on a hockey suitable AGP's and 238.1 match equivalent sessions of demand per season for cricket. Training demand equates to 96.95 hours of use per week for football on 3G pitches, and accumulative 4.14 match equivalent sessions on a sports lit grass pitch for the rugby union and 10.29 hours on a hockey suitable AGP.

The table below translates estimated demand into new pitch provision with associated capital and lifestyle costs.

Table 7.2: Estimated demand and costs for new pitch provision

Pitch type	Number of pitches to meet demand <sup>13</sup>	Capital cost <sup>14</sup>	Lifecycle Cost (per annum) <sup>15</sup>	Number of changing rooms	Capital cost
Adult football	9.75	£1,093,698	£215,459	19.5	£4,026,798
Youth football	25.73	£2,493,189	£503,624	34.3	£7,085,623
Mini soccer	13.00	£397,746	£78,754	0.00	£0
Rugby union	3.69	£640,328	£118,461	7.39	£1,525,487
Rugby league	0.00	£0	£0	0.00	£0
Cricket	5.41	£1,959,763	£360,596	10.82	£2,235,786
Sand based AGPs	0.7	£697,521	£18,136	1.40	£289,740
3G	2.55	£3,057,782	£89,935	5.10	£1,053,959
Tennis courts	5.83 courts	£661,554	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>60.83 and 5.83 tennis courts</b>	<b>£11,001,580</b>	<b>£1,384,964</b>	<b>78.52</b>	<b>£16,217,391</b>

Overall, an additional 60.83 pitches would be required to meet additional demand arising from an additional 45,501 people living in the Braintree District. This consist of 57.58 grass pitches, 3.25 of access to artificial pitches and 5.83 outdoor tennis courts. This would require an expected capital cost of £11,001,580 and a lifecycle cost per annum of £1,384,964. To facilitate the increased provision, 78.52 changing rooms would need to be provided at a capital cost of £16,217,391.

### Scenario 2– Testing the model for the Halstead housing development proposing 2,850 dwellings in the Rural North Analysis Area (6,840 population increase)

The estimated additional population derived from housing growth from 2,850 dwellings with an occupancy rate of 2.4 people per household (based on a national average) is 6,840 people. The table below identifies what this equates to in terms of pitch demand.

<sup>13</sup> Please note the number of pitches have been rounded to the nearest whole number

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.sportengland.org/guidance-and-support/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance>

<sup>15</sup> Lifecycle costs are based on the % of the total project cost per annum as set out in Sport England's Life Cycle Costs Natural Turf Pitches and Artificial Surfaces documents (2012)

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This population increase equates to 7.85 match equivalent sessions of demand per week for grass pitch sports, 0.64 match equivalent sessions on a hockey suitable AGP's and 35.79 match equivalent sessions of demand per season for cricket. Training demand equates to 14.57 hours of use per week for football on 3G pitches, and accumulative 0.62 match equivalent sessions on a sports lit grass pitch for rugby union and 1.55 hours on a hockey suitable AGP.

Table 7.3: Likely demand for grass pitch sports generated from an additional 6,840 people

Pitch sport	Match demand per week <sup>16</sup>	Training demand <sup>17</sup>
Adult football	1.47	14.57 hours
Youth football	3.87	As above
Mini soccer	1.95	As above
Rugby union	0.56	0.62 match equivalent sessions
Rugby league	0.00	0.00 match equivalent sessions
Adult hockey	0.42	1.27 hours
Junior & mixed hockey	0.22	0.28 hours
Cricket	35.79	-

To quantify this, the table below translates estimated demand into new pitch provision with associated capital and lifestyle costs.

Table 7.4: Estimated demand and costs for new pitch provision

Pitch type	Number of pitches to meet demand	Capital cost <sup>18</sup>	Lifecycle Cost (per annum) <sup>19</sup>	Number of changing rooms	Capital cost
Adult football	1.47	£164,413	£32,389	2.93	£605,340
Youth football	3.87	£374,790	£75,708	5.16	£1,065,115
Mini soccer	1.95	£59,791	£11,839	0	£0
Rugby union	0.56	£96,258	£17,808	1.11	£229,320
Rugby league	0.00	£0	£0	0	£0
Cricket	0.81	£294,606	£54,208	1.63	£336,100
Sand based AGPs	0.11	£104,857	£2,726	0.21	£43,556
3G	0.38	£459,663	£13,519	0.77	£158,437
Tennis Courts	0.88 courts	£99,449	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>9.14 and 0.88 tennis courts</b>	<b>£1,653,826</b>	<b>£208,196</b>	<b>11.8</b>	<b>£2,437,867</b>

Overall, an additional 9.14 pitches would be required to meet additional demand arising from an additional 6,840 people living in the Braintree District. This consist of 8.66 grass pitches, 0.49 of access to artificial pitches and 0.88 outdoor tennis courts. This would require an expected capital cost of £1,653,826 and a lifecycle cost per annum of £208,196. To facilitate the increased provision, 11.8 changing rooms would need to be provided at a capital cost of £2,437,867.

<sup>16</sup> As per the PPS Guidance, demand for cricket is considered in terms of match equivalent sessions per season rather than per week.

<sup>17</sup> Hours equate to access to an 11v11 sports lit 3G pitch or hockey suitable AGP

<sup>18</sup> [Link to Sport England cost guidance](#)

<sup>19</sup> Lifecycle costs are based on the % of the total project cost per annum as set out in Sport England's Life Cycle Costs Natural Turf Pitches and Artificial Surfaces documents (2012)

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### Scenario 3 – Testing the model for a housing development (Kings Dene) proposing approximately 5,000 dwellings in the South Analysis Area (12,000 population increase)

The estimated additional population derived from housing growth from 5,000 dwellings with an occupancy rate of 2.4 people per household (based on a national average) is 12,000 people. The table below identifies what this equates to in terms of pitch demand.

This population increase equates to 13.76 match equivalent sessions of demand per week for grass pitch sports, 0.86 match equivalent sessions on a hockey suitable AGP's and 62.8 match equivalent sessions of demand per season for cricket. Training demand equates to 25.57 hours of use per week for football on 3G pitches, and accumulative 1.09 match equivalent sessions on a sports lit grass pitch for rugby union and 2.71 hours on a hockey suitable AGP.

Table 7.5: Likely demand for grass pitch sports generated from an additional 9,418 people

Pitch sport	Match demand per week <sup>20</sup>	Training demand <sup>21</sup>
Adult football	2.57	25.57 hours
Youth football	6.79	As above
Mini soccer	3.43	As above
Rugby union	0.97	1.09 match equivalent sessions
Rugby league	0.00	0.00 match equivalent sessions
Adult hockey	0.74	2.22 hours
Junior & mixed hockey	0.39	0.49 hours
Cricket	62.8	-

To quantify this, the table below translates estimated demand into new pitch provision with associated capital and lifestyle costs.

Table 7.6: Estimated demand and costs for new pitch provision

Pitch type	Number of pitches to meet demand	Capital cost <sup>22</sup>	Lifecycle Cost (per annum) <sup>23</sup>	Number of changing rooms	Capital cost
Adult football	2.57	£288,443	£56,823	5.14	£1,061,994
Youth football	6.79	£657,512	£132,818	9.05	£1,868,631
Mini soccer	3.43	£104,897	£20,770	0	£0
Rugby union	0.97	£168,873	£31,241	1.95	£402,315
Rugby league	0.00	£0	£0	0	£0
Cricket	1.43	£516,848	£95,100	2.85	£589,643
Sand based AGPs	0.18	£183,958	£4,783	0.37	£76,413
3G	0.67	£806,418	£23,718	1.35	£277,957
Tennis Courts	1.54 courts	£174,472	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>16.04 and 1.54 tennis courts</b>	<b>£2,901,420</b>	<b>£365,253</b>	<b>20.71</b>	<b>£4,276,952</b>

<sup>20</sup> As per the PPS Guidance, demand for cricket is considered in terms of match equivalent sessions per season rather than per week.

<sup>21</sup> Hours equate to access to an 11v11 sports lit 3G pitch or hockey suitable AGP

<sup>22</sup> [Link to Sport England cost guidance](#)

<sup>23</sup> Lifecycle costs are based on the % of the total project cost per annum as set out in Sport England's Life Cycle Costs Natural Turf Pitches and Artificial Surfaces documents (2012)

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Overall, an additional 16.04 pitches would be required to meet additional demand arising from an additional 12,000 people living in the Braintree District. This consists of 15.19 grass pitches, 0.86 of access to artificial pitches and 1.54 outdoor tennis courts. This would require an expected capital cost of £2,901,420 and a lifecycle cost per annum of £365,253. To facilitate the increased provision, 20.71 changing rooms would need to be provided at a capital cost of £4,276,952.

### The most appropriate way to meet the estimated demand

It is important that the above results are looked at alongside the findings of the Assessment Report, and the recommendations and actions of the Strategy. By doing so, the most appropriate way of meeting the estimated needs can be determined and any resulting proposals justified. This should include:

- ◀ Using the Assessment Report and related Strategy to understand the nature of the playing pitch sites within an appropriate catchment of the new population along with issues, recommendations and actions relevant to that area.
- ◀ Looking at the different ways in which the needs could be met, including for example:
  - ◀ Enhancing existing provision to increase capacity, supported by suitable management and maintenance arrangements to ensure the greater capacity is maintained over the longer term;
  - ◀ Undertaking works, and ensuring long term maintenance and access arrangements, to secure new or greater community use of existing provision;
  - ◀ Providing new pitches as an extension on current sites.
  - ◀ Providing new (natural and/or artificial grass pitches).

If the decision is taken to provide new pitches, then the calculator takes the estimated needs for matches and training activity and converts this into an estimate of the likely pitch provision required to meet the needs of population projections. Indicative costs are also provided to provide this level of pitch provision in addition to costing for associated changing room provision.

### Summary

The above scenarios identify that through overall housing growth across the Local Plan period; demand will be generated to some extent for all pitch sports. Whilst initially the figures seem substantial, it must be noted that they are based upon the whole of the Braintree District and account for the entire period of the local plan development. In reality, the requirements will be staggered, with existing provision able to meet some of the needs when developments are considered on a case-by-case basis. This would be achieved through contributions being directed towards improvements rather than new provision.

Experience shows that only significantly large housing sites are likely to generate demand for new provision to be created. Where this is the case, consideration should be given to providing multi-pitch sites with suitable ancillary provision, including appropriate clubhouse/changing facilities and car parking. Single pitch sites which have been provided traditionally by developers are not considered to provide long term sustainable provision for the relevant sports.

If any schools or leisure facilities are to be built within the housing developments identified above, these could include the creation of collective 11v11 size sports lit 3G pitch in addition to any tennis/netball courts (as long as they are sports lit) to ensure greater utilisation.

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Relevant accessible and security of tenure through CUAs would also need to be factored into any such development.

It should be noted that there is potential to locate any mini football demand onto a 3G pitch. Any monies dedicated to mini grass football pitches could therefore go towards the development of 3G provision in order to save on land. This approach would require a FA certified pitch in addition to agreement with relevant stakeholders (FF and Essex FA).

Where demand does not warrant new pitch provision, the Action Plan in this document should be consulted to determine whether the additional demand can be accommodated via existing provision (in which case no further action is required). This would only be the case if nearby sites have sufficient actual spare capacity for the relevant sports, which could be established, as an example, through creating a bespoke catchment area for the development and reviewing the provision that falls within this.

An alternative approach to obtaining contributions for each individual housing development and allocating them to improving localised sporting sites identified for improvement within the PPOSS, is to pool them together. This would allow for greater levels of investment into sites, where needed, for more expensive enhancements such drainage or ancillary expansions or even the creation of artificial pitches. Additionally, this would allow for the collating of contributions from smaller developments, below 300 dwellings, to maximise the benefit they can provide to sporting sites across the Braintree District.

The pooling of contributions could lead to the greater enhancement of provision at strategically important sites across the District, such as:

- ◀ Braintree Sport & Health Club (Central Analysis Area).
- ◀ Courtauld Sports Ground (Rural North Analysis Area).
- ◀ Witham Sports Ground (South Analysis Area).

Pooling of contributions should be done strategically and ought to be localised to the analysis area, and even potentially key settlements, of the housing growth to ensure S106 monies are spent on improving the sporting infrastructure for the new population.

It is strongly recommended the Council work with Sport England, and NGBs where relevant, to develop a process and guidance to calculate and secure developer contributions which may include onsite, offsite and pooling of contributions.

It should be noted that the relevant NGBs should be included within any discussions to ensure their overall strategic recommendations for the Braintree District are considered. Additionally, the above scenarios are only to provide a broad indication of what sporting provision, at this current stage, is required for the projected population increase. The PPC will need to be used at various stages of any development to provide up to date analysis moving forward on what is required for a sporting perspective.

Please note that the PPC only includes the main pitch sports and tennis but there may also be a requirement to improve facilities for other pitch and non-pitch sports such as bowls , netball and athletics, for example. Therefore, securing developer contributions to deliver improvements/new provision should be guided by this Strategy and in particular the site-by-site Action Plan and in consultation with the relevant NGB through the PPOSS Steering Group.

### **PART 8: DELIVER THE STRATEGY AND KEEP IT ROBUST AND UP TO DATE**

The section below is a generalised approach on how to deliver a PPOSS whilst also keeping it robust and up-to-date. However, a more tailored approach should also be considered and designed for Braintree District based on the requirements and priorities of the Steering Group.

#### Delivery

The PPOSS seeks to provide guidance for maintenance/management decisions and investment made across Braintree District. By addressing the issues identified in the Assessment Report and using the strategic framework presented in this Strategy, the current and future sporting and recreational needs of the District can be satisfied. The Strategy identifies where there is a deficiency in provision and recommends how best to resolve this in the future.

It is important that this document is used in a practical manner, is used to engage with partners and encourages partnerships to be developed, to ensure that outdoor sports facilities are regarded as a vital aspect of community life and which contribute to the achievement of Council priorities.

The creation of this document should be regarded as part of the planning process. The success of this Strategy and the benefits that are gained are dependent upon regular engagement between all partners involved and the adoption of a strategic approach. Each member of the steering group should take the lead to ensure the PPOSS is used and applied appropriately within their area of work and influence.

To help ensure the PPOSS is well used, it should be regarded as the key document within the study area guiding the improvement and protection of playing pitch and outdoor sport provision. It needs to be the document people regularly turn to for information on the how the current demand is met and what actions are needed to improve the situation and meet future demand. For this to be achieved, the Steering Group needs to have a clear understanding of how the PPOSS can be applied and therefore delivered.

The process of completing the PPOSS will hopefully have already resulted in a number of benefits that will help with its application and delivery. These may include enhanced partnership working across different agendas and organisations, pooling of resources along with strengthening relationships and understanding between different stakeholders and between members of the steering group and the sporting community. The drivers behind the PPOSS and the work to develop the recommendations and action plan will have also highlighted, and helped the steering group to understand, the key areas to which it can be applied and how it can be delivered.

#### Monitoring and updating

It is important that there is regular monitoring and review against the actions identified in the Strategy. This monitoring should continue be led by the local authority and supported by all members of, and reported back to, the Steering Group. Understanding and learning lessons from how the PPOSS has been applied should also form a key component of monitoring its delivery. It is possible that in the interim between reviews the Steering Group could also operate as a 'virtual' group; prepared to comment on suggestions and updates electronically when relevant.

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It is agreed that the Local Authority (potentially via consultants e.g., KKP) is responsible for keeping the database and background supply and demand information up-to-date in order that area-by-area action plans can be updated. This should be carried out in consultation with the NGBs, particularly around affiliation time when information is updated.

As a guide, if no review and subsequent update has been carried out within three years of the PPOSS being signed off by the steering group, then Sport England and the NGBs would consider it and the information on which it is based to be out of date. The nature of the supply and in particular the demand for provision is likely to change year-on-year, meaning that without any form of review and update it would be difficult to make the case that the supply and demand information and assessment work is sufficiently robust.

An annual review should not be regarded as a particularly resource intensive task. However, it should highlight:

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

Alongside regular steering group meetings a good way to keep the strategy up-to-date and maintain relationships is to hold sport specific meetings with the NGBs and other relevant parties. These meetings look to update the key supply and demand information, if necessary amend the assessment work, track progress with implementing the recommendations and action plan and highlight any new issues and opportunities.

These meetings could be timed to fit with the annual affiliation process undertaken by the NGBs which would help to capture any changes in the number and nature of sports clubs in the area. Other information that is already collected on a regular basis such as pitch booking records for local authority and other sites could be fed into these meetings.

The NGBs are also able to indicate any further performance quality assessments that have been undertaken within the study area.

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

## Checklists

In order for this Strategy to be signed off by the steering group, a Stage D Checklist: Develop the Strategy, is signed off.

Stage D Checklist: Develop the Strategy	Tick ✓	
	Yes	Requires Attention
<b>Step 7: Develop the recommendations and action plan</b>	✓	
1. Have a number of study area specific scenarios been looked at to help explore key issues and findings along with possible recommendations and actions?	✓	
2. Have any recommendations and actions regarding AGP provision taken into account the guidance in the 'Selecting the Right Artificial Surface' document and any NGB specific information?	✓	
3. Do the recommendations reflect the drivers, vision and objectives of the work?	✓	
4. Are the recommendations precise enough to enable the development of clear individual area, sport and site specific actions to help achieve them?	✓	
5. Have all relevant parties been engaged with the development of, and are signed up to the delivery of, the recommendations and actions?	✓	
6. Are the recommendations and actions clearly presented?	✓	
7. Has particular attention been paid to the situation at priority sites and those which are being significantly overplayed?	✓	
8. Have area, sport and site specific solutions been proposed to protect, enhance, and provide playing pitch provision to meet the current and future demand?	✓	
9. Has guidance on the future of any sites highlighted as being at risk been provided?	✓	
10. Do the recommendations and actions seek to make the best use of existing pitches?	✓	
11. Has the detriment and benefit of proposals to relocate provision been presented?	✓	
12. Has the level and type of any new playing pitch provision required been presented?	✓	
13. Has the importance of providing appropriate and fit for purpose ancillary facilities been highlighted in order to maximise the potential benefit to sport of any pitches?	✓	
14. Have the recommendations sought to ensure an adequate amount of spare capacity in the provision of accessible pitches with secured community use?	✓	
15. Does the PPS provide a steer as to the future of any spare capacity and any provision that may be genuinely surplus to requirements (paragraphs D12 to D15)?	✓	
16. Does the action plan cover the points listed in paragraph D17?	✓	
17. Does the action plan provide the most appropriate actions to improve provision in the study area rather than just those which the local authority can deliver?	✓	
18. Does the action plan represent an infrastructure plan for playing pitches with deliverable area, sport and site specific actions and projects?	✓	
<b>Step 8: Write and Adopt the Strategy</b>	✓	
1. Does the PPS document provide the reader with a clear understanding of the areas listed in paragraph D20?	✓	

## BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

2.	Is it clear from the PPS document why the recommendations and actions have been included, how they are to be delivered and what they will achieve?	✓	
3.	Does the PPS document indicate how it should be used and applied in different areas and circumstances along with the benefits of doing so?	✓	
4.	Has the PPS document been subject to appropriate consultation?	✓	
5.	Do all members of the steering group and other relevant parties endorse the PPS and recognise its lead role in guiding the improvement of pitches in the study area?	✓	
6.	Has the PPS document been formally adopted by the local authority and is its status recognised across all relevant departments?	✓	

To help ensure the PPS is delivered and is kept robust and up-to-date, the steering group can refer to the new methodology Stage E Checklist: Deliver the strategy and keep it robust and up-to-date:

<b>Stage E: Deliver the strategy and keep it robust and up-to-date</b>	Tick ✓	
	Yes	Requires Attention
<b>Step 9: Apply and deliver the strategy</b>		
1. Are steering group members clear on how the PPS can be applied across a range of relevant areas?		
2. Is each member of the steering group committed to taking the lead to help ensure the PPS is used and applied appropriately within their area of work and influence?		
3. Has a process been put in place to ensure regular monitoring of how the recommendations and action plan are being delivered and the PPS is being applied?		
<b>Step 10: Keep the strategy robust and up-to-date</b>		
1. Has a process been put in place to ensure the PPS is kept robust and up-to-date?		
2. Does the process involve an annual update of the PPS?		
3. Is the steering group to be maintained and is it clear of its on-going role?		
4. Is regular liaison with the NGBs and other parties planned?		
5. Has all the supply and demand information been collated and presented in a format (i.e. single document that can be filtered accordingly) that will help people to review it and highlight any changes?		
6. Have any changes made to the Active Places Power data been fed back to Sport England?		