



WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATED ASSESSMENT REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2019

QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

Knight, Kavanagh & Page Ltd

Company No: 9145032 (England)

MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

Registered Office: 1 -2 Frecheville Court, off Knowsley Street, Bury BL9 0UF

T: 0161 764 7040 E: mail@kcp.co.uk www.kcp.co.uk



6543 026

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

CONTENTS

PART 1: INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY.....	1
PART 2: FOOTBALL	13
PART 3: THIRD GENERATION ARTIFICIAL GRASS PITCHES (3G PITCHES).....	42
PART 4: HOCKEY	53
PART 5: RUGBY LEAGUE.....	64
PART 6: RUGBY UNION.....	84
PART 7: CRICKET	99
APPENDIX ONE: SPORTING CONTEXT.....	114

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

PART 1: INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

This is an update to the Warrington Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) Assessment Report (completed in December 2018) and has been prepared by Knight Kavanagh & Page (KKP). It was originally prepared by LiveWire Warrington CIC for Warrington Borough Council (WBC) and its partners.

The 2018 Warrington PPS was formally adopted by the Council in June 2019. However, the original supply and demand data was predominately collated in 2016 and as such it was recognised that there was a need to refresh the Study in 2019. One of the key drivers for the update has been to have an added focus on disability and women/girls playing pitch sports to reflect the increase in demand in participation since the previous PPS. Further, a Local Football Facility Plan has also been prepared for the Borough which seeks to identify potential opportunities for new and improved football provision.

This report presents a supply and demand assessment of playing pitch facilities in accordance with Sport England's 'Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance: An approach to developing and delivering a playing pitch strategy'. It has been followed to develop a clear picture of the balance between the local supply of, and demand for, playing pitches and other outdoor sports facilities.

It will support the development of a new playing pitch strategy for Warrington. The key drivers for a strategy as set out by Sport England include:

- ◀ To support the improving health and well-being and increasing participation in sport.
- ◀ Sports development programmes and changes in how the sports are played.
- ◀ The need to provide evidence to help protect and enhance existing provision.
- ◀ The need to inform the development and implementation of planning policy.
- ◀ The need to inform the assessment of planning applications.
- ◀ Potential changes to the supply of provision due to capital programmes e.g. for educational sites.
- ◀ To review budgetary pressures and ensure the most efficient management and maintenance of playing pitch provision.
- ◀ To develop a priority list of deliverable projects which will help to meet any current deficiencies provide for future demands and feed into wider infrastructure planning work.
- ◀ To prioritise internal capital and revenue investment.
- ◀ To provide evidence to help secure internal and external funding.

The Sport England guidance details a stepped approach to developing a Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS). These steps are separated into five distinct sections:

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

Stages A to C are covered in this report.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Stage A: Prepare and tailor the approach

The Borough of Warrington is bordered by Halton, Cheshire West and Chester, and Cheshire East boroughs in the County of Cheshire and by the metropolitan boroughs of Trafford, Salford and Wigan in Greater Manchester and St. Helens in Merseyside. It serves a population of over 200,000 people.

Warrington is made up of a wide range of sports facilities that are well used and highly valued by the resident population. These sport facilities complement the overall stock of open spaces across the Borough.

The primary purpose of the Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) is to provide a strategic framework which ensures that the provision of outdoor playing pitches meet the local needs of existing and future residents within the Warrington area. The PPS will be produced in accordance with national planning guidance and provide robust and objective justification for future playing pitch provision throughout Warrington.

One of the core planning principles of the NPPF is to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs.

Section 8 of the NPPF deals specifically with the topic of healthy communities; Paragraph 96 discusses the importance of access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation that can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.

Paragraphs 97 and 98 discuss assessments and the protection of “existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields”. A PPS will provide the evidence required to help protect playing fields to ensure sufficient land is available to meet existing and projected future pitch requirements.

Paragraphs 99 and 100 promote the identification of important green spaces by local communities and the protection of these facilities. Such spaces may include playing fields.

Local context

The Local Plan

The Proposed Submission Version Local Plan will set out the legal planning framework for Warrington’s development for the next 20 years. This covers housing, business space, transport infrastructure and community facilities like schools and GPs.

In 2017, the Council undertook a consultation around our Preferred Development Option (PDO) which looked at Warrington’s development needs for the future. This fed into preparing the Draft Local Plan.

The Local Plan sets out a vision for the Borough’s future, which determines what will be built, where and when but also sets out what areas need to be protected from development. It aims to deliver 18,900 new homes (or 945 a year, up to 2037) and will also support Warrington’s ongoing economic growth by providing 362 hectares of employment land.

The Plan sets out and prioritises using urban capacity to create varied, vibrant neighbourhoods that are shared places to live, work and enjoy. Government guidelines determine the need to build at least 18,900 homes over the course of the plan, which exceeds

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

the urban land available. Therefore, there is a need to consider other areas of land to develop on, including Green Belt, in order to meet our development obligations.

The projected housing figures aim to match Warrington's expected growth and ensure enough homes are provided to support the number of jobs that will be created from Warrington's future economic growth. The areas of Green Belt proposed for development would need to be released to meet Government figures and while our priority is to protect as much Green Belt as possible.

Therefore, WBC needs to keep its PPS up to date in order to comply with the guidance from Sport England and take account of the higher level of growth now envisaged. The revised PPS will continue to provide a robust evidence base to inform statutory land use planning decisions and funding bids, which will involve the following:

- ◀ To provide updated information on Warrington's existing and future needs for playing pitches and its current ability to meet those needs in terms of quality, quantity and location.
- ◀ To provide evidence to inform wider Green Infrastructure Planning across the Borough.
- ◀ To review any surpluses or shortfalls in playing pitches to enable the Council to set priorities and review recommended standards for provision, to be incorporated within and used in the implementation of planning policy.
- ◀ To provide background evidence to support Local Plan policies to meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- ◀ To review the information to enable the Council to justify collecting developer contributions and inform the Council on the distribution of developer contributions to sports and open space in line with Section 106 regulations.

Warrington Borough Council Corporate Strategy 2018-2020

The Corporate Strategy describes both the Council's long term vision for Warrington and its priorities for the next two years which will help deliver this vision. In a period where the Council will continue to face significant cuts from central government, it has an ambition to become financially sustainable through longer term planning.

The Strategy vision is: *'We will work together with our residents, businesses and partners to create a place that works for all.'*

Through the strategy the Council makes four pledges and priorities to its residents that will be used as a basis for making future decisions:

1. Opportunities for the most vulnerable
2. Grow a strong economy for all
3. Build strong, active and resilient communities
4. Create a place to be proud of

The strategy identifies a number of priorities for each of the four pledges. The most relevant pledge is the 'Build strong, active and resilient communities'. The relevant priorities outlined are:

- ◀ Support our residents to be healthy taking responsibility for their lifestyle, health and wellbeing
- ◀ Raise young people's aspirations and enhance prospects (which specifically includes Development of the Youth Zone)

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Well Warrington: Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Warrington 2019 – 2023

The Warrington Health and Wellbeing Strategy identifies the priority areas where resources and services should be targeted in order to promote, maintain and increase the overall health and wellbeing of people, communities and the borough as a whole during the next three years and into the future.

It sets out a vision for the Borough and identifies challenges, opportunities and priorities to be addressed by partners and outlines the outcomes for the strategy. The vision for the Health and Wellbeing Strategy is '*Warrington is a place where we work together to create a borough with stronger neighbourhoods, healthier people and greater equality across all our communities.*'

The strategy identifies core ambitions that will help clearly focus how partners will work together to shape an approach to transforming health and wellbeing in the Borough. The four ambitions are:

1. People will live in healthy, safe and sustainable communities.
2. People will have the skills and resources needed to improve their life chances.
3. People will value being and feeling well and will live active, independent and fulfilled lives.
4. People's quality of life will be improved by the ability to access appropriate, quality care when and where they need it.

Active Warrington Strategy 2017 – 2020

The Active Warrington strategy core outcome is that in Warrington more people, move more, more often! The strategy has a number of supporting strategic aims as outlined below:

- ◀ People are proud to be part of an active town;
- ◀ Everyone understands the full benefits of physical activity;
- ◀ Without discrimination, everyone has the opportunity to try out and participation in a broad range of sports and physical activities;
- ◀ Those who are currently inactive are specifically supported with initiatives that encourages them to move more, in ways that suit them;
- ◀ There continue to be sporting opportunities for people of all levels;
- ◀ Inactivity is recognised by local policy makes and practitioners as a major cause of poor health and disabilities.

The Active Warrington strategy has a steering group which drives the strategy. Beneath the strategy is a delivery framework which includes six work streams:

1. Leisure industry, sport clubs and facilities
2. Children, young people and families
3. Third sector, community assets and small funding pots
4. Targeted input to health improvement and clinical programmes
5. Businesses, active workforce and mass participation
6. Communications and customer insight

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Warrington Disability Partnership (WDP)

WDP is an internationally acclaimed user led charity. With over 26 years' experience of developing and delivering mobility and independent living services, its aim is to support disabled people and people living with long term health conditions.

It actively promotes independent living by providing information on peer counselling, housing, equipment, personal assistance, transport, access, employment, education, training and is often approached in relation to supporting and signposting disability sports activity across Warrington. One of its main aims in this respect, is encouraging all sports clubs to be accessible and encouraging inclusivity. WDP works closely, for example, with Warrington Wolves RLFC and helped with development of its new disability teams.

WDP reports that demand for disability sports in Warrington is high and there are some good examples in place in sports such as swimming, martial arts, tennis and now rugby league. However, barriers to participation are often higher and more acute. It is often not the playing facilities themselves which cause the biggest barriers but wider issues such as availability of transport, which can often be linked to timing of sessions, for example. Accessibility in relation to ancillary facilities is also a common issue, including changing rooms, size of doors and car parking. The other key element relates to the availability of volunteers to support sports clubs to offer disability sports.

It has generally become standard that all new sports facilities have DDA compliance, however, this should also extend to the upgrading of sports facilities and in this context, for playing pitch facilities this should include changing rooms. One of the ways to help ensure new and refurbished facilities are accessible is to involve WDP in the early planning stages of projects.

Warrington Youth Zone

Warrington Youth Club will soon become Warrington Youth Zone. With a brand new building, state of the art facilities and the opportunity to welcome an additional 3,000 members per year. The facility is due to open in 2021 and will be a high-quality facility open to all of the young people from the Borough between the ages of 8 to 19, and up to 25 with disabilities or learning difficulties.

The site for the new development is on Foundry Street, next to the University Technical College and at a capital cost of around £7m is being part-funded by Warrington Borough Council and a number of additional funders.

It will offer members up to 20 different activities every session, including sport, fitness, dance, arts, music, media and self-improvement. The Youth Zone will include a sports hall with facilities for indoor badminton, football, netball and basketball and a separate climbing wall. In addition, the Warrington Local Football Facility Plan (LFFP) identifies the site as a potential for Football Foundation funding for a new 7v7 floodlit 3G pitch which, if successful, would be located on the roof of the building.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Playing Pitch Strategy Governance

The PPS is governed through a Steering Group and in line with the governance arrangements in place for the Active Warrington Strategy.

All decisions in relation to the PPS including updates and recommendations will be communicated via the leisure industry, sports clubs and facilities work stream to the Active Warrington Steering Group. Any actions or recommendations that may involve approval will then be communicated to the relevant groups and highlighted in the annual report of the Active Warrington Strategy.

The membership of the PPS Steering Group is balanced and representative of the different parties and key drivers behind the work and is made up of representatives from the Council, LiveWire, Sport England and NGBs.

The PPS steering group is and has been responsible for the direction of the PPS from a strategic perspective and for supporting, checking and challenging the work of the project team.

It will be important for the PPS steering group to continue once the PPS has been finalised for several reasons, including a continuing responsibility to:

- ◀ Be a champion for playing pitch provision in the area and promote the value and importance of the PPS
- ◀ Ensure implementation of the PPS's recommendations and action plan
- ◀ Monitor and evaluate the outcomes of the PPS
- ◀ Ensure the PPS is kept up to date and refreshed.

Agreed scope

The following types of outdoor sports facilities were agreed by the steering group for inclusion in the assessment and strategy:

- ◀ Football pitches
- ◀ Artificial grass pitches (3G and sand)
- ◀ Cricket pitches
- ◀ Hockey pitches
- ◀ Rugby league pitches
- ◀ Rugby union pitches

Study area

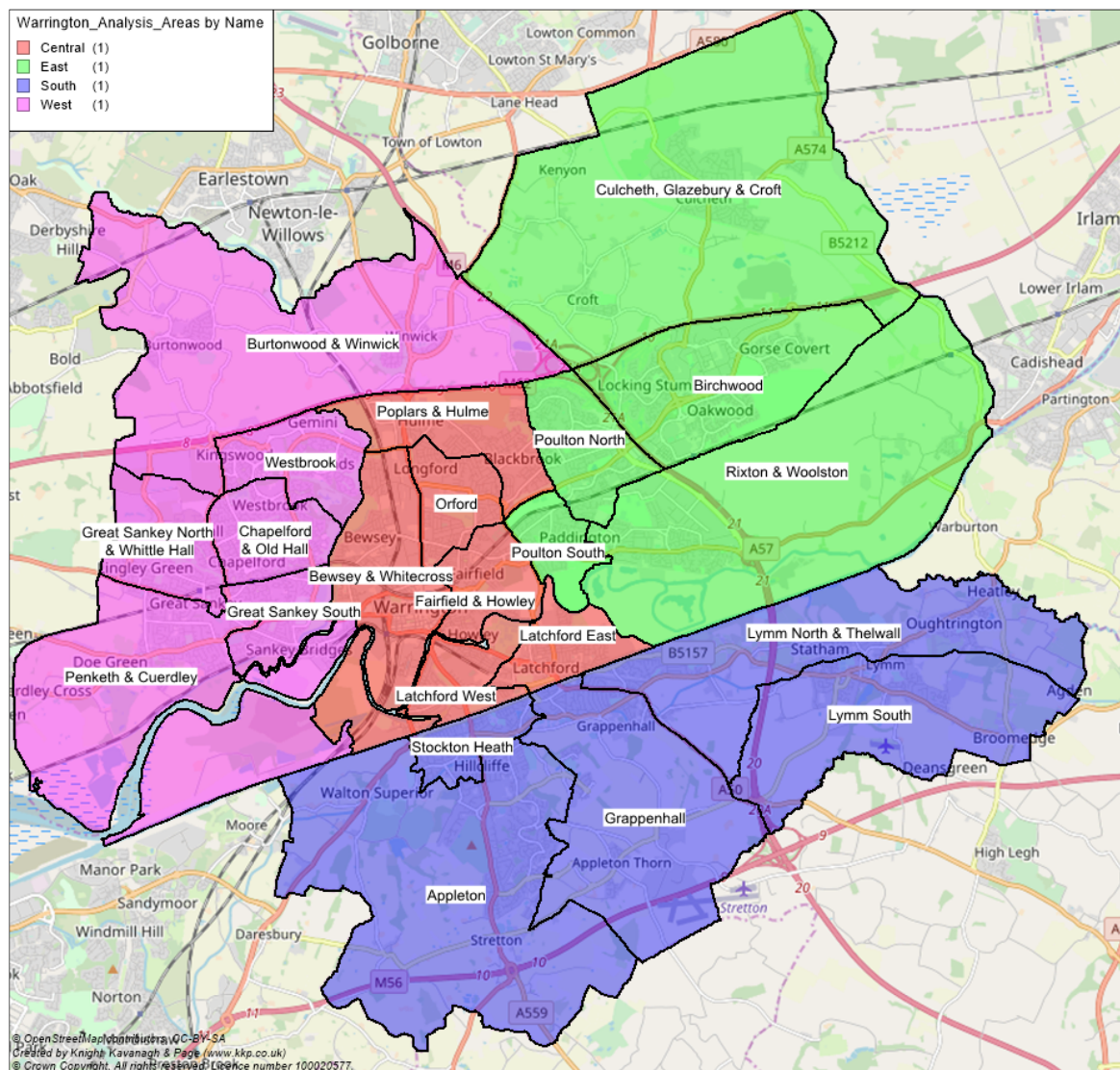
As a borough wide assessment the study area reflects the Warrington borough boundaries. Further to this sub areas or analysis areas have been created to allow a more localised assessment of provision and examination of playing pitch supply and demand at a local level. Use of analysis areas also allows local circumstances and issues to be taken into account.

Warrington is currently split into four neighbourhood areas as shown below and these neighbourhood areas have been used as the analysis areas in the assessment.

There have been some minor changes to the ward boundaries since 2017 and Latchford West Ward now falls within the Central Analysis Area as opposed to the South Analysis Area.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Figure 1.1: Warrington analysis areas 2019



Analysis area	Ward
Central neighbourhood	Bewsey & Whitecross
	Poplars & Hulme
	Latchford West
	Latchford East
	Fairfield & Howley
	Orford
East neighbourhood	Culcheth, Glazebury & Croft
	Rixton & Woolston
	Birchwood
	Poulton South
	Poulton North
South neighbourhood	Lymm North & Thelwall
	Appleton
	Grappenhall
	Lymm South
	Stockton Heath

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Analysis area	Ward
West neighbourhood	Burtonwood & Winwick
	Penketh & Cuerdley
	Great Sankey South
	Great Sankey North & Whittle Hall
	Chapelford & Old Hall
	Westbrook

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

It is essential that a PPS is based on the most accurate and up-to-date information available for the supply and demand for playing pitches. This section provides details about how this information has been gathered.

Gather supply information and views – an audit of playing pitches

PPS guidance uses the following definitions of a playing pitch and playing field. These definitions are set out by the Government in the 2015 'Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order'.¹

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

It should be noted that the reference to five years within the Order is purely in relation to whether Sport England should be consulted in a statutory capacity. The fact that a playing field may not have been marked out for pitch sport in the last five years does not mean that it is no longer a playing field. That remains its lawful planning use whether marked out or not.

Although the statutory definition of a playing field is the whole of a site with at least one pitch of 0.2ha or more, this PPS takes into account smaller sized pitches that contribute to the supply side, such as mini 5v5 football pitches. This PPS counts individual grass pitches (as a delineated area) as the basic unit of supply. The definition of a playing pitch also includes artificial grass pitches (AGPs).

As far as possible the Assessment Report aims to capture all of the pitches within Warrington; however, there may be instances, for example on school sites, where access was not possible and has led to omissions within the report. Where pitches have not been recorded within the report they remain as pitches and for planning purposes continue to be so. Furthermore, exclusions of a pitch does not mean that it is not required from a supply and demand point of view.

Quantity

All playing pitches are included irrespective of ownership, management and use. Playing pitch sites were initially identified using Sport England's Active Places web based database. The Council and NGBs supported the process by checking and updating this initial data. This was also verified against club information supplied by local leagues.

¹ www.sportengland.org>Facilities and Planning> Planning Applications

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

For each site the following details were recorded in the project database (supplied as an electronic file):

- ◀ Site name, address (including postcode) and location
- ◀ Ownership and management type
- ◀ Security of tenure
- ◀ Total number, type and quality of pitches

Accessibility

Not all pitches offer the same level of access to the community. The ownership and accessibility of playing pitches also influences their actual availability for community use. Each site is assigned a level of community use as follows:

- ◀ **Community use** - pitches in public, voluntary, private or commercial ownership or management (including education sites) recorded as being available for hire and currently in use by teams playing in community leagues.
- ◀ **Available but unused** - pitches that are available for hire but are not currently used by teams which play in community leagues; this most often applies to school sites but can also apply to sites which are expensive to hire.
- ◀ **No community use** - pitches which as a matter of policy or practice are not available for hire or used by teams playing in community leagues. This should include professional club pitches along with some semi-professional club pitches, where play is restricted to the first or second team.
- ◀ **Disused** – sites that are not being used at all by any users and are not available for community hire either. Once these sites are disused for five or more years they will then be categorised as ‘lapsed sites’.
- ◀ **Lapsed** - last known use was as a playing field more than five years ago. These fall outside of Sport England’s statutory remit but still have to be assessed using the criteria in paragraph 97 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Sport England would nonetheless challenge a proposed loss of playing pitches/playing field which fails to meet such criteria. It should be emphasised that the lawful planning use of a lapsed site is still that of a playing field.

In addition, there should be a good degree of certainty that the pitch will be available to the community for at least the following three years. A judgement is made based on the information gathered and a record of secured or unsecured community use put against each site. NB: This refers to pitches in community use and not lapsed/disused sites.

Quality

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

It is not just the quality of the pitch itself which has an effect on its capacity but also the quality, standard and range of ancillary facilities. The quality of both the pitch and ancillary facilities will determine whether a pitch is able to contribute to meeting demand from various groups and for different levels and types of play.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

The quality of all pitches identified in the audit and the ancillary facilities supporting them are assessed regardless of ownership, management or availability. Along with capturing any details specific to the individual pitches and sites, a quality rating is recorded within the audit for each pitch.

These ratings are used to help estimate the capacity of each pitch to accommodate competitive and other play within the supply and demand assessment.

In addition to undertaking non-technical assessments (using the templates provided within the guidance and as determined by NGBs), users and providers were also consulted on the quality and in some instances the quality rating was adjusted to reflect this.

Gather demand information and views

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

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

In addition, unmet and displaced demand for provision is also identified on a sport by sport basis. Unmet demand is defined as the number of additional teams that could be fielded if access to a sufficient number of pitches (and ancillary facilities) was available. Displaced demand refers to teams that are generated from residents of the area but due to any number of factors do not currently play within the area.

Current and future demand for playing pitches is presented on a sport by sport basis within the relevant sections of this report.

A variety of consultation methods were used to collate demand information about leagues, clubs, county associations and national/regional governing bodies of sport. Face to face or telephone consultation was carried out with key clubs from each sport. This allowed for the collection of detailed demand information and an exploration of key issues to be interrogated and more accurately assessed.

For data analysis purposes an online survey (converted to postal if required) was utilised. This was sent to all clubs not covered by face to face consultation.

Future demand

Alongside current demand, it is important for a PPS to assess whether the future demand for playing pitches can be met. Using ONS population projections, as well as likely participation growth informed through consultation, an estimate can be made of the likely future demand for playing pitches.

Team generation rates are used to provide an indication of how many people it may take to generate a team (by gender and age group) in order to help estimate the change in demand for pitch sports that may arise from any population change. Future demand for pitches is calculated by adding the percentage increases to the population increases in each analysis area. This figure is then applied to the team generation rates and is presented on a sport by sport basis.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Other information sources that were used to help identify future demand, especially for non-pitch sports (where team generation rates are not applicable) include:

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

Population growth

The current resident population in Warrington is 209,704 (2017 MYE). By 2037 (the period to which this assessment projects population based future demand, in line with the Local Plan period) the population is projected to increase to 232,414² representing an increase of 22,710 (or equivalent to a percentage increase of 11%) according to ONS data.

As ONS figures are available by individual age brackets (to reflect team growth) this is considered the most accurate data set to apply to team generation rates (as identified above) to calculate likely future demand within the Assessment Report. However, there is potential that the ONS projections used may be under estimating future demand when compared to housing growth figures and as such, this should be subject to periodic review. To further account for this within the assessment, club aspirations have also been added to growth from ONS projections to provide a more representative view of future demand.

Stage C: Assess the supply and demand information and views

Supply and demand information gathered within Section B was used to assess the adequacy of playing pitch provision in Warrington. The assessment focuses on how much use each site could potentially accommodate (on an area by area basis) compared to how much use is currently taking place.

Understand the situation at individual sites

Qualitative pitch ratings are linked to a pitch capacity rating derived from NGB guidance and tailored to suit a local area. The quality and use of each pitch is assessed against the recommended pitch capacity to indicate how many match equivalent sessions per week (per season for cricket) a pitch could accommodate.

This is compared to the number of matches actually taking place and categorised as follows, to identify:

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

Develop the current picture of provision

Once capacity is determined on a site by site basis, actual spare capacity is calculated on an area by area basis via further interrogation of temporal demand. Although spare capacity may have been identified, it does not necessarily mean that there is surplus provision. For example, spare capacity may not be available when it is needed or the site may be retained in a 'strategic reserve' to enable pitch rotation to reduce wear and tear.

² Source: ONS 2014-based projections 2014-2039. Released: May 2016 has been used to reflect Government guidance as the most accurate available data.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Capacity ratings assist in the identification of sites for improvement/development, rationalisation, decommissioning and disposal.

Develop the future picture of provision - scenario testing

Modelling scenarios (which will be included within the strategy) to assess whether existing provision can cater for unmet, displaced and future demand is made after the capacity analysis. This will also include, for example, removing sites with unsecured community use to demonstrate the impact this would have if these sites were to be decommissioned in the future. Scenario testing occurs in the strategy report and therefore does not form part of the assessment report.

Identify the key findings and issues

By completing Steps 1-5 it is possible to identify several issues relating to the supply, demand and adequacy of playing pitch provision within Warrington. This report seeks to identify and present the key findings and issues, which should now be checked, challenged and agreed by the Steering Group prior to development of the Strategy (Stage D).

The following sections summarise the local administration of the main grass pitch sports in Warrington. Each section provides a quantitative summary of provision. It also provides information about the availability of facilities and the governing body of each sport and regional strategic plan (where they exist). The findings of club consultation and key issues for each sport are also summarised.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

PART 2: FOOTBALL

County Football Association's (CFA) exist to govern all aspects of football in England. They are responsible for administering club and player registration as well as promoting development and increasing participation in the sport. There is a total of three county FA's that operate across Warrington. Cheshire County FA, Liverpool County FA and Lancashire County FA.

This section of the report focusses on the supply and demand for grass football pitches. Section 3 captures supply and demand for 3rd generation artificial grass pitches (3G AGPs). There is already demand for use of 3G AGPs for competitive football match play and it is anticipated that this demand will continue to grow over the coming years.

Local Football Facility Plan

To support in delivery of the National Football Facilities Strategy, the FA has commissioned a national project. A Local Football Facility Plan (LFFP) will be produced for every local authority across England by early 2020. Each plan will be unique to its area as well as being diverse in its representation, including currently under-represented communities.

Identifying strategic priorities for football facilities across the formal, recreational and informal game, LFFPs will establish a ten-year vision for football facilities that aims to transform the playing pitch stock in a sustainable way. They will identify key projects to be delivered and act as an investment portfolio for projects that require funding. As such, around 90% of all future facility investments will be identified via LFFPs.

Each LFFP will focus on four key aspects:

- ◀ 3G pitches
- ◀ Grass pitches
- ◀ Changing room clubhouses/pavilions
- ◀ Small-sided football facilities

The LFFP for Warrington was produced in May 2019 and identifies 24 priority projects for investment. As an investment portfolio, the LFFP is not a detailed supply and demand analysis of all pitch provision in a local area. The PPS did, however, provide the evidence base for its production and this update will therefore take account of the included projects.

Consultation

In 2016, an electronic survey was sent to all Warrington based clubs affiliated to the CFA's that operate across the borough. In addition to this telephone communication took place to gather additional information and clarify data provided with a number of the large clubs based in Warrington. A total of 35 clubs engaged in the consultation process equating to a response rate of 90%.

The results of the consultation have been used to inform key issues within this section of the assessment report. The report has been updated following consultation with the three CFAs operating in the Borough, the Council and LiveWire.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Supply (2019)

The audit of pitches identifies a current total of 230 grass football pitches available for community use within Warrington across 116 sites during the 2019/20 season.

Table 2.1: Summary of grass football pitches available to the community by analysis area

Analysis area	Available for community use					Totals
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	
Central neighbourhood	26	1	5	22	6	60
East neighbourhood	23	3	14	20	7	67
South neighbourhood	16	1	5	18	9	49
West neighbourhood	23	2	7	16	6	54
Warrington	88	7	31	76	28	230

Please note that a mini 7v7 pitch at Chapelford Primary School is now (2019/20 season) not available for community use albeit it still exists. It is no longer available for community use even though there is a community use agreement in place as part of a wider mitigation package.

Table 2.1 shows that there is a total of 230 grass football pitches that are available for community use, an increase of eight pitches from 2016. Although there is an increase of adult and youth pitches, there has been a decrease in mini pitches being available. This is likely to reflect less demand for grass mini pitches due to an increase in use of 3G pitches for mini matches.

The East Neighbourhood Area has the highest total number of grass football pitches (67), followed by the Central Neighbourhood Area (60) and then the West Neighbourhood Area (54). The South Neighbourhood Area has the lowest total number of grass football pitches (49).

Of the community available football pitches, the majority are managed in house by schools/ colleges/ universities or by Warrington Borough Council. Alongside this, a significant number are managed by clubs, parish councils, letting services, privately, or by LiveWire (a Community Interest Company).

Table 2.1 also identifies a large number of adult pitches in Warrington but it should be noted that the consultation identified that many junior football matches are taking place on adult pitches. This includes some youth 11v11 teams playing on adult pitches, and some mini football being coned out and played on.

In total, 99 youth 11v11 teams currently use adult pitches for home matches, which is not ideal for youth players and is not in line with the FA Youth Review. It should be noted, however, that nationally many youth 11v11 teams are playing on adult pitches, which may be due to a lack of dedicated provision rather than through preference.

In accordance with the FA Youth Review, U17s and U18s can play on adult pitches. The FA's recommended pitch size for each format of play and age group can be seen in the table below.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 2.2: Recommended pitch sizes

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

Lapsed/disused sites

Table 2.3: List of sites identified as lapsed or disused

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Lapsed or disused site	Pitch types	Comments
50	Grappenhall Hall School	South neighbourhood	Disused (2015)	1 x youth pitch	School closed. No community use has ever been recorded for this site.
67	Lymm May Queen Field	South neighbourhood	Disused	1 x adult pitch 1 x mini pitch	Closed for more than 5 years. Could be brought back into use subject to improvements being made.
88	Radley Common	Central neighbourhood	Disused	1 x adult pitch	Closed for more than 5 years. Could be brought back into use subject to improvements being made.
105	St Elphins	East neighbourhood	Disused	1 x adult pitch 1 x mini 7v7 pitch	Closed for more than 5 years. Could be brought back into use subject to improvements being made.
124	Sycamore Lane Primary School	West neighbourhood	Disused (2016)	2 x mini pitches	School closed. Current planning application for this site.
153	St Werbergh's CofE Primary School	South neighbourhood	Lapsed (2001)	2 x youth pitches	School closed
-	Foxwood School (Chatfield Drive, Birchwood)	East neighbourhood	Lapsed	Small pitch	School closed

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Future supply / current developments

Westy Park (South neighbourhood analysis area)

Warrington Borough Council has funding confirmed to re-introduce playing pitches at Westy Park. Previously a site which provided two football pitches, the site was previously closed as it was deemed unsafe due to the ground being contaminated as the playing fields are located on a previous landfill site.

The site has now been declared safe and WBC has determined that one senior rugby league pitch and one senior football pitch are to be provided in 2019. The current site provides ancillary facilities with changing rooms available in the community centre located at the site.

Morley Common (South neighbourhood analysis area)

The Western Link Road development is proposed to go through part of Morley Common Recreation Ground which would result in the loss of one adult football pitch together with the changing rooms and car park. The site contains currently four adult football pitches. The council is currently considering where and how best these could be mitigated.

Peel Hall Park (Mill Lane)

The current planning application for this site will see its development for housing with replacement playing field within the housing site and improvements made to pitches at Radley Common (Windermere Ave).

Informal pitches

There are a number of sites identified that do not have formal football pitches available for hire but do have some informal usage for recreational play. These are listed in the table below:

Table 2.4: Informal pitches in Warrington

Site name	Analysis area	Provision
Ballater Drive	East neighbourhood	2 timber goals
Bank Park	Central neighbourhood	2 timber goals
Bewsey Park	Central neighbourhood	1 mini pitch, metal goals
Blackbear Park	East neighbourhood	2 timber goals
Bruche Park	East neighbourhood	1 timber goal
Burns Grove	Central neighbourhood	2 timber goals
Callands Field	West neighbourhood	1 timber goal
Causeway Park	South neighbourhood	2 timber goals
Dudlows Green Park	South neighbourhood	1 timber goal
English Martyrs Field	Central neighbourhood	2 timber goals
Howley - Harbord Street Play Area	Central neighbourhood	1 timber goal
Larkfield Park	East neighbourhood	1 timber goal
Locking Stumps Play Area	East neighbourhood	4 timber goals
Longbarn Park	East neighbourhood	2 timber goals
Lysander Park	East neighbourhood	1 timber goal
Massey Brook Play Area	South neighbourhood	1 timber goal
Mee Brow Play Area	East neighbourhood	1 timber goal

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site name	Analysis area	Provision
Nottingham Close Play Area	East neighbourhood	1 timber goal
Oakwood Local Park	East neighbourhood	2 timber goals
Old Hall Local Park, Shackleton Close	West neighbourhood	2 timber goals
Peel Hall Park	Central neighbourhood	1 timber goal
Poole Park	Central neighbourhood	2 timber goals
Statham Village Play Area	South neighbourhood	2 timber goals
Statham Village Play Area North Park Brook Road	South neighbourhood	2 timber goals
Twiggeries	East neighbourhood	1 timber goal
Vine Crescent	West neighbourhood	2 timber goals
Weir Lane Play Area	East neighbourhood	1 timber goal
Whitecross Park	Central neighbourhood	2 timber goals

Pitch quality

The quality of football pitches in Warrington have been assessed via a combination of site visits, carrying out non-technical assessments (in 2016) as determined by the FA on all pitches, and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◀ Good
- ◀ Standard
- ◀ Poor

Pitch quality influences the carrying capacity of a site; often pitches lack the drainage and seasonal maintenance necessary to sustain high levels of use. It is likely that pitches that receive little or no ongoing repair or off season remedial work will be assessed as poor, therefore limiting the number of games able to take place each week without it having a detrimental effect on quality. Conversely, well maintained pitches which are tended to regularly are likely to be a higher standard and capable of taking a number of matches without a significant reduction in surface quality.

Private sites (e.g. sports clubs) can often offer better quality facilities than Council and school playing pitches as such sports clubs tend to have dedicated ground staff or volunteers working on pitches regularly during the week. Also, private sites are often secured by fencing which prevents unofficial use whilst council pitches are generally located within public open space, regularly used by the public for informal recreation e.g. Dog Walking etc.

The table below summarises the quality of pitches that are available for community use for football. In total, 43 pitches are assessed as good quality (18%), 82 as standard quality (36%) and 104 are deemed to be poor quality (46%).

Table 2.5: Pitch quality ratings for community use football pitches

Adult pitches			Youth pitches			Mini pitches		
Good	Standard	Poor	Good	Standard	Poor	Good	Standard	Poor
20	35	33	11	11	17	12	36	54
22%	40%	38%	28%	28%	44%	12%	35%	53%

Through the process of carrying out NTAs and consultation the agreed pitch quality ratings show that the majority of pitches are either poor or standard quality. Almost half of the grass football pitches are deemed to be poor quality.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Overall, 22% of the adult pitches are good quality, 40% are standard quality and 38% are poor quality. The picture is slightly different for youth pitches where 28% are rated as good quality, 28% as standard quality with 44% rated as poor quality. Mini pitches are the poorest quality with 53% rated as poor quality, 35% rated as standard quality and only 12% rated as good quality.

The feedback from the club survey gave a mixed response in terms of whether clubs felt the quality of pitches had changed during the last 12 months. 44% of respondents stated pitch quality has got slightly poorer with 11% suggesting pitch quality has become much poorer. 22% of respondents feel there is no difference in pitch quality that has occurred with the remaining 22% stating they feel pitch quality has become slightly better (14%) or much better (8%).

Table 2.6: Site specific feedback received

Site	Feedback (2016)
Appleton Thorn Playing Fields (New Lane)	Poor drainage, with lack of maintenance with feedback suggesting grass cutting is too infrequent and when cutting takes place length of cut is too long.
Bennett's Recreation Ground	Poor drainage resulting in pitches often being waterlogged and causing fixture cancellations.
Birchwood Community High School	Blocked drainage issues resulting in waterlogged pitches.
Cantilever Park	Warrington Town FC now employ a groundsman which has helped improve pitch quality.
Chapelford Primary School	Pitch was relatively new in 2016, and provided as part of a new school project, and appropriate drainage was installed. However, Whittle Hall JFC withdraw community use due to its poor condition and issues with debris (stones and glass) coming up through the surface. It is now not marked out and unavailable for use.
Crab Lane	Poor drainage resulting in waterlogged pitches.
Culcheth Sports Club	The sports club have invested significant funds into maintenance equipment to maintain good quality of pitches at site.
Hillock Lane	Poor drainage terrible resulting in flooding and fixture cancellations. Pitches relocated summer 2015 with work carried out to improve surface drainage but work does not seem to solved any problems according to users, with the pitches at the site still rated as poor.
Hood Lane Recreation Ground	Cromwell FC financed its own improvement work on the pitch in 2015.
Lymm High School	Drainage issues with some pitches.
Mary Ann Meadows	Poor drainage resulting in a significant number of cancellations. Cromwell JFC would like to make it their main base and are currently in dialogue with Warrington BC.
Morley Common	Mixed feedback from users. Some suggesting maintenance has improved, and that improvements have been made to ancillary provision. Other users identified poor drainage and inadequate maintenance.
Orford Jubilee Neighbourhood Hub	Pitch 1 usage is managed appropriately to avoid overplay resulting in maintaining a good quality pitch. Pitches 6,7 & 8 poor drainage and regularly waterlogged.
Pewterspear Sports Pavillion	The pitches have been installed professionally with good drainage. Some of the pitches are on the Cricket Pitch. This means that these pitches are only available for use from Mid October until Early April.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site	Feedback (2016)
Sow Brook Playing Fields	Major issues with waterlogged pitches resulting in high number of postponements.
St Gregory's Catholic High School	Issues with drainage resulting in a large number of postponements. Also due to the constant waterlogging, access for maintenance vehicles is an issue.
Tetley Walkers Sport and Social Club	Lots of cancellations due to waterlogged pitches led to backlog of fixtures. Once pitch was playable was significantly overplayed, and maintenance regime not appropriate/ not in place due to funding.
The Oaks Playing Fields	Improvements needed to drainage required to cope with extreme wet weather.
Thornton Road	Eagle Sports JFC have purchased their own cutting and maintenance equipment and now regularly works on the pitch. New drainage has been installed funding by Eagle Sports JFC. WBC provide top soil in 2015 which allowed for club to do further maintenance work.
Padgate Academy Warrington	Tree roots ingressed to make pitch unplayable. Drainage issues resulting in waterlogged pitches
Victoria Park	New pitch was built alongside athletics track due to this all water run off for the new pitch went onto our pitch meaning one section of a touchline was completely unplayable
Winwick Recreation Centre	Grass cutting not regular enough.
Woolston CofE Primary School	Grass cutting not regular enough.
Woolston Park	Goal mouths are particularly worn with no grass coverage.

Maintenance

Warrington Borough Council's Environment Service deliver a basic level of sportsground maintenance on the majority of its sites that is restricted to grass cutting, topdressing and seeding, with no ring-fenced budgets available for any further level of upkeep or for improvement works.

Maintenance regimes within school grounds, private sports clubs and LiveWire sites, which is carried out by WBC, varies and is dependent upon individual client budgets and requirements.

It should be noted that all of the maintenance elements listed above form part of the FA's non-technical site assessment form.

In 2016, 53% of the respondents to the club survey rated the maintenance of pitches as poor, 19% rated maintenance as standard and 28% rated pitch maintenance as good.

Over marked pitches

Over marking of pitches can cause notable damage to the surface quality and lead to overuse beyond recommended capacity. In some cases mini pitches may be marked onto senior pitches or mini matches may be played widthways across adult or youth pitches. This can lead to targeted areas of surface damage due to a large amount of play focused on high traffic areas, particularly the middle third of the pitch. Over marking of pitches not only influences available capacity, it may also cause logistical issues regarding kick off times; for example, when two teams of differing age formats are due to play at the same site at the same time.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

There are a number of pitches in Warrington which are marked onto or overlapping cricket outfields, which can create availability issues as the cricket season begins in April when the football season is still ongoing, and the football season starts in August as cricket fixtures are still being played. Appleton AFC report this is a particular issue at Pewterspear Sports Pavilion, as some pitches are out of use at the start and end of the cricket season, meaning teams have to relocate to poorer quality pitches.

Sites with over marked pitches that create overplay of the pitch are listed in the Strategy Action Plan, with an appropriate action for removing/relocating the over marked pitches.

Ancillary facilities

The non-technical assessment also assessed ancillary facilities associated with the sites that provide grass football pitches. Ancillary facilities including the condition of the clubhouse, changing accommodation, toilets, showers, medical room, car parking and boundary fencing.

Of the sites where a full check of ancillary facilities took place nearly half were assessed as being poor (49%). 23% of the sites were rated as having standard quality ancillary facilities with 28% rated as having good quality ancillary facilities.

Of the football clubs that engaged in the consultation 40% rated the ancillary facilities at the sites they use as being good quality. 38% rated ancillary facilities as being standard quality with 22% rating ancillary facilities as being poor.

Table 2.7: Club response to ancillary facility question

Good	Standard	Poor
40%	38%	22%

Based on clubs' consultation, it is apparent that there are numerous teams based at Council or Education operated sites that do not have access to on-site changing provision. This is often down to choice but sometimes it is due to the fact that changing facilities are not available.

Following the non-technical assessment, club consultation and further consultation with WBC's Environment Services ancillary facility quality ratings were agreed. These are shown in Table 2.8. The sites with ancillary facilities receiving a poor rating from clubs include:

- ◀ Appleton Thorn (New Lane) Playing Fields
- ◀ Carlsberg Tetley Sports and Social Club
- ◀ Doe Green Recreation Ground
- ◀ Hood Lane Recreation Ground
- ◀ Penketh High School
- ◀ St Vincent's/ Penketh South Primary School
- ◀ The Oaks Playing Fields
- ◀ Thornton Road Recreation Ground

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 2.8: Agreed site ancillary ratings for community use sites (2016)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Agreed ancillary facilities rating	Comments
2	Appleton Thorn Playing Fields (New Lane)	South	Poor	Limited car parking capacity. No changing room facilities. No storage facilities
7	Beamont Academy	Central	Standard	
8	Bennetts Recreation Ground	East	Standard	
11	Birchwood Community High School	East	Standard	
12	Birchwood Forest Park	East	Standard	Changing rooms require upgrading.
23	Poplars Park	Central	Poor	No car parking. No changing room facilities.
26	Chaigeley School	South	Standard	
31	Crab Lane Playing Field	East	Poor	Limited car parking capacity. Changing rooms coming to end of operational life.
33	Culcheth Community Campus	East	Good	
35	Culcheth Sports Club	East	Good	Recent investment to improve changing facilities.
36	Dakota Park	West	Good (at Chapelford Primary School)	Community use of Chapelford Primary School changing facilities was established for Chapelford FC (open age) which has now folded. Only junior and mini football now takes place at the site with no requirement for changing access.
38	Dallam Recreation Ground	Central	Good	Changing rooms recently replaced providing new changing rooms. Limited car parking.
39	Doe Green Recreation Ground	West	Poor	No car parking provision. Changing facilities have reached the end of their operational life.
40	Elizabeth Park	South	Poor	No car parking provision. No changing facilities.
52	Grappenhall Village Sports Club	South	Good	
55	Great Sankey Parish Playing Fields	West	Poor	There is an agreement in place between LiveWire and Great Sankey Parish Council that users can use Great Sankey Neighbourhood Hub (GSNH) car park – Parish Fields can be directly accessed from GSNH car park.
59	Hillock Lane Playing Fields	East	Poor	Limited car parking provision. No changing facilities. Clubs using the site are keen for new changing rooms linked also with school use.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Agreed ancillary facilities rating	Comments
61	Hood Lane Recreation Ground	West	Good	Limited car parking provision.
65	Loushers Lane Recreation Ground	South	Poor	No changing room provision. Limited car parking. Car parking surface very poor condition.
66	Lymm High School	South	Good	
70	Mary Ann Meadows	West	Poor	Limited car parking. Changing rooms coming to the end of their lifespan.
72	Monks Sports & Social Club	East	Standard	
74	Morley Common	South	Poor	Limited car parking provision. Car parking surface very poor condition. Changing rooms recently refurbished.
77	Orford Jubilee Neighbourhood Hub	Central	Good	
80	Padgate Hall	East	Poor	No changing facilities. Limited parking.
82	Peel Hall Playing Fields	East	Poor	No changing room provision. Limited car parking. Car parking surface very poor condition.
86	Pewterspear Sports Pavilion	South	Good	Current planning application in for proposed single storey extension to create a larger function room and new indoor exercise/studio room, conversion of redundant existing rooms into a new dance studio and remodel and refurbish of existing changing rooms and shower facilities. This will result in the current four changing rooms will be reduced to two. However, ECB and FF have indicated they are satisfied with the reduction.
90	Ridgeway Grundy Park	South	Poor	No car parking. Changing rooms require replacement.
91	Rylands Recreation Club	Central	Standard	
93	Sandy Lane Recreation Club	South	Poor	No car parking. Changing rooms coming to end of lifespan. Lymm FC have lease on changing rooms at site.
95	Shaw Street Recreation Ground	East	Poor	Extended and refurbished changing rooms and community room due to open February 2017. Car park resurfaced and lit.
97	Sow Brook Playing Fields	South	Poor	Replacement changing rooms required. Car parking limited and poor condition.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Agreed ancillary facilities rating	Comments
106	St Gregory High School	West	Good	New changing rooms built as part of new sports hall project.
121	Stocks Lane Playing Field	West	Poor	No car parking. No changing room facilities.
127	Thornton Road Recreation Ground	West	Poor	Limited car parking and poor quality. Changing rooms require extension and improvement as they fall short of standard and quantity required.
130	University of Chester Warrington Campus	East	Good	
131	Victoria Park	Central	Poor	Large car park but doesn't have capacity to meet demand generated by diverse site usage. Replacement Parks changing rooms required. Limited on site storage.
138	Winwick Recreation Centre	East	Standard	
142	Woolston Neighbourhood Hub	East	Standard	No changing room facilities.
143	Woolston Park	East	Poor	Changing rooms at end of lifespan. Limited parking
145	The Oaks Playing Field	East	Standard	
146	Tim Parry Community Centre	West	Poor	No changing room facilities.

Security of tenure

Through the consultation no clubs reported issues with current ownership, lease or rented agreements in place. However, security of tenure is something that needs to be considered in order to support the development of football within Warrington. Whilst there is a commitment from WBC, which owns the majority of football pitches, that these pitches will continue to be provided for community use in the future, most of the pitches are rented by clubs on a seasonal basis. A growing number of clubs wish to access grants for funding to maintain and improve facilities. Eligibility may be dependent upon securing long term leases for parkland sites. This aspect of the grant process requires further consideration in relation to Warrington Borough Council land in order for legal agreements to be implemented.

A number of sites in Warrington are protected by Fields in Trust (FiT) and these are listed below. Sites protected by FiT are legally protected through a Deed of Dedication. Permission has to be sought from FiT to develop all or any part of a protected site. Of the sites listed only Radley Common has playing pitches on them, the remaining are just playing fields without any pitches.

- ⬇ Alexandra Park, Stockton Heath
- ⬇ Croft Playing Field
- ⬇ Peel Hall Park

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

- ◀ Radley Common
- ◀ Smithy Lane Playing Field

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Football National League System (the football pyramid) demand

The National League System (NLS), otherwise known as the football pyramid, is the league structure for men's football that sits directly below the Football League, League 2. It stretches from the Conference Premier Division at Step 1 through to County Leagues at Step 7. There are five clubs in Warrington that play within the football pyramid:

- ◀ Daten FC – Step 7
- ◀ Eagle Sports FC – Step 7
- ◀ Greenalls Padgate St Oswald's FC – Step 7
- ◀ Rylands FC – Step 5
- ◀ Warrington Town FC – Step 4

Clubs within the step system must adhere to ground requirements set out by the FA. The higher the level football being played the higher the requirements. Clubs cannot progress into the league above if the ground requirements do not meet the correct specifications. Ground grading assesses grounds from A to H, with 'A' being the requirement for Step 1 clubs.

Although all clubs currently meet the requirements of their leagues it is likely the majority would need to make ground improvements or potentially move sites in order to progress through the football pyramid.

Women's National League system

Correspondingly there is a Women's National League System similar to the adult men's which provides structure to the women's game. As seen in the table below this ranges from Step 1 to Step 6 with each step requiring differing ground grading requirements.

Table 2.9: Summary of ground grading for women's football

Level	League	Grading category
Step 3 and 4	Women's Super League 1	Grade A
Step 3 and 4	Women's Super League 2	Grade B
Step 5	Northern and Southern Women's Premier League	Grade A
Step 6	Women's Combination Leagues	Grade B
Step 7	Women's Regional Leagues – Premier Divisions	Grade C

Although women's clubs are still required to meet ground requirements set out by the FA, these differ from the men's National League System. Ratings range from grade A to C each with differing minimum requirements. Step 1 and 2 in the Women's National League System is akin to Step 3 and 4 of the men's National League System, however, not exactly the same. The system is also a hierarchical format with promotion and relegation between the levels, allowing even the smallest club the theoretical possibility of rising to the top of the system.

In 2017, the FA announced plans to restructure the women's league for the highest performers in the football pyramid. The changes were implemented from the start of the 2018/2019 season and saw the top league, FA WSL 1, expand from 10 clubs to 14 and the creation of a new national league established at tier two.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Demand (2019)

Through updated affiliation data provided by the CFAs a total of 456 teams were identified as playing football on pitches located within the Warrington boundary during the 2018/19 seasons. This consists of 73 adult teams, 204 youth teams and 179 mini soccer teams.

This sees an overall increase from 2016, with 11 additional teams. Despite this, the number of adult teams has decreased by 10, however, mini football has seen an overall growth in participation, with the number of teams increasing by 23. There has also been an increase in adult women's teams, previously there was only one team and now there are five.

Table 2.10: Summary of where competitive teams play in Warrington by analysis area (2016)

Analysis area	Number of teams playing					
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
Central neighbourhood	38	15	9	13	11	86
East neighbourhood	20	29	20	23	18	110
South neighbourhood	10	36	25	30	27	128
West neighbourhood	5	39	31	26	31	132
Warrington	73	119	85	92	87	456

The table above shows that West Area (132) is where most teams have their match play pitch located, closely followed by the South Area (128) and West Area (110). There are a lower number of teams in the Central Area (87). The most prevalent playing format was the youth 11v11 category (119); however, each format is well represented.

2019 participation trends

When compared to PPS data collated in 2016/2017, there are 11 more teams currently participating in Warrington, despite each format, except mini football, experiencing a decrease in demand.

When studied on an analysis area basis, both the Central and West areas have seen an increase in participation (38 and 17 teams respectively). Conversely, the East and South areas have seen decreases in the number of teams based there, reducing by 26 and 18 teams respectively. A decrease in specific areas may not be as a result of teams folding but may be as a consequence of teams relocating elsewhere within the Borough to access appropriate, or better quality provision.

Increasing female participation is currently a key aim for the FA and it therefore reflects well on Warrington that the number of adult women's teams has increased by four since 2016. There are now 15 youth girls' teams seven, of which, are youth 11v11 teams.

It is reported by the three CFAs that generally the overall number of teams has remained consistent, which is reflected in the data. Some junior girls demand is exported to central venues in Cheshire and/or Liverpool, although the establishment of a Warrington Girls' League from the 2019/20 season will see an increase in female participation within the Borough. It is youth and mini girls' football that has seen notable growth in the past three years and it is expected that this will continue moving forwards.

It is considered, that although some clubs have lost junior teams in recent seasons, others have increased numbers meaning that there has been a general consistency in participation.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Disability football

Disability football in Warrington is gradually growing, with various partners within the Borough providing offerings. Warrington Collegiate has a disability football programme, whilst Warrington Wolves Community Foundation also has a notable disability football offering.

Each of the three CFAs servicing Warrington provides Ability Counts Leagues, specific league structures catering for individuals with disabilities that want to participate in competitive football. There is also pan-disability football based at Green Lane Community Special School.

The potential for disability football in Warrington is significant, with Warrington Disability Partnership a potential key partner moving forward. The organisation reports that the range of sports on offer within Warrington is not an issue; but rather the facilities, access, transport and timings available that inhibit participation.

Warrington Youth Club received funding to establish disability football sessions but struggled with a low turnout. It is hoped that it will increase in the future, with further buy in and support from additional partners.

Women and girls' football

Currently the majority of female teams playing in Warrington affiliate to Cheshire FA. Liverpool CFA reports that much of its female demand is exported to Liverpool, Sefton or Cheshire; whilst Lancashire CFA has only one girls' team.

The creation of the Warrington Girls' League will see an increase in female junior participation in Warrington; with fixtures to be played on Sundays on a home and away basis. In recent seasons, the number of female teams has increased, with 25 female teams within the Borough's larger clubs. Lymm Rovers FC are one of the largest provider of girls only teams in the Country, with female teams outnumbering male teams within the Club.

Walking football

Walking football is a variant of association football that is aimed at keeping people aged over 50 involved with football if, due to a lack of mobility or for other reason, they are not able to play the traditional game. The sport can be played both indoors and outdoors.

Flexi football

Elevens is an alternative way to play 11-a-side that provides a more flexible approach to playing football. Cheshire FA now operates Elevens and is running 2019/20 leagues including in Warrington at Orford Jubilee on the 3G pitch.

Displaced demand (2016)

Displaced demand is existing demand that is being met by provision outside of the Warrington boundary. There are a number of reasons why displacement may occur such as a Central Venue League, where one location/site is used as the venue for all competitive fixtures with no teams having home or away fixtures or because teams choose to hire pitches outside of the boundary due to pitch quality or hire costs.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Through the audit there were 21 teams identified as being displaced. Of these, 81% of the teams (17) are girls' teams that compete in a central venue league that takes place outside of Warrington. 16 of these teams compete in the Cheshire Girls Football League located in the Cheshire West and Chester local authority area and 2 compete in the Liverpool Central Venue Girls League. All of these teams are happy competing in these leagues and do not have demand for pitches in Warrington.

Sankey Vale FC, an adult male team play its home games in St Helens but indicate that this is the Club's preferred home pitch.

Other displaced demand from 2016 has now come back to play in Warrington and Matthiola FC teams now play at Sankey Valley St James Primary and have also just secured use of a pitch at St Joseph's Primary.

Future demand

Future demand can be defined in three ways. Through participation increases, using population forecasts and additional demand generated from housing growth. The latter is assessed via a range of scenarios contained within the Strategy document, with the former two detailed below.

Population increases (2019)

Team generation rates are used to calculate the number of teams likely to be generated in the future (2037) based on population growth. When applied to Warrington as a whole it is predicated that there will be an increase of one adult male team, 16 youth 11v11 boys' teams, a youth 11v11 girls' team, five youth 9v9 teams and one additional mini 7v7 team.

Table 2.11: Team generation rates (2037)

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams	Team Generation Rate	Future population within age group	Predicted future number of teams	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population ³
Senior Men (16-45)	36,304	68	1:534	37,303	70	2
Senior Women (16-45)	35,667	5	1:7133	35,822	5	0
Youth Boys (12-15)	7,467	112	1:67	8,542	128	16
Youth Girls (12-15)	6,927	7	1:990	8,087	8	1
Youth Boys (10-11)	2,562	77	1:33	2,729	82	5
Youth Girls (10-11)	2,377	8	1:297	2,583	8	0
Mini-Soccer Mixed (8-9)	5,161	92	1:56	5,239	93	1
Mini-Soccer Mixed (6-7)	5,271	87	1:61	5,201	86	0

When TGRs are applied to individual analysis areas it can generate a more accurate forecast of participation growth from population increases. When TGRs are applied to specific analysis areas the total predicted is one adult men's team, 15 youth 11v11 boys' teams, a youth 11v11 girls' squad and four youth 9v9 boys' teams.

³ Rounded to the nearest whole number

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

2.12: Team generation rates (by analysis area)

Age group	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population (by Analysis Area)				
	Central	East	South	West	Total
Senior Men (16-45)	1	-	-	-	1
Senior Women (16-45)	-	-	-	-	-
Youth Boys (12-15)	2	4	4	5	15
Youth Girls (12-15)	-	-	1	-	1
Youth Boys (10-11)	-	1	1	2	4
Youth Girls (10-11)	-	-	-	-	-
Mini-Soccer Mixed (8-9)	-	-	-	-	-
Mini-Soccer Mixed (6-7)	-	-	-	-	-
Total	3	5	6	7	21

Participation increases (2016)

A number of clubs report aspirations to increase the number of teams they provide. Of the clubs which quantified their potential increase in 2016, there is a predicated growth of 49 teams, equating to a demand for three adult, 7.5 youth and 12.5 mini additional match equivalent sessions subject to pitch availability.

The potential growth highlighted through the consultation is relatively evenly spread across neighbourhood analysis areas. In terms of women and girls' participation it only picks up future demand that would require pitch provision within the Warrington area as it acknowledges the fact that youth girls' participation is currently met through central venue leagues outside of the local authority.

Capacity analysis (2019)

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

As a guide, the FA has set a standard number of matches that each grass pitch type should be able to accommodate without adversely affecting its current quality (pitch capacity). Taking into consideration the guidelines on capacity the following ratings were used in Warrington:

Adult pitches		Youth pitches		Mini pitches	
Pitch quality	Matches per week	Pitch quality	Matches per week	Pitch quality	Matches per week
Good	3	Good	4	Good	6
Standard	2	Standard	2	Standard	4
Poor	1	Poor	1	Poor	2

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 2.13 applies the above pitch ratings against the actual level of weekly play recorded to determine a capacity rating as follows:

Potential capacity	Play is below the level the site could sustain
At capacity	Play matches the level the site can sustain
Overused	Play exceeds the level the site can sustain

Education sites

To account for curricular/extra-curricular use of education pitches it is likely that the carrying capacity at such sites will need to be adjusted. The only time this would not happen is when a school does not use its pitches at all and the sole use is community use. The adjustment is typically dependent on the amount of play carried out, the number of pitches on site and whether there is access to an on-site AGP.

In some cases, where there is no identified community use, there is little capacity to accommodate further play. Internal usage often exceeds recommended pitch capacity, which is further exacerbated by basic maintenance regimes that may not extend beyond grass cutting and line marking.

For Warrington, current play at primary schools, secondary schools, colleges and independent schools has been enlarged on a site-by-site basis following consultation with the providers. Generally, usage is increased by one match equivalent session per pitch.

Peak time

The peak time varies for different pitch types. The table below identified whether or not spare capacity can actually be considered as such, based on whether pitches are available at peak time.

Table 2.12: Peak time for pitch types

Pitch type	Peak Time	Comments
Adult	Saturday PM	The demand for adult pitches is highest on Saturday PM, despite many youth 11v11 teams also access adult pitches on both Saturday and Sunday mornings.
Youth 11v11	Saturday AM	The vast majority of youth 11v11 teams in Warrington play on Saturday AM.
Youth 9v9	Saturday AM	The vast majority of youth 9v9 teams in Warrington play on Saturday AM.
Mini	Saturday AM	The vast majority of mini 5v5 and 7v7 teams in Warrington play on Saturday AM.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 2.13: Football pitch capacity analysis (2019)

Site ID	Site name	Management type	Analysis area	Community use	Maintained by WBC	Pitch type	Pitch size	Agreed quality rating	No. of pitches	Current play (match equivalent sessions ⁴)	Site capacity (MES)	Overused, at capacity or potential to accommodate additional play (MES)	Actual spare capacity (MES)
7	Beamont Academy	School/College/University	Central	Yes-unused	Yes	Adult		Standard	2	2	4	-2	2
9	Bewsey Lodge Primary School	School/College/University	Central	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	1	2	-1	1
15	Brook Acre Primary School	School/College/University	Central	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	1	2	-1	1
21	Cantilever Park	Sports Club	Central	Yes	No	Adult		Good	1	1.5	3	-1.5	0.5
23	Poplars Park	Local Authority	Central	Yes-unused	Yes	Youth	(11v11)	Poor	1	0	1	-1	0.5
24	Cardinal Newman High School	School/College/University	Central	Yes	No	Adult		Standard	2	2.5	4	-1.5	2
25	Carlsberg Tetley Sports and Social Club	Commercial Management	Central	Yes	No	Adult		Standard	1	2	2	-	0
37	Dallam Primary School	School/College/University	Central	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	1	4	-3	1
38	Dallam Recreation Ground	Local Authority	Central	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(5v5)	Standard	2	0	8	-8	2
38	Dallam Recreation Ground	Local Authority	Central	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	2	0	8	-8	2
48	Grange Sports & Social Club	Sports Club	Central	Yes	No	Adult		Good	1	3.5	3	0.5	0
62	Latchford St James Primary	School/College/University	Central	No	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	1	2	-1	1
65	Loushers Lane Recreation Ground	Local Authority	Central	Yes	Yes	Adult		Poor	2	2	2	-	0
65	Loushers Lane Recreation Ground	Local Authority	Central	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(5v5)	Poor	1	0	2	-2	1
65	Loushers Lane Recreation Ground	Local Authority	Central	Yes	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	0.5	2	-1.5	0.5
65	Loushers Lane Recreation Ground	Local Authority	Central	Yes	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	1.5	1	0.5	0
71	Meadowside Primary	School/College/University	Central	Yes-unused	No	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	1	2	-1	1
74	Morley Common	Local Authority	Central	Yes	Yes	Adult		Poor	4	1.5	4	-2.5	0.5
76	Oakwood Avenue Primary School	School/College/University	Central	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	1	2	-1	1
77	Orford Jubilee Neighbourhood Hub	Community Interest Company	Central	Yes	Yes	Adult		Good/Standard	4	10	9	1	1.5
77	Orford Jubilee Neighbourhood Hub	Community Interest Company	Central	Yes	Yes	Mini	(5v5)	Standard	2	2	8	-6	0
77	Orford Jubilee Neighbourhood Hub	Community Interest Company	Central	Yes	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	2	1.5	8	-6.5	0.5
77	Orford Jubilee Neighbourhood Hub	Community Interest Company	Central	Yes	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	1	2	-1	0
78	Our Lady's Primary	School/College/University	Central	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	1	2	-1	1
82	Peel Hall Park	Local Authority	Central	Yes-unused	Yes	Adult		Poor	1	0	1	-1	0.5
82	Peel Hall Park	Local Authority	Central	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	0	2	-2	1
82	Peel Hall Park	Local Authority	Central	Yes-unused	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	0	1	-1	0.5
87	Priestley College	School/College/University	Central	No	No	Adult		Standard	1	1	2	-1	1
91	Rylands Recreation Club	Sports Club	Central	Yes	No	Adult		Good	2	2	6	-4	1
91	Rylands Recreation Club	Sports Club	Central	Yes	No	Youth	(9v9)	Good	1	0.5	4	-3.5	0.5
96	Sir Thomas Boteler High School	School/College/University	Central	Yes	Yes	Adult		Good	2	2.5	6	-3.5	2
96	Sir Thomas Boteler High School	School/College/University	Central	Yes	Yes	Mini	(5v5)	Good	1	3	6	-3	0
96	Sir Thomas Boteler High School	School/College/University	Central	Yes	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Good	2	4.5	12	-7.5	0
96	Sir Thomas Boteler High School	School/College/University	Central	Yes	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	Good	1	2	4	-2	0
98	St Albans Primary School	School/College/University	Central	Yes	Yes	Adult		Poor	1	2.5	1	1.5	0
98	St Albans Primary School	School/College/University	Central	Yes	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	2.5	2	0.5	0
99	St Andrews Primary School	School/College/University	Central	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	1	2	-1	1
100	St Ann's Primary School	School/College/University	Central	Yes-unused	No	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	1	2	-1	1

⁴ Based on pitch quality the FA recommends a maximum number of match equivalent sessions to accommodate per pitch type.

*indicates pitch usage revised to reflect educational use

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site ID	Site name	Management type	Analysis area	Community use	Maintained by WBC	Pitch type	Pitch size	Agreed quality rating	No. of pitches	Current play (match equivalent sessions ⁴)	Site capacity (MES)	Overused, at capacity or potential to accommodate additional play (MES)	Actual spare capacity (MES)
101	St Barnabas Primary School	School/College/University	Central	Yes-unused	No	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	1	2	-1	1
102	St Benedict's Primary School	School/College/University	Central	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	1	4	-3	1
103	St Bridget's Primary School	School/College/University	Central	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	1	2	-1	1
105	St Elphin's Primary	Local Authority	Central	No	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	1	2	-1	1
110	St Margert's Primary School	School/College/University	Central	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	1	4	-3	1
116	St Stephens Primary School	School/College/University	Central	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	1	2	-1	1
131	Victoria Park	Local Authority	Central	Yes	Yes	Adult		Standard	3	1.5	6	-4.5	2
8	Bennetts Recreation Ground	Parish Council	East	Yes	No	Adult		Standard	4	0.5	8	-7.5	3.5
10	Birchwood C of E Primary School	School/College/University	East	Yes-unused	No	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	1	2	-1	1
11	Birchwood Community High School	School/College/University	East	No	Yes	Adult		Standard	3	3	6	-3	1.5
12	Birchwood Forest Park	Local Authority	East	Yes	Yes	Adult		Poor	1	1	1	-	0
12	Birchwood Forest Park	Local Authority	East	Yes	Yes	Mini	(5v5)	Poor	1	1	2	-1	0
12	Birchwood Forest Park	Local Authority	East	Yes	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	2	2	6	-4	0
12	Birchwood Forest Park	Local Authority	East	Yes	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	1.5	1	0.5	0
18	Bruche Primary School	School/College/University	East	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	1	2	-1	1
29	Christ Church Primary School	School/College/University	East	No	No	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	3	3	6	-3	1.5
30	Cinnamon Brow Primary School	School/College/University	East	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	1	2	-1	0.5
31	Crab Lane Playing Field	Local Authority	East	Yes	Yes	Adult		Poor	1	2	1	1	0
31	Crab Lane Playing Field	Local Authority	East	Yes	Yes	Mini	(5v5)	Poor	1	1	2	-1	0
31	Crab Lane Playing Field	Local Authority	East	Yes	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	1.5	2	-0.5	0
31	Crab Lane Playing Field	Local Authority	East	Yes	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	2	1	2	-1	1
32	Croft Primary School	School/College/University	East	No	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	1	2	-1	0.5
33	Culcheth Community Campus	Community Interest Company	East	Yes	Yes	Adult		Good	2	2	6	-4	2
33	Culcheth Community Campus	Community Interest Company	East	Yes	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Good	1	1	6	-5	1
33	Culcheth Community Campus	Community Interest Company	East	Yes	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	Good	2	2	8	-6	2
34	Culcheth Primary School	School/College/University	East	No	No	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	1	2	-1	0.5
35	Culcheth Sports Club	Sports Club	East	Yes	No	Adult		Good	2	4	6	-2	0.5
44	Glazebury C of E Primary School	School/College/University	East	Yes-unused	No	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	1	2	-1	1
46	Gorse Covert Primary School	School/College/University	East	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	2	2	2	-	0
59	Hillock Lane Playing Fields	Local Authority	East	Yes-unused	Yes	Adult		Poor	2	0	2	-2	2
59	Hillock Lane Playing Fields	Local Authority	East	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(5v5)	Poor	1	0	2	-2	2
59	Hillock Lane Playing Fields	Local Authority	East	Yes-unused	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	2	0	2	-2	2
64	Locking Stumps Primary School	School/College/University	East	Yes-unused	No	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	1	2	-1	0.5
72	Monks Sports & Social Club	Sports Club	East	Yes	No	Adult		Good	1	3	3	-	0
75	Newchurch Primary School	School/College/University	East	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	1	2	-1	0.5
80	Padgate Hall	Local Authority	East	Yes-unused	Yes	Adult		Poor	2	0	2	-2	1
95	Shaw St Recreation Ground	Local Authority	East	Yes	Yes	Adult		Standard	1	1	2	-1	0
107	Hollins Green St Helen's C of E Primary School	School/College/University	East	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	1	4	-3	1
109	St Lewis Primary School	School/College/University	East	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	1	4	-3	1
112	St Oswald's Primary	School/College/University	East	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	1	4	-3	1
114	St Peter's Primary School	School/College/University	East	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	1	4	-3	1
128	Twiss Green Primary School	School/College/University	East	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	1	4	-3	1
129	Padgate Academy Warrington	School/College/University	East	Yes	No	Adult		Standard	2	3	4	-1	1
129	Padgate Academy Warrington	School/College/University	East	Yes-unused	No	Youth	(9v9)	Standard	2	2	4	-2	2
130	University of Chester (Warrington Campus)	School/College/University	East	Yes	No	Adult		Good	1	2.5	3	-0.5	0.5

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site ID	Site name	Management type	Analysis area	Community use	Maintained by WBC	Pitch type	Pitch size	Agreed quality rating	No. of pitches	Current play (match equivalent sessions ⁴)	Site capacity (MES)	Overused, at capacity or potential to accommodate additional play (MES)	Actual spare capacity (MES)
139	Woolston C of E Primary School	School/College/University	East	Yes	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	1.5	2	-0.5	0.5
140	Woolston Community Primary	School/College/University	East	Yes	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	2	2	-	0
141	Woolston Learning Village	School/College/University	East	No	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	1	4	-3	1
142	Woolston Neighbourhood Hub	Community Interest Company	East	Yes-unused	Yes	Youth	(11v11)	Poor	1	0	1	-1	1
143	Woolston Park	Local Authority	East	Yes	Yes	Adult		Poor	1	6.5	1	5.5	0
143	Woolston Park	Local Authority	East	Yes	Yes	Mini	(5v5)	Poor	2	6	4	2	0
143	Woolston Park	Local Authority	East	Yes	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	5.5	2	3.5	0
143	Woolston Park	Local Authority	East	Yes	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	4	1	3	0
145	The Oaks Playing Fields	Sports Club	East	Yes	No	Mini	(5v5)	Good	2	1	12	-11	1
145	The Oaks Playing Fields	Sports Club	East	Yes	No	Mini	(7v7)	Good	2	2.5	12	-9.5	0
145	The Oaks Playing Fields	Sports Club	East	Yes	No	Youth	(11v11)	Good	2	2.5	8	-5.5	0
145	The Oaks Playing Fields	Sports Club	East	Yes	No	Youth	(9v9)	Good	2	2	8	-6	0
2	Appleton Thorn Playing Fields	Local Authority	South	Yes	Yes	Adult		Poor	1	1.5	1	0.5	0
2	Appleton Thorn Playing Fields	Local Authority	South	Yes	Yes	Mini	(5v5)	Poor	3	1.5	6	-4.5	1.5
2	Appleton Thorn Playing Fields	Local Authority	South	Yes	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	3	2	1	0
3	Appleton Thorn Primary School	School/College/University	South	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(5v5)	Poor	1	0	2	-2	0.5
3	Appleton Thorn Primary School	School/College/University	South	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	0	4	-4	1
13	Bridgewater High School (Lower)	School/College/University	South	No	No	Adult		Poor	1	0	1	-1	0.5
13	Bridgewater High School (Lower)	School/College/University	South	No	No	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	0	1	-1	0.5
14	Bridgewater High School (Upper)	School/College/University	South	No	No	Adult		Standard	2	0	4	-4	2
14	Bridgewater High School (Upper)	School/College/University	South	No	No	Youth	(11v11)	Standard	1	0	2	-2	1
16	Broomfields Junior School	School/College/University	South	Yes-unused	No	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	0	2	-2	0.5
26	Chaigley School	School/College/University	South	Yes	No	Adult		Standard	1	1	2	-1	1
28	Cherry Tree Primary School	School/College/University	South	Yes	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	3	2	1	0
28	Cherry Tree Primary School	School/College/University	South	Yes	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	2.5	1	1.5	0
40	Elizabeth Park	Local Authority	South	Yes-unused	Yes	Adult		Poor	1	0	1	-1	0.5
40	Elizabeth Park	Local Authority	South	Yes	Yes	Mini	(5v5)	Poor	2	0.5	4	-3.5	1
51	Grappenhall Heys Primary School	School/College/University	South	No	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	2	0	4	-4	1
52	Grappenhall Village Sports Club	Sports Club	South	Yes	Yes	Adult		Good	3	6.5	9	-2.5	2
52	Grappenhall Village Sports Club	Sports Club	South	Yes	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Good	1	3.5	6	-2.5	0
52	Grappenhall Village Sports Club	Sports Club	South	Yes	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	Good	2	3	8	-5	0
60	HM Prison (Thorn Cross)	HMP	South	No	No	Adult		Poor	2	0	2	-2	0
60	HM Prison (Thorn Cross)	HMP	South	No	No	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	2	0	2	-2	0
66	Lymm High School	School/College/University	South	Yes	No	Adult		Good	3	4	9	-5	1
66	Lymm High School	School/College/University	South	Yes	No	Mini	(7v7)	Good	3	8.5	18	-9.5	0
66	Lymm High School	School/College/University	South	Yes	No	Youth	(9v9)	Good	1	3.5	4	-0.5	0
79	Outhrington Primary School	School/College/University	South	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	0	4	-4	1
86	Pewterspear Sports Pavilion	Trust	South	Yes	No	Adult		Standard	1	0.5	0	0.5	0
86	Pewterspear Sports Pavilion	Trust	South	Yes	No	Mini	(5v5)	Standard	1	2	4	-2	0
86	Pewterspear Sports Pavilion	Trust	South	Yes	No	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	2	3.5	8	-4.5	0
86	Pewterspear Sports Pavilion	Trust	South	Yes	No	Youth	(11v11)	Standard	1	5.5	2	3.5	0
86	Pewterspear Sports Pavilion	Trust	South	Yes	No	Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	3	2	1	0
89	Ravenbank Primary	School/College/University	South	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	0	4	-4	1
90	Ridgeway Grundy Park	Local Authority	South	Yes	Yes	Adult		Poor	2	1.5	2	-0.5	0
90	Ridgeway Grundy Park	Local Authority	South	Yes	Yes	Mini	(5v5)	Poor	1	1.5	2	-0.5	0
93	Sandy Lane Recreation Ground	Local Authority	South	Yes	Yes	Adult		Poor	1	3	0	3	0

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site ID	Site name	Management type	Analysis area	Community use	Maintained by WBC	Pitch type	Pitch size	Agreed quality rating	No. of pitches	Current play (match equivalent sessions ⁴)	Site capacity (MES)	Overused, at capacity or potential to accommodate additional play (MES)	Actual spare capacity (MES)
97	Sow Brook Playing Fields	Local Authority	South	Yes-unused	Yes	Adult		Poor	2	0	2	-2	1
117	St Thomas Primary School	School/College/University	South	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	0	4	-4	1
119	St Wilfred's Primary School	School/College/University	South	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	0	4	-4	1
120	Statham Primary School	School/College/University	South	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	0	4	-4	1
123	Stretton St Matthews	School/College/University	South	Yes-unused	No	Adult		Standard	1	0	2	-2	1
126	Thelwall Junior School	School/College/University	South	Yes-unused	No	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	2	0	4	-4	1
147	Bradshaw Community Primary School	School/College/University	South	Yes-unused	No	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	1	4	-4	1
149	St Monica's Catholic Primary School	School/College/University	South	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(5v5)	Standard	1	1	4	-4	1
6	Barrowhall Community Primary School	School/College/University	West	Yes	Yes	Mini	(5v5)	Standard	1	2	4	-2	2
6	Barrowhall Community Primary School	School/College/University	West	Yes	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	2	4	-2	2
19	Burtonwood Primary School	School/College/University	West	Yes-unused	No	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	1	2	-1	1
20	Callands Primary School	School/College/University	West	Yes	Yes	Mini	(5v5)	Poor	2	5	4	1	0
36	Dakota Park	Local Authority	West	Yes	Yes	Adult		Standard	1	0.5	2	-1.5	1
36	Dakota Park	Local Authority	West	Yes	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	2.5	4	-1.5	0
39	Doe Green Recreation Ground	Local Authority	West	Yes	Yes	Adult		Poor	1	0.5	1	-0.5	0
39	Doe Green Recreation Ground	Local Authority	West	Yes	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	0.5	2	-1.5	0.5
42	Evelyn St Primary School	School/College/University	West	Yes	No	Mini	(5v5)	Poor	1	2	2	-	0
148	Fiddlers Ferry	Private	West	Yes	No	Adult		Good	1	3	3	-	0
47	Gorseley Recreation Ground	Parish Council	West	Yes-unused	No	Adult		Poor	1	0	1	-1	1
47	Gorseley Recreation Ground	Parish Council	West	Yes-unused	No	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	0	1	-1	1
53	Great Sankey High School	School/College/University	West	No	Yes	Adult		Poor	2	1	2	-1	0
55	Great Sankey Parish Playing Fields	Parish Council	West	Yes-unused	No	Adult		Poor	1	0	1	-1	1
61	Hood Lane Recreation Ground	Local Authority	West	Yes	Yes	Adult		Standard	1	1	2	-1	1
70	Mary Ann Meadows	Local Authority	West	Yes	Yes	Adult		Poor	4	4.5	4	0.5	0
70	Mary Ann Meadows	Local Authority	West	Yes	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	2	2.5	1	1.5	0
81	Park Road Primary	School/College/University	West	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	1	4	-3	1
83	Penketh Community Primary School	School/College/University	West	Yes	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	2	3.5	4	-0.5	0.5
84	Penketh High School	Private (commercial lettings)	West	Yes	Yes	Adult		Standard	3	5	6	-1	3
85	Penketh South Primary	School/College/University	West	Yes-unused	No	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	1	1	-	1
94	Sankey Valley St James Primary School	School/College/University	West	Yes	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	2	2	8	-6	1
106	St Gregory's High School	Private (commercial lettings)	West	Yes	Yes	Adult		Standard	4	10.5	8	2.5	0
106	St Gregory's High School	Private (commercial lettings)	West	Yes	Yes	Mini	(5v5)	Standard	1	4.5	4	0.5	0
106	St Gregory's High School	Private (commercial lettings)	West	Yes	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	5	4	1	0
106	St Gregory's High School	Private (commercial lettings)	West	Yes-unused	Yes	Youth	(11v11)	Standard	1	1	2	-2	1
106	St Gregory's High School	Private (commercial lettings)	West	Yes	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	Standard	2	5.5	4	1.5	0
108	St Joseph's Primary School	School/College/University	West	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	1 ⁵	2	-1	1
113	St Paul of the Cross Primary School	School/College/University	West	Yes-unused	No	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	1	4	-3	1
115	St Philip Westbrook Church of England Primary School	School/College/University	West	Yes	No	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	2	2	-	0
118	St Vincent's	School/College/University	West	Yes	No	Mini	(5v5)	Poor	1	2.5	2	0.5	0
121	Stocks Lane Playing Field	Local Authority	West	Yes	Yes	Youth	(11v11)	Poor	1	1.5	1	0.5	0

⁵ This pitch isn't currently being used for community use but the School has just agreed that Matthiola JFC can use it in the future.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site ID	Site name	Management type	Analysis area	Community use	Maintained by WBC	Pitch type	Pitch size	Agreed quality rating	No. of pitches	Current play (match equivalent sessions ⁴)	Site capacity (MES)	Overused, at capacity or potential to accommodate additional play (MES)	Actual spare capacity (MES)
127	Thornton Road Recreation Centre	Sports Club	West	Yes	Yes	Adult		Poor	2	3	2	1	0
134	Westbrook Old Hall Primary School	School/College/University	West	Yes-unused	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	1	4	-3	1
138	Winwick Recreation Ground	Parish Council	West	Yes	Yes	Adult		Standard	2	5.5	4	1.5	0
138	Winwick Recreation Ground	Parish Council	West	Yes	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	3.5	4	-0.5	0
146	Tim Parry Community Centre	Parish Council	West	Yes	No	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	1	2	-1	0
146	Tim Parry Community Centre	Parish Council	West	Yes	No	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	1	1	-	0

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Spare capacity

The next step is to ascertain whether or not any identified ‘potential capacity’ can be deemed ‘actual spare capacity’. There may be situations where, although a site is highlighted as potentially able to accommodate some additional play, this should not be recorded as spare capacity against the site. For example, a site may be managed to regularly operate slightly below full capacity to ensure that it can cater for a number of regular friendly matches and activities that take place but are difficult to quantify on a weekly basis.

Actual spare capacity has been included in Table 2.13; and shows that there is a significant number of pitches that have potential capacity for additional use; but no capacity during the peak period, either because pitches are being used at this time, pitch quality is poor or the site is considered unsecure.

A pitch is only said to have ‘actual spare’ if it is available for community use and available at the peak time for that format of the game. Any pitch not meeting this criteria has been discounted. Pitches that are of a poor quality are not deemed to have actual spare capacity due to the already low carrying capacity of the pitches. Any identified spare capacity should be retained in order to relieve the pitches of use, which in turn would aid the improvement of pitch quality. In addition, teams do not want to play on poor quality pitches.

School sites that are currently available for community use but unused are also not considered to have actual spare capacity as the full availability of these pitches cannot be determined. Further consultation with the providers is therefore recommended to fully understand community use aspects, i.e. are the pitches available during peak time, are they available throughout the playing season and are they affordable.

Actual spare capacity has been aggregated up by area and by pitch type.

Table 2.14: Actual spare capacity summary

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions per week)					
	Adult	Youth (11v11)	Youth (9v9)	Mini (7v7)	Mini (5v5)	Total
Central	4.5	0.5	1	5	3	14
East	7	1	3	-	3	14
South	3.5	-	-	-	2.5	6
West	4	-	1	2	3.5	10.5
Warrington	19	1.5	5	7	12	44.5

Despite 192 pitches across 100 sites displaying 344 match equivalent sessions of potential capacity for additional demand; once the aforementioned criteria is applied Warrington has 44.5 match equivalent sessions of actual spare capacity across 28 sites in the Borough.

This is a significant increase on the 17.5 match equivalent sessions of actual spare capacity in 2016 partly due to the general trend of teams utilising 3G pitch provision for more match demand.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Overplay

Overplay occurs when there is more play accommodated on a site that it is able to sustain (which can often be due to low carrying capacity of the pitches). In 2016, 35 pitches were overplayed across 18 sites by a total of 22.5 match equivalent sessions. Several of these pitches were at schools, where the main reasons for overplay are an accumulation of curriculum use, extra-curricular use including school fixtures and any additional use by the community.

In 2019, Warrington has 44 pitches across 18 sites overplayed by a total of 43.5 match equivalent sessions per week. Of the pitches, 19 were assessed as poor quality across 15 sites, accounting for 16 match equivalent sessions of overplay.

Table 2.15: Overplay on pitches

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Capacity rating
48	Grange Sports & Social Club	Central	Adult	1	0.5
65	Loushers Lane Recreation Ground	Central	Youth 9v9	1	0.5
77	Orford Jubilee Neighbourhood Hub	Central	Adult	4	1
98	St Albans Primary School	Central	Adult	1	1.5
98	St Albans Primary School	Central	Mini 7v7	1	0.5
12	Birchwood Forest Park	East	Youth 9v9	1	0.5
31	Crab Lane Playing Field	East	Adult	1	1
143	Woolston Park	East	Adult	1	5.5
143	Woolston Park	East	Mini 5v5	2	2
143	Woolston Park	East	Mini 7v7	1	3.5
143	Woolston Park	East	Youth 9v9	1	3
2	Appleton Thorn Playing Fields	South	Adult	1	0.5
2	Appleton Thorn Playing Fields	South	Mini 7v7	1	1
28	Cherry Tree Primary School	South	Mini 7v7	1	1
28	Cherry Tree Primary School	South	Youth 9v9	1	1.5
86	Pewterspear Sports Pavilion	South	Adult	1	0.5
86	Pewterspear Sports Pavilion	South	Youth 11v11	1	3.5
86	Pewterspear Sports Pavilion	South	Youth 9v9	1	1
93	Sandy Lane Recreation Ground	South	Adult	1	3
20	Callands Primary School	West	Mini 5v5	1	1
70	Mary Ann Meadows	West	Adult	4	0.5
70	Mary Ann Meadows	West	Youth 9v9	2	1.5
106	St Gregory's High School	West	Adult	4	2.5
106	St Gregory's High School	West	Mini 5v5	1	0.5
106	St Gregory's High School	West	Mini 7v7	1	1
106	St Gregory's High School	West	Youth 9v9	2	1.5
118	St Vincent's	West	Mini 5v5	1	0.5
121	Stocks Lane Playing Field	West	Youth 11v11	1	0.5
127	Thornton Road Recreation Centre	West	Adult	2	1
138	Winwick Recreation Ground	West	Adult	2	1.5
Total					43.5

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Previously, the majority of overplay occurred on adult pitches (15.5), with small amounts of overplay recorded on other pitch types.

In 2019, adult pitches have remained the most overplayed; though the total on each of the other pitch types has increased. The East Area is now the most overplayed area with 15.5 match equivalent sessions of overplay whilst the Central Area is still the least overplayed (four match equivalent sessions).

Table 2.16: Overplay summary

Analysis area	Overplay (match equivalent sessions per week)					Total
	Adult	Youth (11v11)	Youth (9v9)	Mini (7v7)	Mini (5v5)	
Central	3	-	0.5	0.5	-	4
East	6.5	-	3.5	3.5	2	15.5
South	4	3.5	2.5	2	1.5	13.5
West	5.5	0.5	3	1	0.5	10.5
Warrington	19	4	9.5	7	4	43.5

Supply and demand analysis

Having considered supply and demand, the tables below identifies current demand (i.e. spare capacity taking away overplay and any latent/unmet/displaced demand) in each of the analysis areas for the different pitch types, based on match equivalent sessions. Future demand is based on team generation rates (TGRs) only as details of club aspirations were not analysis area specific previously.

Table 2.17: Summary of current and future provision of secured adult pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity ⁶	Demand (match equivalent sessions)				Total
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Latent/unmet/displaced demand	
Central	4.5	3	1.5	0.5	-	1
East	7	6.5	0.5	-	-	0.5
South	3.5	4	0.5	-	-	0.5
West	4	5.5	1.5	-	0.5	2
Warrington	19	19	-	0.5	0.5	1

The table highlights that overall in Warrington, adult pitches are currently played to capacity although there is a small shortfall in the South Analysis Area. When future demand from TGRs and latent, unmet and displaced demand are considered then there is a small shortfall.

⁶ In match equivalent sessions

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 2.18: Summary of current and future provision of secured youth 11v11 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity ⁷	Demand (match equivalent sessions)				Total
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Latent/unmet/displaced demand	
Central	0.5	-	0.5	1	-	0.5
East	1	-	1	2	-	1
South	-	3.5	3.5	2.5	-	6
West	-	0.5	0.5	2.5	0.5	3.5
Warrington	1.5	4	2.5	8	0.5	11

There is a current and future shortfall of youth 11v11 provision in Warrington. The current shortfall is 2.5 match equivalent sessions and is exacerbated when future demand (TGRs only), latent, unmet and displaced demand are all considered. Currently, the Central and East analysis areas have some spare capacity, but this is eliminated and becomes a shortfall with future demand accounted for.

It should be noted that not all future youth 11v11 teams will utilise this pitch format with some, particularly those that are older, accessing adult pitches for matches. Therefore, it may be that there will be a shortfall on adult pitches in the future.

Table 2.19: Summary of current and future provision of secured youth 9v9 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity ⁸	Demand (match equivalent sessions)				Total
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Latent/unmet/displaced demand	
Central	1	0.5	0.5	-	-	0.5
East	3	3.5	0.5	0.5	-	1
South	-	2.5	2.5	0.5	-	3
West	1	3	2	1	-	3
Warrington	5	9.5	4.5	2	-	6.5

The table highlights that overall in Warrington there are insufficient youth 9v9 pitches available to meet current and future demand although there is a small amount of spare capacity in the Central Analysis Area at present. Shortfalls on youth 9v9 pitches are generally a result of significant overplay resulting from poor quality pitches.

⁷ In match equivalent sessions

⁸ In match equivalent sessions

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 2.20: Summary of current and future provision of secured mini 7v7 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity ⁹	Demand (match equivalent sessions)				Total
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Latent/unmet/displaced demand	
Central	5	0.5	4.5	-	-	4.5
East	-	3.5	3.5	-	-	3.5
South	-	2	2	-	-	2
West	2	1	1	-	0.5	0.5
Warrington	7	7		-	0.5	0.5

The table highlights that overall in Warrington there is a sufficient supply of mini 7v7 pitches to accommodate current and future demand albeit at overall capacity. Most spare capacity in the Central Area, but this is outweighed by the shortfalls in the three other analysis areas.

Table 2.21: Summary of current and future provision of secured mini 5v5 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity ¹⁰	Demand (match equivalent sessions)				Total
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Latent/unmet/displaced demand	
Central	3	-	3	-	-	3
East	3	2	1	-	-	1
South	2.5	1.5	1	-	-	1
West	3.5	0.5	3	-	0.5	2.5
Warrington	12	4	8	-	0.5	7.5

Unlike mini 7v7 pitches, there is a sufficient supply of mini 5v5 pitches in Warrington to support both current and future demand. Despite there being a minor shortfall in the West Analysis Area that increases with latent, displaced and unmet demand, the actual spare capacity available in the other analysis areas is sufficient to address this.

There is a national trend for mini football to be accommodated on 3G pitches moving forward, with multiple matches able to be accommodated simultaneously; with leagues also able to have various kick off times meaning that a larger number of teams can be accommodated on a single site. If this trend continues and Warrington based clubs and leagues follow suit then it is likely that any shortfalls of mini provision will be eliminated.

In addition to this, if fewer mini teams are accessing grass pitches more match demand there may be the potential to reconfigure some sites to address shortfalls of other football or sporting formats.

⁹ In match equivalent sessions

¹⁰ In match equivalent sessions

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Football – grass pitch overall picture

- ◀ There is insufficient supply of all football pitch types in Warrington except for mini 5v5 pitches which have spare capacity at peak times both now and in the future. This is likely a reflection of an increase in mini play on 3G pitches within the Borough.

Supply

- ◀ The audit of pitches identifies a current total of 230 grass football pitches available for community use within Warrington across 116 sites during the 2019/20 season. This is an increase of eight pitches from 2016.
- ◀ Although there is an increase in adult and youth pitches, there has been a decrease in mini pitches being available. This is likely to reflect less demand for grass mini pitches due to an increase in use of 3G pitches for mini matches.
- ◀ There are 44.5 match equivalent sessions of actual spare (peak time) capacity across 28 sites in the Borough.

Quality

- ◀ Most pitches are assessed as either poor or standard quality. Almost half of the grass football pitches are deemed to be poor quality.
- ◀ Warrington Borough Council's Environment Service deliver a basic level of sportsground maintenance on the majority of its sites that is restricted to grass cutting, topdressing and seeding, with no further budgets available for any further level of upkeep or for improvement works.
- ◀ There are 44 pitches across 18 sites overplayed by a total of 43.5 match equivalent sessions per week. Of the pitches, 19 were assessed as poor quality across 15 sites, accounting for 16 match equivalent sessions of overplay.
- ◀ Of the sites where a full check of ancillary facilities took place nearly half were assessed as being poor (49%). 23% of the sites were rated as having standard quality ancillary facilities with 28% rated as having good quality ancillary facilities.

Demand

- ◀ A total of 456 teams were identified as playing football on pitches located within the Warrington local authority area, which is an increase of 11 teams since 2016. The number of female teams has increased in this time, with there now being five adult women's teams and 15 youth girls' teams in 2019.
- ◀ Through the audit in 2016, there were 21 teams identified as being displaced. Of these, 81% of the teams (17) are girls' teams that compete in a central venue league that takes place outside of Warrington. However, this will change with the establishment of Warrington Girls League from the 2019/20 season.
- ◀ In 2019 team generation rates applied to population growth (to 2037) predict an increase of an adult male team, 15 youth 11v11 boys' teams, a youth 11v11 girls' team and four youth 9v9 boys' teams.
- ◀ A number of clubs report aspirations to increase the number of teams they provide. Of the clubs which quantify their potential increase, there is a predicted growth of 49 teams, equating to a demand for three adult, 7.5 youth and 12.5 mini pitches.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

PART 3: THIRD GENERATION ARTIFICIAL GRASS PITCHES (3G PITCHES)

Introduction

There are several surface types that fall into the category of artificial grass pitch (AGP). The three main groups are rubber crumb (also known as third generation turf or 3G), sand based (filled or dressed) and water based.

Table 3.1: AGP type and sport suitability

Surface	Category	Comments
Rubber crumb	Long Pile 3G (60mm with shock pad)	Rugby surface – must comply with World Rugby type 22 and/or RFL Community Standard, requires a minimum of 60mm pile.
Rubber crumb	Medium Pile 3G (55-60mm)	Preferred football surface. Suitable for non-contact rugby union/league practice or play.
Rubber crumb	Short Pile 3G (40mm)	Acceptable surface for some competitive football.
Sand	Sand Filled	Competitive hockey and football training.
Sand	Sand Dressed	Preferred hockey surface and suitable for football training.
Water	Water based	Preferred hockey surface and suitable for football training if irrigated.

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

Competitive football can take place on 3G surfaces that have been FA or FIFA certified and a growing number of 3G pitches are now used for competitive match play at mini soccer and youth level. The recommended FA dimensions for a full size 3G pitch are 100x64 metres with additional run off areas of three metres required on each side. Minimum playing area dimensions to meet performance standard criteria for competitive football are 90x45 metres (or 100x64 metres for FIFA sanctioned international matches), with additional run off areas of three metres required on each side. FIFA 3G pitch certification is required to host competitive adult match play at Step 3 and below, whilst for teams playing at Steps 1 or 2 pitches are required to have FIFA Pro standard certification, further information on which is included later in the section. Football training can take place on sand and water based surfaces but is not the preferred option.

World Rugby (WR) 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. The artificial surface standards identified in Regulation 22 allows matches to be played on surfaces that meet the standard. Full contact activity, including tackling, rucking, mauling and lineouts can take place. All full size World Rugby compliant 3G pitches feature on the RFU register, including expiry dates of certification¹¹. Upon registration, World Rugby compliancy is valid for two years before renewal and retesting is required.

¹¹<http://www.englishrugby.com/governance/club-support/facilities-kit-and-equipment/artificial-surfaces/artificial-grass-pitches>

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

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

Many test contractors are able to offer reduced rates through efficiency savings to carry out multiple performance tests in the same session, therefore providers seeking 3G pitch compliancy for a number of sports would be recommended to consider this opportunity.

Current provision

Within this PPS, full size 3G pitches are defined as those which meet FA minimum dimension criteria for adult football (90x45 metres). It should be noted that within other external documentation the FA typically refers to 3G pitches as 3G Football Turf Pitches (FTPs).

There are now four full size 3G pitches in Warrington which meet the size guidelines to be considered a full size pitch. This is one more than in 2016, with Birchwood Community High School now provided.

Table 3.2: Full size 3G pitches in Warrington

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Management	Pitch type	Floodlit?	Size (metres)
11	Birchwood Community High School	East	Education	Medium Pile 3G	Yes	102 x 63
54	Great Sankey Neighbourhood Hub	West	LiveWire	Medium Pile 3G	Yes	100 x 64
77	Orford Jubilee Neighbourhood Hub	Central	LiveWire	Long Pile 3G	Yes	100 x 66
129	Padgate Academy Warrington	East	Education	Short Pile 3G	Yes	92 x 55

In addition to the supply of full size 3G pitches in Warrington, there are a variety of smaller size 3G pitches that are available for community use.

Table 3.3: Additional supply of 3G pitches in Warrington

Site ID	Site name	Management	Analysis area	No. of pitches	Pitch type	Pitch quality	Pitch size
5	Bank Quay Sports Club	Private	Central	1	3G		30 x 20
21	Cantilever Park (Warrington Town)	Sports Club	South	1	3G	Standard	32 x 24
77	Orford Jubilee Neighbourhood Hub	LiveWire	Central	10	3G	Standard	30 x 20
136	Whitecross Community Centre	Council	Central	1	3G	Poor	55 x 30

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site ID	Site name	Management	Analysis area	No. of pitches	Pitch type	Pitch quality	Pitch size
150	Kings Leadership Academy	School	East	1	3G	Standard	5 aside
151	Warrington Wolves Training Dome	Sports Club	East	1	3G	Standard	5 aside

Future provision

The LFFP for Warrington identifies eight priority sites/areas for full size 3G pitch development using the shortfalls identified¹². The priority list is as follows:

- ◀ Culcheth area
- ◀ Woolston Park
- ◀ Lymm High School
- ◀ Padgate Academy Warrington (refurbishment of existing)
- ◀ Broomfields Leisure Centre
- ◀ Grappenhall Village Sports Club
- ◀ Central analysis area
- ◀ West analysis area

In addition, the LFFP identifies one site for small-sided 3G development, highlighting Warrington Onside Youth Centre as a potential opportunity.

Of the above, a Football Foundation grant application has been approved to develop a full size 3G pitch at Broomfields Leisure Centre. Appleton FC (48 teams - developing girls) has been identified as a partner club and it is hoped that this will be provided late 2019.

Provision of a new 3G pitch at Lymm High School has been approved for funding from Football Foundation. It is hoped this pitch will be available in late 2019 with partner clubs Lymm Piranhas (28 teams) and Lymm Rovers (41 teams) women and girls focus club at a national level.

Given that the LFFP is a live document informed by an up-to-date PPS, it is recommended that the project list is re-assessed following this update. Given that demand has increased since 2016, it is likely that 3G pitch shortfalls have also increased and is determined later in this section of the report.

Further to the above, enquiries have been made in relation to potential future projects for a 3G pitch at Winwick Recreation Ground attached to Winwick Leisure Centre and Rylands FC which has aspiration for a full size 3G pitch at Rylands Recreation Ground on a condemned caged area.

Warrington Town also has long term aspiration to relocate away from its current home ground to a larger, more sustainable site. However, its existing site is in need of some short term investment, particularly if the Club was to progress to Step 2.

¹² Based on 455 football teams in 2016/17 season and using the FA 1:38 team ratio for training there is a need for 12 full size 3G pitches. Given four full size 3G pitches currently exist, this equates to the shortfall of eight.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Conversion to 3G surfaces

Since the introduction of 3G pitches and given their popularity for football, providers have seen this as a way to replace a worn sand or water based carpet and generate increased revenue from hiring out a 3G pitch to football and rugby clubs and commercial football providers. This has often come at the expense of hockey, with players now travelling further distances to gain access to a suitable pitch and many teams consequently displaced from their preferred local authority.

Due to its impact on hockey, it is appropriate to ensure that sufficient sand based AGPs are retained for the playing development of hockey. To that end, a change of surface will require a planning application and the applicants will need to show that there is sufficient provision available for hockey in the locality. Advice from Sport England and England Hockey should also be sought prior to any planning application being submitted.

It should also be noted that, if a surface is changed, it could require the existing floodlighting to be changed and in some instances noise attenuation measures may need to be put in place.

A 3G surface is limited in the range of sport that can be played or taught on it. Providers proposing a conversion should take advice from the appropriate sports' governing bodies or refer to Sport England guidance: <https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/tools-guidance/design-and-cost-guidance/artificial-sports-surfaces/>

FA/FIFA approved pitches

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

Pitches undergo FIFA testing to become a FIFA Quality pitch (previously FIFA One Star) or a FIFA Quality Pro pitch (previously FIFA Two Star), with pitches commonly constructed, installed and tested in situ to achieve either accreditation. This comes after FIFA announced changes to 3G performance in October 2015 following consultation with member associations and licenced laboratories. The changes are part of FIFA's continued ambition to drive up performance standard in the industry and the implications are that all 3G pitches built through the FA framework will be constructed to meet the new criteria.

The changes from FIFA One Star to FIFA Quality will have minimal impact on the current hours of use guidelines, which suggests that One Star pitches place more emphasis on the product's ability to sustain acceptable performance and can typically be used for 60-85 hours per week with a lifespan of 20,000 cycles. In contrast, pitches built to FIFA Quality Pro performance standards are unlikely to provide the hours of use that some FIFA Two Star products have guaranteed in the past (previously 30-40 hours per week with a lifespan of 5,000 cycles). Typically, a FIFA Quality Pro pitch will be able to accommodate only 20-30 hours per week with appropriate maintenance due to strict performance measurements.

Clubs playing in the football pyramid on 3G pitches meeting FIFA One Star or Two Star guidelines will still be expected to certify pitches annually, however, if any pitch replacement takes place the Club will need to meet the new FIFA performance criteria of FIFA Quality/Quality Pro. Pitches below the national league pyramid require FA testing every three years.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

All four full size 3G pitches in Warrington are FIFA or FA approved and can therefore be used to host competitive football matches:

- ◀ Great Sankey Neighbourhood Hub (FIFA Approved)
- ◀ Orford Jubilee Neighbourhood Hub (FA Approved)
- ◀ Birchwood Community High School (FIFA Approved)
- ◀ Padgate Academy Warrington (FA Approved) *

In addition to above, the five aside 3G pitch at Kings Leadership Academy has also been FA Approved.

*Please note that although this pitch is identified in the PPS as poor quality it is currently on the FA Register, however, it is unlikely to regain this if it is not refurbished in the near future.

World Rugby compliant pitches

At present, there are no World Rugby compliant 3G pitches in Warrington; although the pitch at Lymm Rugby Club is nearing completion and will be WR compliant upon its opening.

Given the inclement weather often experienced throughout the winter months of the rugby union season, more clubs are becoming increasingly receptive towards training on artificial pitches. Clubs traditionally train on match pitches where floodlights are in place or one pitch designated for all training in particular, unless there is a separate floodlight grass training area. It often results in deterioration in pitch quality coupled with decreasing maintenance budgets.

The recent RFU Investment Strategy for 3G pitches both at club and community based sites is indicative of the growing acceptance of 3G pitches amongst clubs nationally. Nationally clubs identify the use of 3G pitches for training as a method of protecting the match pitches and providing a high quality surface for full contact practice. Competitive play continues to take place on grass pitches for the most part, with ad hoc use of 3G pitches for fixtures in the case of unsuitable pitches due to waterlogging or frost.

RFL compliant pitches

There is a small size indoor 3G pitch located at the University of Chester (Warrington Campus) that was built by Warrington Wolves RFC in 2015 to support its academy and professional training requirements.

Since rugby league switched from the winter to summer season in March 2012, the majority of teams have moved towards playing in summer. The improved weather and longer daylight hours throughout the summer mean that clubs tend to train on grass pitches or areas in order to reduce additional costs of hiring facilities because they require less access to floodlighting. This often leads to overuse of match pitches by clubs which consistently train on them, especially those which have several teams and train twice a week.

Use of 3G pitches for rugby league typically extends to pre-season or early season training when weather is often still poor and floodlights are required. It is likely that nationally demand for 3G pitches for training will increase in future but that teams will continue to prefer grass training provision during most months of the season when weather is forgiving. Rugby league is still played throughout the winter in schools, colleges and universities where 3G pitches are used often for both training and matches where certified.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Quality

Of the four full size 3G pitches in Warrington, two are assessed as good quality, one as standard and one as poor quality. In the case of the pitch at Great Sankey Neighbourhood Hub, this has undergone refurbishment and is FIFA one star rated. Birchwood Community High School is a new facility since the previous PPS and as such is good quality.

Table 3.4: Quality of full size 3G pitches in Warrington

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Floodlit?	Quality	Built	Refurb	Comments
11	Birchwood Community High School	East	Yes	Good	2018	-	Recently provided
54	Great Sankey Neighbourhood Hub	West	Yes	Good	2000	2016	Refurbished with 3G carpet in 2016.
77	Orford Jubilee Neighbourhood Hub	Central	Yes	Standard	2012	-	Quality has remained the same
129	Padgate Academy Warrington	East	Yes	Poor	1994	2009	Reduced in quality from standard in 2016

Availability

The table below summarises the availability of full size AGPs in Warrington. In addition, it records the availability of provision within the peak period based on information provided by the operators during consultation. The peak period for AGPs is identified as 34 hours a week (Monday to Thursday 17:00-21:00; Friday 17:00-19:00; Saturday and Sunday 09:00-17:00). This has been applied in conjunction with findings from consultation to provide a total number of hours available for community use per week during the peak period.

Table 3.5: Community opening times of full size 3G pitches

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	Hours available in the peak period
11	Birchwood Community High School	East	Medium Pile 3G	31.5
54	Great Sankey Neighbourhood Hub	West	Medium Pile 3G	31.5
77	Orford Jubilee Neighbourhood Hub	Central	Long Pile 3G	31.5
129	Padgate Academy Warrington	East	Short Pile 3G	25

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Demand

Rugby league

Consultation in 2016 revealed that there was demand for 3G pitch provision from a rugby league perspective to meet training demand. Notwithstanding the small size RFL 3G pitch at Warrington Wolves Training Dome which is unavailable for wider community use, there are currently no community available 3G pitches with the necessary certification required for rugby league purposes. As detailed later, funding is being sought for a new RFL 3G pitch at Victoria Park as part of the Rugby League World Cup 'Inspired by 2021' Legacy Programme.

Rugby union

Consultation revealed that there was demand for 3G pitch provision from a rugby union perspective to meeting training and competitive match play demand. There are currently no 3G pitches with the necessary World Rugby certification required for rugby union purposes.

Lymm RUFC was granted planning permission for a 3G pitch in early 2017 and the pitch is nearing completion, due to be operational in November 2019. Further consultation revealed that if built, the AGP will cater for some of the Rugby Union demand but not all of it. The reason for this is that the host club would only have 12 guaranteed hours per week (which includes matches) to use the pitch for. The rest of the time the RFU would look for the pitch to be utilised to support other club demand, universities, college and schools.

Football

The FA considers high quality third generation artificial grass pitches as an essential tool in promoting coach and player development. The pitches can support intensive use and as such are great assets for both playing and training. Primarily such facilities have been installed for community use and training, however, are increasingly used for competition which The FA wholly supports.

Training demand

Getting access to good quality, affordable training facilities is a problem for many clubs throughout the Country. In the winter months, midweek training is only possible at floodlit facilities.

During the consultation in 2016, a number of clubs in Warrington reported a lack of access to affordable floodlit training facilities, particularly 3G surfaces. A total of 10 clubs reported demand for additional training facilities, all of which, suggest additional 3G pitches are required. Five of these clubs were training on sand-based AGPs but expressed demand to train on 3G pitches that cannot currently be met due to lack of availability of 3G pitches. It should be noted that the majority of these clubs are large community clubs, made up of a large number of affiliated teams across different age-groups and genders. In total the number of affiliated teams linked to those 10 clubs was circa 217 in 2016. It is highly likely that demand for access to 3G pitches has increased further since 2016.

The FA's long term ambition is to provide every affiliated team in England the opportunity to train once per week on a floodlit 3G surface, together with priority access for every Charter Standard Community Club through a partnership agreement. Based on peak time access being on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings, and based on full size 3G pitches being divided into thirds or quarters for training purposes, it is estimated that 38 teams can be accommodated on one full size 3G pitch.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

This discounts Mondays and Fridays as it is considered that most teams do not want to train in such close proximity to a weekend match, and also allows for other forms of access such as for small-sided commercial leagues and recreational play.

On the basis that there are 456 currently playing competitive home fixtures on pitches within Warrington, there is a recommended boroughwide need for 12 full size 3G pitches. On the basis that there are currently four full size 3G pitches this leaves a shortfall of eight in Warrington.

It should be noted, however, that there are a further 20 displaced teams that play competitively outside of Warrington but require training facilities within Warrington. Most of these teams are female teams that compete in central venue leagues outside of Warrington.

Further analysis of where teams play (and therefore are most likely to want to train) by analysis area is shown below.

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

Analysis area	Current number of teams	Current 3G requirement ¹³	Current number of 3G pitches	Shortfall of 3G pitches
Central	86	2 (2.3)	1	1
East	110	3 (2.9)	2	1
South	128	3 (3.4)	-	3
West	132	4 (3.5)	1	3
Warrington	456	12	4	8

The greatest current shortfalls are in South and West areas, which both have a shortfall of three full size 3G pitches each.

Please note that once 3G pitches are provided at Broomfields Leisure Centre and Lymm High School, the shortfall of 3G pitches in South Analysis Area will be reduced to one.

When accounting for future demand of 21 teams (a total demand of 477 teams) the overall need across Warrington increases by two when analysed by analysis area.

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

Analysis area	Current number of teams	Current 3G requirement ¹⁴	Current number of 3G pitches	Shortfall of 3G pitches
Central	89	3 (2.5)	1	2
East	115	3 (3.0)	2	1
South	134	4 (3.5)	-	4
West	139	4 (3.7)	1	3
Warrington	477	14	4	10

Please note that once 3G pitches are provided at Broomfields Leisure Centre and Lymm High School, the future shortfall of 3G pitches in South Analysis Area will be reduced to two.

¹³ All figures rounded up to the nearest full size pitch.

¹⁴ All figures rounded up to the nearest full size pitch.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 3.8: Summary of usage and spare capacity of full size 3G pitches

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Surface type	Size	Total number of hours available for community use during peak period ¹⁵	Usage (during peak period)	Spare Capacity (during peak period)	Comments
11	Birchwood Community High School	East	Medium Pile 3G	Full size	<i>Unknown</i>			
54	Great Sankey Neighbourhood Hub	West	Medium Pile 3G	Full size	31 15 (Mon – Fri) 16 (Sat & Sun)	94% 100% 88%	6% 0% 12%	No capacity for training purposes during weekday peak periods. Spare capacity at weekends is extremely limited.
77	Orford Jubilee Neighbourhood Hub	Central	Long Pile 3G	Full size	31 15 (Mon – Fri) 16 (Sat & Sun)	70% 82% 59%	30% 18% 41%	Minimal spare capacity for training purposes during weekday evenings. Only slots available during peak periods are 5.30 – 6.30pm weekday evenings. Some spare capacity available at weekends, predominantly Sunday PM, and pitch is FA certified.
129	Padgate Academy Warrington	East	Short Pile 3G	Full size	25 18 (Mon – Fri) 7 (Sat only)	64% 80% 14%	36% 20% 86%	Minimal spare capacity for training purposes during weekday evenings. Only slots available are 5.00 – 6.00pm weekdays. Spare capacity available at weekends although pitch is not FA certified.

¹⁵ The peak period for AGPs is identified as 34 hours a week (Monday to Thursday 17:00-21:00; Friday 17:00-19:00; Saturday and Sunday 09:00-17:00)

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Summary of usage

Table 3.7 highlights the current usage of full size 3G AGPs and the number of hours that the pitches are available in the peak period. The table shows that all 3G AGPs are well used and that whilst spare capacity exists during the peak period, this is limited to times during the weekend and outside of the most popular time slots (Monday to Thursday 6.00pm onwards). There is some limited potential to increase the hours that the pitches are available during the peak period.

It is important to acknowledge that due to the lack of 3G pitches there is significant usage of sand based AGPs by football clubs during weekday evenings for training purposes. More detailed information is available in Section 4 but in summary four of the size full size sand based AGPs have more football usage than hockey, with two of the pitches being 100% used for football.

Conclusion

In conclusion, there are four full size 3G pitches across Warrington, all of which, are FIFA or FA approved and can therefore be used to host competitive football matches. None of the pitches have the necessary RFL certification for full contact rugby.

Through consultation with the clubs and operators, it is clear that the AGPs are at capacity during weekday evening peak periods and unable to offer more usage for football, hockey or rugby league training. Consultation indicates that football, hockey and rugby league clubs all require more access to AGPs and at a cost that is affordable.

On the basis that there are 456 currently playing competitive home fixtures on pitches within Warrington, there is a recommended boroughwide need for 12 full size 3G pitches. On the basis that there are currently four full size 3G pitches this leaves a shortfall of eight in Warrington, as reflected in the Warrington LFFP.

Once 3G pitches are provided at Broomfields Leisure Centre and Lymm High School, the shortfall of 3G pitches in South Analysis Area will be reduced to one.

There remains lots of football training demand on sand AGPs even though there has been an increase in 3G pitches in Warrington.

The seasonal differences between when football and rugby league takes place present challenges. As football training is the dominant reason for hire of 3G AGPs due mostly to the fact it has higher levels of demand and that this demand is during winter rather than summer periods, rugby league teams identified during consultation that they struggle to access 3G AGPs for training resulting in overplay on grass pitches.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Overall 3G pitch summary

- ◀ Analysis of football training demand by analysis area shows a need for 12 full size 3G pitches. On the basis that there are currently four full size 3G pitches this leaves a shortfall of eight in Warrington.
- ◀ Once 3G pitches are provided at Broomfields Leisure Centre and Lymm High School, the current shortfall of 3G pitches in South Analysis Area will be reduced to one.
- ◀ When accounting for future demand of 21 teams (a total demand of 477 teams overall) the overall need across Warrington increases by two when analysed by analysis area.

Supply

- ◀ There are four full size 3G pitches across Warrington, all of which, are FIFA or FA approved and can therefore be used to host competitive football matches.
- ◀ Lymm Rugby Club now has a full size 3G pitch with the shock pad and certification required for rugby union purposes.
- ◀ There are currently no community available 3G pitches with the necessary certification required for rugby league purposes. However, funding is being sought for a new RFL 3G pitch at Victoria Park as part of the Rugby League World Cup 'Inspired by 2021' Legacy Programme.

Quality

- ◀ Of the four full size 3G pitches in Warrington, two are assessed as good quality (Birchwood Community High School and Great Sankey Neighbourhood Hub), one as standard (Orford Jubilee Neighbourhood Hub) and one as poor quality (Padgate Academy Warrington).

Demand

- ◀ There are 456 currently playing competitive home fixtures on grass pitches within Warrington, there is a recommended boroughwide need for 12 full size 3G pitches.
- ◀ There is demand for full size 3G pitches to be constructed to RFL specification to service rugby league training and match demand and to address capacity issues at Victoria Park.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

PART 4: HOCKEY

Introduction

Hockey in England is governed by England Hockey (EH) and is administered locally by the Cheshire Hockey Association.

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

Table 4.1: England Hockey guidelines on artificial surface types suitable for hockey

Category	Surface	Playing Level	
		Essential	Desirable
1	Water surface approved within the FIH Global/National Parameters	International hockey (training and matches).	Domestic National Premier League competition; Higher levels of player pathway (performance centres and upwards).
2	Sand dressed surfaces within the FIH National Parameter	Domestic National Premier League competition; Higher levels of player pathway (academy centres and upwards).	All adult and junior league hockey; Intermediate or advanced school hockey; EH competitions for clubs and schools.
3	Sand filled surfaces within the FIH National Parameter	All adult and junior club training and league hockey; EH competitions for clubs and schools; Intermediate or advanced school hockey.	Lower level hockey (introductory level).
4	All 3G surfaces	No hockey.	Lower level hockey (introductory level) when no category 1-3 surface is available.

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

It is considered that a hockey pitch can accommodate a maximum of four matches on one day (peak time) provided the pitch has floodlighting. Training is generally midweek for senior activity and requires access to a pitch and floodlights, whereas many junior teams train on a Sunday as well as during midweek.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Consultation

There are three hockey clubs located in Warrington. In 2016, all clubs responded to an online survey resulting in a response rate of 100%. Results from this consultation have been used to inform the key issues within this section of the needs assessment. The clubs are as follows:

- ◀ Lymm Hockey Club
- ◀ Warrington Hockey Club
- ◀ University of Chester (Warrington Campus) Hockey Club

Updates in 2019 have been provided by England Hockey.

Supply (2019)

There is a total of six full size (sand filled/ dressed) AGPs in Warrington, of which, five are available for community use. This takes account of the conversion of the AGP at Broomfields Leisure Centre to a 3G surface which is currently in progress (2019). The AGP at Cardinal Newman is not available for community use and is not floodlit.

Table 4.2: Summary of sand based AGPs by location

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Floodlit?	Community use?	Hockey use?
24	Cardinal Newman High School	South	No	No	No
33	Culcheth Community Campus	East	Yes	Yes	Yes
66	Lymm High School	South	Yes	Yes	Yes
84	Penketh High School	West	Yes	Yes	No
87	Priestley College	South	Yes	Yes	Yes
130	University of Chester (Warrington Campus)	East	Yes	Yes	Yes

There is one smaller size AGP in Warrington suitable for hockey, located at Stockton Heath Primary School. However, this pitch is not available for community use and is not floodlit.

Management and security of tenure

Of the full size AGPs in Warrington suitable for hockey, one is managed by LiveWire Warrington (Culcheth Community Campus). The AGPs at Lymm High School, Priestley College and University of Chester (Warrington Campus) are managed in house whilst the AGP at Penketh High School is managed by School Lettings Solutions.

Four of the full size AGPs are used for hockey; Culcheth Community Campus, Lymm High School, Priestley College and University of Chester (Warrington Campus).

Pitch quality

It is considered that the carpet of an AGP has a life span of approximately 10 years; this however is dependent on levels of use. Due to this, resurfacing is recommended at Cardinal Newman Catholic High School (1984), Culcheth Community Campus (2004), and Penketh High School (1995).

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Lymm High School's AGP was resurfaced in 2009 and was rated as standard quality through the NTA process although recent feedback from England Hockey following consultation with Lymm Hockey Club, which uses the AGP both for competitive match play and training, suggest there is a drainage issue with the pitch that impacts on the use of the AGP, neighbouring cricket wickets and in extreme circumstances housing in the vicinity of the pitch. England Hockey is looking to meet with the school in early January 2020 to discuss the options.

The AGP at University of Chester (Warrington Campus), originally built in 2003, underwent significant rejuvenation works during 2016, which has improved the pitch quality.

The most recently built sand based/filled AGP is located at Priestley College. Built in 2010 this pitch was rated as good quality through the NTA and this quality rating was supported by Warrington Hockey Club who use the site for all their competitive match play and training requirements.

All of the AGPs aged 10 years or more were rated as standard quality through the NTA process. Lymm Hockey Club also use AGPs at Culcheth Community Campus and University of Chester (Warrington Campus) for competitive match play. The Club's view of the quality of these pitches was that they are a standard quality.

Table 4.3: Sand based AGP pitch ratings

Site ID	Site name	Quality rating
24	Cardinal Newman High School	Standard
33	Culcheth Community Campus	Standard
66	Lymm High School	Poor*
84	Penketh High School	Standard
87	Priestley College	Good
130	University of Chester (Warrington Campus)	Standard

*As detailed further above, Lymm Hockey Club and England Hockey report that the quality of the pitch has reduced further and is now poor quality (previously assessed as standard quality). This has resulted in the Club having to use an alternative venues for the remainder of the 2019 season.

Ancillary facilities

Feedback from the two hockey clubs indicates that ancillary facilities are available at the four sites that are currently used for hockey. The quality of the ancillary facilities based on the consultation was that Culcheth Community Campus and Priestley College have good quality ancillary facilities whilst Lymm High School and University of Chester (Warrington Campus) have standard quality ancillary facilities.

Usage

The following table summarises the availability of full size sand based AGPs for community use in Warrington. In addition, it records the availability of provision within the peak period. Sport England's Facility Planning Model (FPM) applies an overall peak period for AGPs of 34 hours a week (Monday to Thursday 17:00 – 21:00; Friday 17:00-19:00; Saturday and Sunday 09:00 – 17:00).

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 4.4: Community opening times of full size sand based AGPs

Site ID	Site name	Opening times	Hours in the peak period	% of use for hockey	% of use for football	Comments	Capacity for hockey
24	Cardinal Newman High School	Unavailable	0	-	-	This AGP is based on a school site with no community use identified. This is likely due to a lack of floodlighting. The school aspires to replace the carpet with a 3G surface and install floodlights so it can be available for community use.	Unavailable
33	Culcheth Community Campus	Mon-Fri 07:15-22:30 Sat & Sun 08:30-17:00	34	20%	80%	Used by Culcheth High School (outside peak periods), with the majority of community use coming from local football teams. For hockey, the pitch is used by Lymm Hockey Club for competitive match play, if other pitches at Lymm High School and University of Chester (Warrington Campus) are not available.	Spare capacity for hockey matches.
66	Lymm High School	Mon-Fri 17:00-22:00 Sat 08:00-18:00 Sun 09:00-17:00	34	70%	30%	Used by Lymm High School (outside peak periods). Used predominantly by Lymm Hockey Club*, with all remaining spare capacity let out to community football teams.	No spare capacity for hockey*
84	Penketh High School	Mon-Fri 17:00-21:30 Sat & Sun 09:00-20:00	34	0%	100%	Used by Penketh High School (outside peak periods), with all community use being for football. No demand for hockey use identified.	No hockey use or demand identified.
87	Priestley College	Mon-Thurs 18:00-21:00 Sat 12:00-16:00	16	44%	56%	No capacity is available during peak time. Usage is fairly evenly split between Warrington Hockey Club, who use it for training and competitive matches and community football teams.	No spare capacity for hockey.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site ID	Site name	Opening times	Hours in the peak period	% of use for hockey	% of use for football	Comments	Capacity for hockey
130	University of Chester (Warrington Campus)	Wednesday 17:30-20:30 Sat 12:00-17:00	8	62%	38%	Used by Lymm Hockey Club for competitive match play. Used by the University hockey team for matches and training. The priority is student University teams, and their training schedules. Wednesday is the only evening between 5.30-8.30pm offered for external team bookings.	No spare capacity for hockey.

* Please note that due to quality issues, Lymm Hockey Club is having to use an alternative venue for the remainder of the 2019 season. Junior training is currently at Broomfields Leisure Centre (which is to be converted to a 3G pitch). Seniors are not currently training but matches are being played at University of Chester until Christmas 2019.

There is significant use of sand based AGPs in Warrington for football training. The most significant now being Culcheth Community Campus and Penketh High School.

Penketh High School and Cardinal Newman High School have no community hockey use. Penketh High School is likely not to be used due to its location compared to where the demand is (South Area) where both Lymm Hockey Club and Warrington Hockey Club are based. Historically the Cardinal Newman High School has not allowed community use, however, in addition, there is no floodlighting which is also likely to be a barrier to hockey community use.

Lymm High School, Priestley College and University of Chester (Warrington Campus) are operating at capacity, and these are the main AGPs used by the three hockey clubs. The other AGP currently used by clubs for competitive matches is located at Culcheth Community Campus. This pitch is only sporadically used if fixtures cannot be accommodated at other venues and therefore has spare capacity at weekends for matches.

There is a lack of capacity for additional hockey training. Lymm HC would like to deliver additional mid-week junior training but due to the football use mid-week, only late slots are available, which is unsuitable for junior sessions. This is affecting the growth of the junior section at Lymm HC. The only site with capacity to accommodate hockey training is Penketh High School but due to its location it is not a viable option for Lymm Hockey Club, Warrington Hockey Club or the University of Chester (Warrington Campus) Hockey Club.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Demand (2019)

In 2019 there are three hockey clubs in Warrington consisting of 16 teams and 379 members. Of these, there are seven women's, six men's and three junior teams.

Table 4.5: Current hockey demand

Name of club	Match facility (main home ground in bold)	Training facility	No. of competitive teams			Current membership ¹⁶		
			Senior men	Senior women	Juniors	Senior men	Senior women	Juniors
Lymm Hockey Club	University of Chester (Warrington Campus) Broomfields Leisure Centre (until Christmas 2019)	University of Chester (Warrington Campus) Broomfields Leisure Centre (until Christmas 2019)	3	5	3	53	58	173
University of Chester (Warrington Campus)	University of Chester (Warrington Campus)	University of Chester (Warrington Campus)	1	-	-	8	-	-
Warrington Hockey Club	Priestley College	Priestley College	2	2	-	29	40	18
Warrington total			6	7	3	90	98	191

Lymm Hockey Club

Lymm Hockey Club is the largest club located within Warrington, with a total 284 members, of which 111 are senior members and 173 junior members. This club consists of five women's, three men's and three junior teams.

Its main home ground is Lymm High School, however, due to quality issues, the Club is having to use alternative venues for the remainder of the 2019 season. Junior training is currently at Broomfields Leisure Centre (which is progressing to be converted to a 3G pitch). Seniors are not currently training but matches are being played at University of Chester until Christmas 2019.

Notwithstanding the issues above, the Club would like to have additional pitch provision to enable them to provide more training to their existing teams and members, and to offer mid-week junior training.

¹⁶ Taken from club surveys and EH affiliation

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

University of Chester (Warrington Campus)

The University of Chester (Warrington Campus) Hockey Club has eight senior members. The Club now consists of a men's senior team; having previously also had a senior women's team. Many prospective members now affiliate to the University of Chester HC, based in Chester (Cheshire West & Chester). All matches and all training activity are played at the University of Chester (Warrington Campus). The Club did not express any concerns through the consultation.

Warrington Hockey Club

Warrington Hockey Club has a total of 87 members, 69 senior and 18 junior. The Club consists of two women and two men's teams. All matches and all training activity are played at Priestley College.

The Club's main concern is the price and availability of suitable AGPs within Warrington. It would like to start their pre-season training earlier but is unable to do so as Priestley College AGP is closed during school holiday periods. It also highlighted that they are struggling to cover costs associated with pitch hire. The Club is working with England Hockey to start a junior section. Planning work for this is currently taking place. This will require more pitch time.

Unmet and latent demand

During the consultation Lymm Hockey Club indicated that it had unmet demand for an additional two hours of training for their senior teams that could not be accommodated at Lymm High School. Through further consultation with EH and the Club, it has been identified that it also has demand for additional mid-week junior training sessions.

Warrington Hockey Club indicated that its only unmet demand was during the school summer holiday period for training at Priestley which is unavailable over summer preventing pre-season training.

Future demand

EH applies a growth rate to current affiliated membership numbers to determine anticipated increases in future demand. The predicted growth rate for Warrington is 4% and the table below uses this to determine potential growth.

It should also be noted that EH has recently launched its Hockey Heroes programme (2019), aiming to introduce 3-5 year olds to hockey activity, with a view that these participants will follow the pathway to becoming full club members as they develop. This programme will influence future demand levels and it is envisaged that an additional junior team per season will be recruited from the programme.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 4.7: Predicted future club based membership based on growth rate

Name of club	Match facility (main home ground in bold)	Training facility	Current membership ¹⁷			Total current membership	Future membership ¹⁸			Total future membership
			Senior men	Senior women	Juniors		Senior men	Senior women	Juniors	
Lymm Hockey Club	Lymm High School University of Chester (Warrington Campus) Culcheth Community Campus	Lymm High School	53	58	173	284	55	60	180	295
University of Chester (Warrington Campus)	University of Chester (Warrington Campus)	University of Chester (Warrington Campus)	8	-	-	8	8	-	-	8
Warrington Hockey Club	Priestley College	Priestley College	29	40	18	87	30	41	18	89
Warrington Total			90	98	191	379	93	101	198	392

In addition, Lymm Hockey Club and Warrington HC express future demand. Lymm Hockey Club indicated that it hopes to grow as a club over the coming years. It did not have any quantifiable numbers linked to this growth in terms of the number of participants or the number of additional teams they may introduce.

Warrington Hockey Club also has aspiration to increase the number of participants and teams. The Club does not have a junior section but has a desire to introduce one over the next year. It does not know where the new junior session will be hosted and where additional teams would train or play as their current base (Priestley College) is at capacity.

¹⁷ Taken from club surveys

¹⁸ England Hockey predicts growth of 4% in Warrington

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Supply and demand analysis

In order to support the development of hockey in Warrington it is imperative to ensure that there is sufficient supply for both competitive match play requirements and also for training and other informal versions of hockey e.g. small sided hockey and Back to Hockey.

Based on 12 adult teams and three junior teams (this discounts the two University of Chester (Warrington Campus) teams as these play midweek) in Warrington requiring a pitch at peak time (Saturday) there is a requirement for four full size (rounded up from 3.75) floodlit hockey pitches based on teams playing home and away (and based on a floodlit AGP being able to accommodate a maximum of four matches on a Saturday and Sunday).

Due to availability on pitches for matches, training and the informal versions of the game, the current four pitches used for hockey need to be retained as hockey surfaces. Junior teams can play competitive fixtures on either Saturday's or Sundays, all current junior teams in Warrington currently play on a Sunday. Furthermore, a large proportion of junior members actually represent the senior teams competitively. Based on the information available there is sufficient supply to meet both current and future competitive match play requirements. However, it is not sufficient to meet current and future training demand, and any additional growth in participation numbers at the hockey clubs achieved through any informal versions of the game.

The four AGPs that need to be protected are:

- ◀ Culcheth High School
- ◀ Lymm High School
- ◀ Priestley College
- ◀ University of Chester (Warrington Campus)

The emerging key issues in this update is the reduced quality of the AGP at Lymm High School which is affecting use by Lymm HC which is currently (the remainder of the 2019 season) using alternative venues. However, this position is unsustainable for the Club.

In addition, there is also a need to provide a solution to address the shortage of provision to accommodate hockey clubs training needs. Of the current AGPs suitable for hockey use, there is currently significant football use occurring, which is hindering the development of hockey and the availability for hockey to develop.

The three sand based AGPs currently used for hockey are all hired, to varying degrees, for football use. Lymm High School AGP which is where Lymm Hockey Club is based has 30% football use during the peak periods, and Priestley College's AGP, Warrington Hockey Club's home ground, has 56% football use during the peak periods it is available. The University of Chester AGP has 38% football use during the available peak periods.

It is hoped that with the increase in 3G pitches will also come an increase in capacity for hockey on AGPs where football training is transferred. This is most likely to have an impact at Lymm High School where there is a new 3G pitch planned.

It is important to highlight that if additional provision is provided to support hockey training and informal play the participation numbers will increase and potentially the number of competing teams could also increase.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

As there is a requirement for four sand based AGPs to meet demand for competitive match play and training requirements, it is essential that the four sand based AGPs currently utilised for competitive match play and training (Lymm High School, Priestley College, Culcheth High School and University of Chester (Warrington Campus)) must therefore be retained as sand-based AGPs. Also, if some of the existing football use that occurs during peak periods at these sites could be reduced, it would help meet the current unmet demand for training and support further informal play.

Converting sand-based AGPs to 3G

Since the introduction of 3G pitches and given their popularity for football, providers have seen this as a way of replacing their tired sand-based carpet and generating money from hiring out a 3G pitch to football clubs and commercial football providers. This has come at the expense of hockey, with players now travelling further distances to gain access to a suitable pitch and many teams being displaced from their preferred local authority.

Due to its impact on hockey, it is appropriate to ensure that sufficient sand-based AGPs are retained for the playing development of hockey. To that end, a change of surface will require a planning application and, as part of that, the applicants will have to show that there is sufficient provision available for hockey in the locality. Advice from Sport England and England Hockey should also be sought prior to any planning application being submitted.

It should also be noted that, if a surface is changed, it could require the existing floodlighting to be changed and, in some instances, noise attenuation measures may need to be put in place.

The 3G surface is limited in the range of sport that can be played or taught on it. Those proposing a conversion should take advice from the appropriate sports' governing bodies or refer to Sport England guidance 'Selecting the Right Artificial Grass Surface which can be found on Sport England's website: <https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/tools-guidance/design-and-cost-guidance/artificial-sports-surfaces/>

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Overall hockey picture

- ◀ The current quantitative level of suitable AGP provision for hockey is sufficient to meet current and future demand. However, quality issues at Lymm High School have resulted in Lymm Hockey Club having to find alternative venues.
- ◀ There is a requirement for four sand based AGPs to meet demand for competitive match play, junior training and informal play.
- ◀ The AGP provision currently utilised for hockey is strategically well positioned within the Borough currently.
- ◀ The four AGPs that have recorded hockey use and need to be protected; Culcheth Community Campus, Lymm High School, Priestley College and University of Chester (Warrington Campus).

Supply

- ◀ There is a total of six full size (sand filled/ dressed), floodlit AGPs in Warrington. This takes account of the conversion of the AGP at Broomfields Leisure Centre to a 3G surface which is currently in progress (2019). The AGP at Cardinal Newman is not available for community use and is not floodlit.

Quality

- ◀ Only one AGP is assessed as good quality (Priestly College) and the remaining five are rated as standard quality. However, reports suggest that the AGP at Lymm High School has issues with floodlighting and has reduced to poor quality meaning that the Club is now using alternative venues.
- ◀ It is considered that the carpet of an AGP usually lasts for approximately ten years (depending on level of use and maintenance regimes). Due to this, resurfacing is recommended at three AGPs; Cardinal Newman Catholic High School (1984), Culcheth Community Campus (2004), and Penketh High School (1995).

Availability

- ◀ The pitch at Priestley College is only available during term time which restricts pre-season training for Warrington Hockey Club.
- ◀ Lymm High School (notwithstanding current quality issues and reduced usage), and University of Chester (Warrington Campus) are all operating at capacity during the peak periods for hockey.
- ◀ Although Priestley College is at capacity, please note that it is not fully available during the peak period (only 16 hours compared to 34 hours at the other sites).
- ◀ Culcheth Community Campus is generally unused for hockey (except occasional use by Lymm HC) and therefore has significant spare capacity. However, it is currently accommodating Lymm HC whilst there are quality issues at Lymm High School.
- ◀ There is significant use of sand based AGPs in Warrington for football training. The most significant now being Culcheth Community Campus and Penketh High School.

Demand

- ◀ There are three hockey clubs in Warrington with a total of 379 members, of which, 188 are senior members and 191 junior members.
- ◀ One of the clubs highlighted that they had existing unmet demand due to the unavailability of additional AGP provision during weekday evenings.
- ◀ Two clubs indicated plans to increase their membership numbers in the coming years, specifically by introducing new and additional junior sections with the club.
- ◀ England Hockey predicts there to be a growth in membership of 4% in Warrington (based on affiliation trends) which results in an overall increase of six adults and seven juniors. There is demand for additional access to sand based AGP during weekday evenings for training purposes, specifically in the South Area. However, an increase in 3G pitch provision may create some spare capacity for further hockey training on the current AGPs.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

PART 5: RUGBY LEAGUE

The Rugby Football League (RFL) is the governing body for rugby league in Britain and Ireland. It administers the England national rugby league team, the Challenge Cup, Super League and the Championships which form the professional and semi-professional structure of the game in the United Kingdom. The RFL also administers the amateur and junior game across the county in association with the British Amateur Rugby League Association (BARLA).

Warrington Wolves RLFC official charity Warrington Community Foundation has been created to provide opportunities through sport, education, health and the arts which enrich, inspire and celebrate the Warrington community. This is achieved through delivering a range of programmes including rugby league coaching sessions through to improving health, wellbeing and career prospects for both young people and adults. The Foundation delivers a huge variety of community projects covering the areas of Dance, Disability, Education, Health and Heritage. One of its key programmes is Sky Try.

The Sky Try programme aims to increase viewers, spectators and participants to rugby league. It aims to achieve this through four distinct pillars which each have their own specific targets:

- ◀ Primary rugby league: a minimum five-week coaching programme in primary schools.
- ◀ Secondary school competition and player development: aimed at increasing secondary school participation in rugby league through workshops.
- ◀ Play Touch Rugby League: a six-week workout project aimed at increasing mini/junior girls' participation.
- ◀ Making the big games bigger: aimed at increasing spectator numbers through major rugby league events.

Consultation

There are nine amateur rugby clubs located in Warrington. In 2016, eight of these clubs responded to an online survey resulting in a response rate of 89%. Results from this consultation were used to inform the key issues within this section of the needs assessment. Updates in 2019 have been provided by Warrington Wolves Charitable Foundation and RFL.

Supply (2019)

The audit of pitches now identifies a current total of 36 grass rugby league pitches within Warrington across 19 sites. These are sites that currently have rugby league pitches marked out on the site.

Of these pitches, three are considered unavailable for community use, located at Cardinal Newman High School, HMP Thorn Cross and Halliwell Jones Stadium. The latter of these sites is the home venue of Warrington Wolves, which competes in the Betfred Super League.

Table 5.1 shows that in 2019 there was a total of 33 grass rugby league pitches that are available for community use, 27 of these are senior pitches, two are junior pitches and four are primary pitches. Please note that for the purpose of this report, being available for community use refers to pitches in public, voluntary, private or commercial ownership or management (including education sites) recorded as being available for use/hire by teams/clubs.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

The number of pitches available for community use has increased since the previous PPS data was collated (2016), despite the rugby league pitch at university of Chester (Warrington campus) no longer marked for rugby league activity. The number of senior rugby league pitches, overall, has remained the same.

The pitches at Rylands Recreation Ground are also no longer in place, having been converted to football pitches by the site owner (resulting in the displacement of the Club).

In addition to these grass pitches, there is also small size indoor 3G pitch located at the University of Chester (Warrington Campus) that was built by Warrington Wolves RFC in 2015 to support its academy and professional training requirements.

Table 5.1: Rugby league sites in Warrington

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Clubs playing at pitches	Notes of ownership/ management
7	Beamont Academy	Central	-	Owned and managed by school.
11	Birchwood Community High School	East	-	Owned and managed by school.
24	Cardinal Newman High School	Central	-	Owned and managed by school.
33	Culcheth Community Campus	East	-	Pitches are owned by school but managed by LiveWire.
38	Dallam Recreation Ground	Central	Bank Quay Bulls	Rented from WBC on annual seasonal fee.
43	Fir Tree Lane	West	Burtonwood Bulldogs & Burtonwood Bridge	Rented from Burtonwood Parish Council on annual seasonal fee.
55	Great Sankey Parish Playing Fields	West	-	Owned and managed by Great Sankey Parish Council.
58	Halliwell Jones Stadium	Central	Warrington Wolves Super League	Privately owned and managed.
59	Hillock Lane Playing Fields	East	Woolston Rovers	Site jointly owned by Warrington Borough Council (80%) and by Woolston & Fearnhead Parish Council. Managed by WBC. Rented from WBC on annual seasonal fee.
60	HM Prison (Thorn Cross)	South	-	Privately owned and managed.
61	Hood Lane Recreation Ground	West	Crosfields	Rented from WBC
65	Loushers Lane Recreation Ground	Central	Occasional use from Latchford Albion and Priestly College.	Owned and managed by WBC.
72	Monks Sports & Social Club	East	Woolston Rovers	Privately managed with clubs linked to Sports Club.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Clubs playing at pitches	Notes of ownership/ management
95	Shaw Street Recreation Ground	East	Culcheth Eagles	Rented from WBC on annual seasonal fee.
96	Sir Thomas Boteler High School	Central	-	Owned by WBC and managed by school.
102	St Benedict's Primary School (Junior pitch)	Central	Rylands Sharks	Owned by WBC and managed by school. Rented from school in return for club maintaining.
131	Victoria Park	Central	Latchford Giants & Latchford Albion	Rented from WBC on annual seasonal fee.
132	Victoria Park Arena	Central	Latchford Giants	Rented from WBC on match basis
132	Victoria Park Stadium	Central	Latchford Albion & Warrington Wolves	Rented from WBC on match basis
154	Christ Church Playing Field	East	-	Owned by WBC.

Table 5.2: Summary of grass rugby league pitches available to the community by analysis area

Analysis area	Available for community use			
	Senior	Junior	Primary	Total
Central neighbourhood	11	1	2	14
East neighbourhood	9	1	1	11
South neighbourhood	0	0	0	0
West neighbourhood	7	0	1	8
Warrington	27	2	4	33

The community use pitches are generally well spread across the analysis areas, although there are no rugby league pitches available for community use located in the South neighbourhood area. The West and East neighbourhood analysis areas have eight and 11 pitches respectively. The Central neighbourhood Analysis Area has 14 pitches available for community use, including half of Warrington's primary size pitches.

The vast majority of rugby league pitches are classified as being senior size, with cones used to mark pitches for under 11s and below. However, there are instances where designated junior or primary pitches are provided.

Ownership/ management

Of the community available pitches, 22 are managed by Warrington Borough Council, three are managed by parish councils, five are managed in house by schools/colleges/universities, one is managed privately by private commercial sports clubs; one by LiveWire, a Community Interest Company; and one by the Church of England.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Lapsed/ disused sites

Table 5.3: Lapsed or disused rugby league pitches/sites in Warrington

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Lapsed or disused site	Comments
4	Bank Park	Central neighbourhood	Lapsed	A junior pitch. Due to its location and lack of ancillary facilities, it became disused during late 2000 and has not been used as a playing pitch site since.
63	Lockers Playing Field	Central neighbourhood	Lapsed	Two senior pitches. Privately owned and closed when associated business closed in early 2000.
70	Mary Ann Meadows	West neighbourhood	Disused	A senior rugby league pitch that was disused but is now marked for football.
137	Wilderspool Stadium	Central neighbourhood	Disused	A senior rugby league pitch.

Future supply/current developments

As part of the needs assessment any pitch development plans that have funding in place and planning permission (where required) have been highlighted in this section. There are a number of aspirational plans for facility improvements that either do not yet have funding and/ or planning permission.

Victoria Park

As part of the Rugby League World Cup ‘Inspired by 2021’ Legacy Programme, a bid for a new rugby league certified 3G pitch at Victoria Park has been proposed. A planning application has recently been submitted and it will be constructed, owned and managed by WBC. The proposal is to extend the fencing around the Arena pitch to incorporate the 3G pitch and to relocate the grass rugby pitch around to the side of the Arena. Provision of a 3G pitch specifically for rugby league will help to alleviate the significant overplay at Victoria Park and to better accommodate Warrington Wolves and Latchford Albion/Giants teams. Other community clubs will also be programmed into the usage for training.

Rylands Recreation Club

Having previously provided a rugby league pitch which was used by Rylands RFC, Rylands Recreation Club served notice to the Club earlier this year and as such the pitch is due to be re-designated to a football pitch to service Rylands FC for the 2019/20 season. Having also removed the cricket pitch from the site, it now contains three football pitches.

Bennetts Recreation Ground

This site previously contained rugby league pitches; however, the site is now utilised for football. An opportunity has been identified to re-accommodate two rugby pitches at the site and this could provide an opportunity to accommodate Rylands Sharks ARLFC (requires two pitches). Although one pitch could just be marked out, accommodating a second pitch will be more costly as pitch improvement works would be required. Rylands Sharks ARLFC has recently agreed a lease with the Parish Council to secure the site for some rugby league use moving forward.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Westy Park (South neighbourhood analysis area)

Warrington Borough Council has funding confirmed to re-introduce playing pitches at Westy Park. Previously a site which provided football provision, the site was previously closed as it was deemed unsafe due to the ground being contaminated as the playing fields are located on a previous landfill site.

The site has now been declared safe and WBC has determined that one senior rugby league pitch and one senior football pitch are to be provided in 2019. The current site provides ancillary facilities with changing rooms available in the community centre located at the site.

South neighbourhood area

The South neighbourhood Analysis Area, specifically Stockton Heath, has been identified as a potential growth area for rugby league; although there is currently a lack of provision or club in the location. Bridgewater High School is noted as having a strong rugby league offering which could potentially be the basis for a new club.

School sites

Sir Thomas Boteler High School has been identified as having potential for an additional rugby league pitch should funds be available, whilst the condemned sand based AGP at Cardinal Newman High School could potentially be converted to an RFL Community Standard certified 3G pitch.

Pitch quality

The quality of football pitches in Warrington have been assessed via a combination of site visits (carried out in 2016), carrying out non-technical assessments (NTAs) as determined by the RFL all pitches, and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◀ Good
- ◀ Standard
- ◀ Poor

Pitch quality influences the carrying capacity of a site; often pitches lack the drainage and maintenance necessary to sustain high levels of use. It is likely that pitches that receive little or no ongoing repair or off season remedial work will be assessed as poor, therefore limiting the number of games able to take place each week without it having a detrimental effect on quality. Conversely, well maintained pitches which are tended to regularly are likely to be a higher standard and capable of taking a number of matches without a significant reduction in surface quality.

Private sites (e.g. sports clubs) can often offer better quality facilities than Council and school playing pitches as such sports clubs tend to have dedicated ground staff or volunteers working on pitches regularly during the week. Also, private sites are often secured by fencing which prevents unofficial use whilst council pitches are generally located within parks and open spaces, regularly used by the public.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Carrying capacity of a pitch is dependent upon the quality of a pitch which is outlined below:

Category	Capacity
Good	3 matches per week
Standard	2 matches per week
Poor	1 match per week

Table 5.4: Pitch quality ratings for rugby league pitches (available for community use only)

Site ID	Site name	Pitch size	Agreed quality rating
7	Beamont Academy	Senior	Poor
7	Beamont Academy	Senior	Poor
11	Birchwood Community High School	Senior	Standard
33	Culcheth Community Campus	Senior	Standard
38	Dallam Recreation Ground	Primary	Standard
38	Dallam Recreation Ground	Primary	Standard
38	Dallam Recreation Ground	Senior	Standard
38	Dallam Recreation Ground	Senior	Standard
43	Fir Tree Lane	Primary	Poor
43	Fir Tree Lane	Senior	Standard
43	Fir Tree Lane	Senior	Standard
55	Great Sankey Parish Playing Fields	Senior	Poor
59	Hillock Lane Playing Fields	Junior	Poor
59	Hillock Lane Playing Fields	Primary	Poor
59	Hillock Lane Playing Fields	Senior	Poor
59	Hillock Lane Playing Fields	Senior	Poor
59	Hillock Lane Playing Fields	Senior	Poor
61	Hood Lane Recreation Ground	Senior	Good
61	Hood Lane Recreation Ground	Senior	Standard
61	Hood Lane Recreation Ground	Senior	Standard
61	Hood Lane Recreation Ground	Senior	Poor
65	Loushers Lane Recreation Ground	Senior	Poor
72	Monks Sports & Social Club	Senior	Good
95	Shaw St Recreation Ground	Senior	Standard
95	Shaw St Recreation Ground	Senior	Standard
96	Sir Thomas Boteler High School	Senior	Standard
102	St Benedicts Primary School	Junior	Standard
131	Victoria Park	Senior	Good
131	Victoria Park	Senior	Poor
131	Victoria Park	Senior	Poor
132	Victoria Park Arena & Stadium	Senior	Good
132	Victoria Park Arena & Stadium	Senior	Good
154	Christ Church Playing Field	Senior	Standard

The eight teams that engaged in the consultation all provided feedback with regards to their views on pitch quality. This feedback was considered alongside pitch quality ratings obtained from non-technical assessments. Two clubs indicated that they felt pitches were of good quality; these were Culcheth Eagles who are based at Shaw Street Recreation Ground and Latchford Giants identified one pitch at Victoria Park as being good quality.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Warrington Wolves Community Foundation provided feedback on updated pitch quality as part of the 2019 iteration.

The table below, summarises the quality of pitches that are available for community use for rugby league. In total, five pitches are rated as good quality (15%), 15 as standard quality (45%) and 13 are deemed to be poor quality (39%).

Table 5.5: Pitch quality ratings for community use rugby league pitches

Senior pitches			Junior pitches			Primary pitches		
Good	Standard	Poor	Good	Standard	Poor	Good	Standard	Poor
5	12	10	0	1	1	0	2	2
19%	44%	37%	0%	50%	50%	0%	50%	50%

The feedback from the club survey gives a mixed response in terms of whether clubs feel the quality of pitches has changed during the last 12 months. 37% of respondents stated pitch quality has got slightly poorer with 25% suggesting pitch quality has become much poorer. 25% of respondents feel there is no different in pitch quality that has occurred with only the remaining 13% stating they feel pitch quality has become slightly better.

All sites managed and/or maintained by Warrington Borough Council (many of the school sites are maintained by WBC) receive a basic level of maintenance that is restricted to grass cutting and seeding, with no further budgets available for any further level of upkeep or for improvement works.

Table 5.6: Site specific feedback on pitch quality (2016)

Site	Feedback
Dallam Recreation Ground	It was identified during the consultation that improvement works were being carried out on the pitches at that time. Feedback on the pitch that was in use was that grass cutting and line marking had become less frequent resulting in a poorer pitch. There was also concern expressed at the football pitches being introduced at the site as part of the improvement work.
Fir Tree Lane	Poor drainage and maintenance was indicated through consultation. It was suggested that inadequate drainage of the pitch makes the pitch more unplayable than playable. Also dangerous when the pitch dries with divots.
Victoria Park	One pitch in particular identified as being 'superb' however other rugby league pitches on the site not as good quality, resulting in overplay on the better pitch. Frequency of grass cutting identified as an issue.
Victoria Park Arena	A new pitch has been provided, however, it was identified that access is limited.

There has been no significant investment made into pitch quality since the site assessments and consultation were carried out in 2016. Despite this there have been some changes in quality, with some pitches improving from poor to standard; and others reducing to poor quality.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Over marked pitches

As already mentioned, the majority of rugby league pitches are classified as being senior sized, with cones used to mark pitches for U11 and below. Over marking of pitches can however cause notable damage to the surface quality and lead to overuse beyond recommended capacity. Over marking of pitches not only influences available capacity, it may also cause logistical issues regarding kick off times; for example, when two teams of differing age formats are due to play at the same site at the same time.

All of the senior rugby league pitches are used for junior matches at some point during the season depending on availability.

There are no known pitches in Warrington which are marked onto or overlapping cricket outfields. Whilst having rugby league pitches marked out on cricket pitches can create availability issues as both cricket and rugby league are summer sports, it can sometimes be an option for creating additional capacity if required.

Ancillary facilities

Ancillary facilities including the condition of the clubhouse, changing accommodation, toilets, showers, medical room, car parking and boundary fencing.

When asked during consultation in 2016, many of the clubs identified poor quality changing rooms as being an issue. This remains an issue at some sites in 2019, notably Monks Sports Club (Woolston Rovers) changing room block is identified as being inadequate. There is one portacabin block and some temporary container changing rooms which have no showers. Further the changing rooms at Victoria Park have reached the end of their lifespan and are in need of updating. Latchford Albion/Giants which use the playing fields do not have a permanent off field facility and is exploring which of the local social clubs to use locally.

There are also some key sites which have no onsite changing rooms available, for example, at Fir Tree Lane (Burtonwood) where clubs currently have to utilise the nearby Community Centre for changing provision. There is also no off road parking available at the site. Loushers Lane Recreation Ground also does not contain changing rooms albeit this is only used as an overspill site for Latchford Giants.

Table 5.7: Rugby league changing rooms summary

Site ID	Site name	Quality rating	Comments on changing rooms/clubhouses (updated 2019)
7	Beamont Academy	Good	Community use of pitches managed by LiveWire and changing rooms are those in Orford Jubilee Neighbourhood Hub.
11	Birchwood Community High School	Standard	-
33	Culcheth Community Campus	Good	-
38	Dallam Recreation Ground	Standard	New changing facility which includes a small meeting room and kitchen area. However, no clubhouse for use after matches which is highlighted as an issue.
43	Fir Tree Lane	Poor	Changing provision provided is at the nearby Community Centre. No changing provision on site. Lack of clubhouse for after matches.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site ID	Site name	Quality rating	Comments on changing rooms/clubhouses (updated 2019)
55	Great Sankey Parish Playing Fields	Poor	No changing rooms available. No clubs identified as using the site.
59	Hillock Lane Playing Fields	Poor	Changing rooms have reached the end of their lifespan.
61	Hood Lane Recreation Ground	Standard	Clubhouse has been recently updated and is well used and adequate for club requirements. Seven changing rooms, all of an adequate size but in need of a paint and general tidy up, shower area needs some work.
65	Loushers Lane Recreation Ground	Poor	No changing rooms available.
72	Monks Sports & Social Club	Poor	Changing room block is inadequate – one portacabin block and some temporary container changing rooms which have no showers. Good clubhouse which has a bar, one main function room, and kitchen
95	Shaw Street Recreation Ground	Good	New building has been put in place which has new changing rooms and a kitchen to produce refreshments. No clubhouse. The Eagles use the Culcheth Sports Club after matches (400m from ground) and as a base and also are across the road from Culcheth High School.
96	Sir Thomas Boteler High School	Standard	-
102	St Benedict's Primary School (Junior pitch)	Standard	No changing rooms available.
130	University of Chester (Warrington Campus)	Good	-
131	Victoria Park	Poor	Changing rooms have reached the end of their lifespan. Need updating. Lack of clubhouse for after matches.
132	Victoria Park Arena	Good	Small rooms but tiled and serve their purpose, with decent showers.

Security of tenure

Security of tenure is something that needs to be looked at in Warrington to support the development of rugby league within Warrington. Whilst there is a commitment from WBC, which owns the majority of rugby league pitches, that these pitches will continue to be provided for community use in the future, most of the pitches are rented by clubs on a seasonal basis.

The RFL is happy to continue to work with clubs and councils on asset transfers where rugby league clubs are in a good position to sustainably manage and maintain an asset. Rugby league is very dependent on local authorities as the majority of its facilities are owned and run by local authorities.

The RFL highlights concern about the potential impact of budget cuts on clubs and therefore aims to help volunteers to secure their facilities for the long-term and to help provide the training and equipment required by volunteers to care for their facilities.

Demand (2019)

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Demand for rugby league in Warrington tends to fall within the categories of organised competitive play and organised training. As the majority of rugby league play takes place during the summer period, when the nights are lighter, a significant amount of training takes place on pitches in addition to the competitive match play.

Competitive play

A total of 84 teams are identified as playing competitive rugby league in Warrington during the 2019 season. This consists of 12 senior men teams, one senior women's team (19 years +), 25 junior boys' teams, two junior girls' teams (12 – 18 years), 42 primary teams (7 – 11 years) and two disability teams.

These numbers include the ten teams representing Rylands Sharks ARLFC, which is without a home venue at present (2019), until provision is established at Bennetts Recreation Ground. These teams have played matches at various venues during the 2019 season; however, given that Bennetts Recreation Ground is based in the East Analysis Area, Rylands Sharks ARLFC teams have been allocated here.

Table 5.8: Summary of where competitive teams play in Warrington by analysis area

Analysis area	No. of competitive rugby league teams				
	Senior	Junior	Primary	Disability	Total
Central neighbourhood	6	12	13	2	33
East neighbourhood	3	10	17	-	30
South neighbourhood	-	-	-	-	-
West neighbourhood	4	5	12	-	21
Warrington	13	27	42	2	84

Peak time for senior teams to play is Saturday PM and junior and primary teams are Sunday AM.

The table above shows that the Central neighbourhood Analysis Area is where most teams have their competitive pitch located (33 teams), whilst the East and West neighbourhood analysis areas have 20 and 21 teams based within them. There are no teams currently based in the South neighbourhood Analysis Area.

It should be noted that some primary and junior squads may have sufficient participants to play multiple competitive matches simultaneously. However, as these are considered as whole squads, they have been valued as such.

Stockton Heath is identified as a potential demand area for rugby league, however, due to a lack of available land facilitating this has been problematic. Bridgewater High School, for example, although it plays both codes of rugby, it has more rugby league teams. Further, Warrington Wolves players are also known to use greenspace at Pewterspear Green for ad hoc training sessions for local children to attend.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 5.9: Club by club summary of teams

Club	Senior men	Senior women	Junior boys	Junior girls	Primary (mixed)	Disability
Bank Quay Bulls ARLFC	1	-	3	-	5	-
Burtonwood Bridge ARLFC	1	-	-	-	-	-
Burtonwood Bulldogs ARLFC	-	-	2	-	6	-
Crosfields ARLFC	3	-	3	-	6	-
Culcheth Eagles ARLFC	1	-	3	-	6*	-
Latchford Albion ARLFC	1	-	-	-	-	-
Latchford Giants ARLFC	-	-	5	-	6	-
Rylands Sharks ARLFC	1	-	4	-	5	-
Warrington Wolves	3	1	2	2	2**	2
Woolston Rovers ARLFC	1	-	3	-	6	-
Total	12	1	25	2	42	2

*One of the primary is teams is a dedicated U12 girls' team.

**The two primary teams are girls'-only teams.

Women and girls' rugby league

Following a successful campaign to increase women's participation in rugby league, Warrington Wolves has now introduced a women's team which started to compete during the 2019 season, playing its fixtures at Victoria Park Arena within the Championship. Enough demand has been generated to introduce a second team for next season. It should be noted, however, that although Victoria Park Arena is the main ground, the team only played five of its fixtures here due to events within the wider park.

Linked to the above success and through initiatives delivered at schools such as the Sky Try programme, Warrington Wolves has also established several girls' teams competing at U16, U14, U12 and U7-U10 age groups during 2019 season. From next season this will increase to two teams at U14 and two teams at U12 age groups.

Due to capacity issues encountered at Victoria Park this season (2019), all the girls' teams will play at Crosfields RFC (Sundays). Although this will create additional pitch quality/maintenance issues, capacity wise this is considered a better option.

Since 2016, there is now also a U12 girls teams established, which played at Culcheth RFC from this season (2019).

Disability rugby league

In 2017, Warrington Wolves launched the country's first Physical Disability Rugby League (PDRL) team. PDRL is a running format of rugby league which involves both full contact and touch tackle options, for all players who have physical disabilities. It consists of nine-a-side teams, consisting of seven players with a physical disability and two able-bodied players who do not have physical disabilities.

Other Super League clubs have now also established PDRL teams and it is hoped that a Disability League will be formed in the future. Currently, the team plays four festival format fixtures at Victoria Park although the occasional fixtures are also played before Warrington Wolves first team matches at the Halliwell Jones Stadium.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

The 2019 season also saw the launch of the Warrington Wolves Learning Disability Rugby League (LDRL) team. Super League and the RFL partnered with the national social care charity Community Integrated Care in February to create a ground-breaking adapted form of rugby league for people with learning disabilities and autism. Backed by 12 major rugby league clubs and integrated into the Super League calendar. This is the first ever example of a professional sports league sharing its brand with a learning disability sports programme, which was launched at the iconic Dacia Magic Weekend event in May. Since the launch, the Warrington LDRL team has taken part in a series of high-profile events and festivals.

Although played indoors, Warrington Wolves also has a wheelchair rugby team which played at Cardinal Newman during 2019 season.

Education rugby league

There is high demand for rugby league at education sites with all secondary schools in Warrington playing competitive rugby league. Further, there is a new partnership (started in 2018) in place with Priestley College which established a Rugby Academy with youth teams playing September through to March. Opportunities to progress into Warrington Wolves' U19s or reserve grade teams are also available.

Masters rugby league

Masters rugby league is a derivative version of the sport aimed at players over the age of 35. It has a social emphasis and focus on providing playing opportunities for older players and as such remains non-competitive with no score kept. Masters rugby league is typically played as part of a festival format. Masters rugby league is growing in Warrington and is generally included within club delivery at Crosfields, Rylands and Bank Quay rugby clubs. Woolston and Culcheth rugby clubs have also previously had some participation.

Touch Rugby

To actively encourage participation in rugby (either code), clubs may provide alternative offers to traditional club competition. Touch is one possible format which clubs can use; Touch is non-contact rugby sessions, during which participants compete in teams to score tries, following similar laws to traditional rugby league/union formats. There are three specific Touch Rugby League clubs in Warrington; Knights (playing at Penketh High School), Titans (playing at Winwick Leisure Centre) and Culcheth Touch (Culcheth High School).

LiveWire also run Touch Rugby sessions weekly on a Monday evening at Broomfields Leisure Centre.

In a joint scheme, LiveWire and the Warrington Wolves Foundation joined forces to offer men and women in Warrington a 12-week beginners' fitness and weight loss programme called Fit to Tackle. Touch Rugby was introduced as part of the sessions and resulted in an increase in participation.

There are now 120 registered players across Warrington playing Touch Rugby in 2019 played across four separate sites one of which being a women's only session.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Walking rugby

Walking rugby is a slower game of touch rugby that is accessible for disability groups and older participants, generally aged 44 years and above. The game is less physical than traditional rugby, but the general aim remains the same, with passing and scoring laws applying; and tackling involves a two-handed touch to the waist or below. Sessions for over 44s are an opportunity for participants to become physically active and for others to re-engage with rugby at a less strenuous pace. Walking rugby sessions are run by LiveWire but these take place indoors at Orford Jubilee Neighbourhood Hub.

Training

Winter rugby training is accommodated across a combination of indoor sports halls, 3G pitches and other open spaces including a dedicated floodlit training area located at Victoria Park. Finding appropriate facilities is a regular issue identified by clubs.

Further, Warrington Wolves identifies this as a significant issue at Victoria Park due to the rapid increase in the number of women and girls' teams now competing and the difficulties in accessing training slots. In addition to use by Latchford Giants, the Warrington Wolves women's and girls' teams are only able to train one night a week and have four teams on the Arena pitch at one time. There can also be issues/crossover with athletics use of the surrounding track during the winter. As a result of these issues, all the girls' teams will transfer to play at Crosfields RLFC next season.

There are three 3G pitches in Warrington that are highlighted as being constructed with the shock pad required for rugby use. These are located at Orford Jubilee Neighbourhood Hub (full size pitch), University of Chester (Warrington Campus) and Padgate Academy Warrington (need to check this has shock pad). However, whilst these pitches can be used for non-contact formats of the game (touch rugby), in order to be used for contact rugby league, these pitches require testing and certification. Currently none of these pitches are certified for rugby league. Indeed, there is a lack of clarity as to whether any of the three pitches do in fact have the necessary shock pad installation.

The 3G pitch located at University of Chester (Warrington Campus) is a purpose built, indoor training facility to support the Warrington Wolves professional team and academy. It has limited community use although some teams access it in winter for training. Through the audit it has been identified that this pitch is not certified for contact rugby league. The Warrington Wolves PDRL team also trains here but it is generally considered too small.

The 3G pitch located at Orford Jubilee Neighbourhood Hub is heavily used with 100% of the usage being football. The 3G pitch at Padgate Academy Warrington does have some rugby league use, however, the pitch is predominately used for football.

As detailed earlier under *Future Developments*, as part of the Rugby League World Cup 'Inspired by 2021' Legacy Programme, a bid for a new rugby league certified 3G pitch at Victoria Park has been proposed.

It has also been highlighted that there is potential for additional floodlighting at Crosfields RFC from the World Cup Legacy Programme.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Casual use

As the majority of rugby league is played on pitches owned and/or managed by either Warrington Borough Council or parish councils these sites tend to be as open public spaces and are used for recreational play, dog walking etc. This additional wear and damage is an issue for clubs as it decreases the quality of pitches and in turn the carrying capacity for matches and training.

Displaced demand

Displaced demand is existing demand that is being met by provision outside of the Warrington boundary. There are a number of reasons why displacement may occur such as a central venue league, where one location/site is used as the venue for all competitive fixtures with no teams having home or away fixtures or because teams choose to hire pitches outside of the boundary due to pitch quality or hire costs.

Although there are still no Warrington based teams travelling outside of Warrington to access pitches, Rylands RLFC has been displaced from Rylands Sports and Social Club site which has now become a football only site (cricket was also previously displaced from the site). This has resulted in the Club losing teams as it does not currently have a home ground albeit it is in the process of establishing a home ground at Bennetts Recreation Ground.

Future demand

Future demand can be defined in three ways, through participation increases, housing growth and using population forecasts. Team generation rates are used below as the basis for calculating the number of teams likely to be generated in the future based on population growth.

Population increase (2019)

Team generation rates are used to calculate the number of teams likely to be generated in the future (2037) based on population growth.

Table 5.10: Team generation rates (2037)

Age group	Current pop. within age group	Current no. of teams	Team Generation Rate	Future pop. within age group (2037)	Predicted future number of teams	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population
Senior Men (19-45)	35,097	12	1:2925	35,947	12.3	0
Senior Women (19-45)	34,416	1	1:34416	34,506	1.0	0
Junior Boys (12-18)	8,674	25	1:347	9,897	28.5	3
Junior Girls (12-18)	8,178	2	1:4089	9,407	2.3	0
Primary mixed (7-11)	12,699	42	1:302	13,179	43.6	1

Using the 2037 projected population increases it demonstrates that additional teams are forecasted to be generated for both junior boys and primary teams. The most significant growth is predicted to be in junior rugby league with three boys' teams anticipated. A further one teams is anticipated to be generated in junior rugby.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Based on the anticipated additional teams, this equates to the need for access to rugby league pitches that could cater for 1.75 match equivalent sessions per week.

Participation increase (2016)

During the consultation process several clubs indicated that they had plans to grow their number of teams in the future. However, only two clubs were able to quantify this; Bank Quay Bulls (one senior, one junior girl's and one primary team) and Latchford Giants (one U8, one U13, one U18 and one U19 team). In the main these aspirations have been achieved.

Capacity analysis (2019)

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

As previously indicated the carrying capacity of a pitch is dependent upon the quality of a pitch which is outlined below:

Category	Capacity
Good	3 matches per week
Standard	2 matches per week
Poor	1 match per week

The next step is to ascertain whether or not any identified 'potential capacity' can be deemed 'actual capacity'. There may be situations where, although a site is highlighted as potentially able to accommodate some additional play, this should not be recorded as spare capacity against the site. For example, a site may be managed to regularly operate slightly below full capacity to ensure that it can cater for a number of regular friendly matches and activities that takes place but are difficult to quantify on a weekly basis. Where actual spare capacity exists it is highlighted in Table 5.11.

The peak period

In order to fully establish actual spare capacity, the peak period needs to be established. As the majority of competitive rugby league takes place on senior rugby league pitches the peak period is considered to be Saturday PM and Sunday AM.

Education sites

To account for curricular/ extra-curricular use of education pitches it is deemed that usage should be adjusted and increased by 1 match equivalent session per pitch. The only time this does not apply is when a school does not use its pitches at all and the sole use is that made by the community.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 5.11: Rugby league capacity table (2019)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	Quality rating	No. of pitches	Match equivalent sessions of play (per week)	Recommended site capacity (sessions per week)	Capacity rating	Comments
7	Beamont Academy	Central	Senior	Poor	2	2	2	-	Site is poor quality with education use therefore has no capacity.
11	Birchwood Community High School	East	Senior	Standard	1	1	2	-1	PE/ Extracurricular use only recorded on this pitch.
33	Culcheth Community Campus	East	Senior	Standard	1	1.75	2	-0.25	Current community use from Rylands Sharks for training only.
38	Dallam Recreation Ground	Central	Primary	Standard	2	2.5	4	-1.5	Used by Bank Quay Bulls for match and training demand.
38	Dallam Recreation Ground	Central	Senior	Standard	2	5.5	4	1.5	Currently used by Bank Quay Bulls for training and competitive match play.
43	Fir Tree Lane	West	Primary	Poor	1	2.5	1	1.5	Currently used by Burtonwood Bulldogs and Burtonwood Bridge.
43	Fir Tree Lane	West	Senior	Standard	2	1.75	4	-2.25	
55	Great Sankey Parish Council Playing Fields	West	Senior	Poor	1	0	1	-1	No current community use. Site has poor ancillary facilities, with no parking or changing facilities.
59	Hillock Lane Playing Fields	East	Junior	Poor	1	1	1	-	Extensively used by Woolston Rovers for both training and matches.
59	Hillock Lane Playing Fields	East	Primary	Poor	1	1	1	-	Adjacent schools also access for curricular and extra-curricular purposes.
59	Hillock Lane Playing Fields	East	Senior	Poor	3	6	3	3	
61	Hood Lane Recreation Centre	West	Senior	Standard	4	13.5	8	5.5	Currently used by Crosfields for both training and matches. The site is overplayed by 5.5 match equivalent sessions per week.
65	Loushers Lane Recreation Ground	Central	Senior	Poor	1	0	1	-1	Not currently used on a consistent basis, although Latchford Giants ARLFC and Priestly College do use the provision on an ad-hoc basis. Site has poor ancillary facilities, with no parking or changing facilities. Predominantly used as football site.
72	Monks Sports & Social Club	East	Senior	Good	1	3	3	-	Used by Woolston Rovers for both training and matches. The site is at capacity.
95	Shaw Street Recreation Ground	East	Senior	Standard	2	9	4	5	Currently used by Culcheth Eagles for both training and matches. The site is overplayed by five match equivalent sessions per week.
96	Sir Thomas Boteler High School	Central	Senior	Standard	1	1	2	-1	PE/ extracurricular lessons only recorded on this pitch.
102	St Benedict's Primary School	Central	Junior	Standard	1	4	2	2	Currently used by Rylands Sharks for both training and matches. Pitch also has PE/ extracurricular use.
131	Victoria Park	Central	Senior	Good & poor mix	3	11.25	5	6.25	Currently used by Latchford Giants for both training and matches. The site is overplayed by 6.25 match equivalent sessions per week.
132	Victoria Park Stadium	Central	Senior	Good	1	2.5	3	-0.5	The pitch is predominantly used by Warrington Wolves with some usage from Latchford Albion.
132	Victoria Park Arena	Central	Senior	Good	1	0.5	3	-2.5	The pitch has some community rugby league use along with community football use.
154	Christ Church Playing Field	East	Senior	Standard	1	0	2	-2	A senior rugby league pitch that is unused. It has two MES of potential capacity.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Actual spare capacity

The next step is to ascertain whether or not any identified 'potential capacity' can be deemed 'actual capacity'. There may be situations where, although a site is highlighted as potentially able to accommodate some additional play, this should not be recorded as spare capacity against the site. For example, a site may be managed to regularly operate slightly below full capacity to ensure that it can cater for a number of regular friendly matches and other activities that are difficult to quantify on a weekly basis.

Table 5.12: Actual spare capacity

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Spare capacity (match equivalent sessions)	MES available in the peak period	Comments
11	Birchwood Community High School	East	Senior	1	-1	1	Actual spare capacity discounted due to the unsecure nature of the site.
33	Culcheth Community Campus	East	Senior	1	-0.25	1	Actual spare capacity discounted due to the unsecure nature of the site.
38	Dallam Recreation Ground	Central	Primary	2	-1.5	0	No actual spare capacity during the peak period.
43	Fir Tree Lane	West	Senior	2	-2.25	1	One MES of actual spare capacity.
55	Great Sankey Parish Council Playing Fields	West	Senior	1	-1	1	One MES of actual spare capacity.
65	Loushers Lane Recreation Ground	Central	Senior	1	-1	1	One MES of actual spare capacity.
96	Sir Thomas Boteler High School	Central	Senior	1	-1	1	Actual spare capacity discounted due to the unsecure nature of the site.
132	Victoria Park Stadium	Central	Senior	1	-0.5	-	No actual spare capacity during the peak period.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Spare capacity (match equivalent sessions)	MES available in the peak period	Comments
132	Victoria Park Arena	Central	Senior	1	-2.5	0.5	0.5 MES of actual spare capacity.
154	Christ Church Playing Field	East	Senior	1	-2	1	One MES of actual spare capacity.
Total						4.5	

Despite 12 pitches across nine sites displaying a total of 12.75 match equivalent session of potential capacity, only five sites are considered to have capacity for additional demand during the peak period. There are 4.5 match equivalent sessions of actual spare capacity during the peak period.

Overplay

A total of 16 pitches across seven sites are overplayed by a combined 24.75 match equivalent sessions per week. This is a decrease from 35 match equivalent sessions in 2016. There are two main reasons for overplay which are the number of teams playing and training at the same sites along with the varying quality of pitches across Warrington.

Overplay, in some circumstances, can be dealt with by improving quality of pitches or by providing more training pitches. It is important to acknowledge however that there is not enough spare capacity available in the areas of overplay to meet this level of demand.

Senior pitches are overplayed by a total of 21.25 match equivalent sessions per week; with the junior pitch at St Benedict's Primary School overplayed by two match equivalent sessions; and the primary pitch at Fir Tree Lane overplayed by 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week.

Table 5.13: Overplay by analysis area

Analysis area	Senior	Junior	Primary	Overplay
Central neighbourhood	7.75	2	-	9.75
East neighbourhood	8	-	-	8
South neighbourhood	-	-	-	-
West neighbourhood	5.5	-	1.5	7
Warrington	21.25	2	1.5	24.75

The table above shows that the Central neighbourhood Analysis Area has the highest level of overplay (9.75 match equivalent sessions per week).

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Supply and demand analysis 2019

Having considered supply and demand scenarios above, the table below identifies the overall spare capacity in each of the analysis areas based on match equivalent sessions.

Table 5.14: Supply and demand analysis of senior rugby league pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity ¹⁹	Current Demand (match equivalent sessions)		Future demand (match equivalent sessions)		
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand (pop growth)	Future demand (participation increase)	Total
Central neighbourhood	1.5	7.75	6.25	1.25	3	10.5
East neighbourhood	1	5	4	-	-	4
South neighbourhood	-	-	-	-	-	-
West neighbourhood	2	5.5	3.5	-	-	3.5
Warrington	4.5	18.25	13.75	1.75²⁰	3	18.5

Overall in Warrington there is a shortfall of 13.75 match equivalent sessions on senior pitches to meet current demand. This shortfall is exacerbated when future demand is considered, increasing to 18.5 match equivalent sessions per week.

The Central neighbourhood Analysis Area has the largest shortfall (6.25 match equivalent sessions) and this increases when future demand is considered. This is in line with the Area having the largest number of teams based within it.

The current shortfall is lower than previously reported (30.5 match equivalent sessions), as is the future shortfall.

Given that any overplay on junior and primary pitches in Warrington outweigh any actual spare capacity in Borough it is considered that there are shortfalls of these format pitches, although a significant amount of primary and junior demand is currently, and will continue to be, accommodated on senior pitches.

¹⁹ In match equivalent sessions

²⁰ Total future demand by population growth in Warrington is taken from TGRs reported earlier (1.75 match equivalent sessions of demand on senior pitches). Population increases in the East and West areas are insufficient to establish new teams.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Rugby league summary

- ◀ **There is insufficient supply of rugby league pitches in Warrington to meet demand.**
- ◀ **Overall in Warrington there is a current shortfall of 22.25 match equivalent sessions.**
- ◀ **Overall in Warrington there is a predicted shortfall of 27 match equivalent sessions based on anticipated future demand.**
- ◀ In 2019 there are 33 grass rugby league pitches within Warrington available for community use. Of these, 27 pitches are senior rugby league pitches, two is a junior pitch and four are primary pitches.
- ◀ Of the community available rugby league pitches, 22 are managed by Warrington Borough Council, three are managed by parish Councils, five are managed in house by schools/ colleges/ universities, one is managed privately by sports clubs, one by LiveWire; and one by the Church of England.
- ◀ In total, five pitches are rated as good quality (15%), 15 as standard quality (45%) and 13 are deemed to be poor quality (39%).
- ◀ Ten clubs provide a total of 84 teams playing competitive rugby league on pitches located within Warrington during the 2019 season. This consists of 13 senior teams, 27 junior teams, 42 primary teams and two disability teams.
- ◀ The Central Area is where most teams have their match play pitch located (33).
- ◀ Since the previous PPS, there has been creation of women and girls' rugby league teams and disability teams now playing competitively in the Borough.
- ◀ There are also a range of rugby league initiatives and formats being played in Warrington including Masters rugby league, Touch Rugby and walking rugby.
- ◀ Rylands RLFC has been displaced from Rylands Sports and Social Club site which has now become a football only site (cricket was also previously displaced from the site). This has resulted in the Club losing teams as it does not currently have a home ground albeit it is in the process of establishing a home ground at Bennetts recreation Ground.
- ◀ Team generation rates applied to population growth (to 2037) predict an increase of three junior boys' teams and a primary team.
- ◀ A number of clubs report aspiration to increase the number of teams they provide. Of the clubs which quantify their potential increase, there is a predicated growth of one senior men's team, two junior teams and a primary team.
- ◀ There is little actual spare capacity on pitches in Warrington with only 5.5 match equivalent sessions expressed in total. However, overplay amounts to 24.75 match equivalent sessions. The Central Area has the highest level of overplay (9.75 match equivalent sessions).
- ◀ One of the main reasons for overplay is training on match pitches couple with poor quality pitches. In addition, primary and junior teams playing on senior pitches also contributes to the overplay.
- ◀ Warrington Borough Council's Environment Service deliver a basic level of sportsground maintenance on the majority of its sites that is restricted to grass cutting, topdressing and seeding, with no ring fenced budgets available for any further level of upkeep or for improvement works.
- ◀ As part of the Rugby League World Cup 'Inspired by 2021' Legacy Programme, a bid for a new rugby league certified 3G pitch at Victoria Park has been proposed.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

PART 6: RUGBY UNION

Introduction

The Rugby Football Union (RFU) is the governing body for the sport across England. It is split into six areas across the country with a workforce team that covers development, coaching, governance and competitions. A development officer is responsible for Warrington and works with clubs to maximise their potential. This work involves developing club structures, including working towards the RFU accreditation (Clubmark) and the development of school-club structures. The rugby union playing season operates from September to May.

Consultation

There remain three amateur rugby union clubs located in Warrington. In 2016, each of these clubs responded to an online survey resulting in a 100% response rate. Results from this consultation has been used to inform the key issues within this section of the needs assessment. Updates for 2019 have been provided by the RFU.

Supply (2019)

In total there are 17 grass rugby union pitches (14 senior and three mini) in Warrington located across eight sites. All of the pitches are available for community use with nine of the pitches being used consistently by community clubs. Pitches that are available for community use but are unused by community clubs are all located at education sites.

Please note that the audit only identified dedicated, line marked pitches. For the purposes of this report, being available for community use refers to pitches in public, voluntary, private or commercial ownership or management (including education sites) that are recorded as being available for use/ hire by teams/clubs.

There is currently (2019) a World Rugby Regulation 22 compliant 3G pitch being established at Lymm Rugby Club. The pitch has been funded by the Club and sale of some club-owned land; with a senior grass rugby union pitch being converted to 3G surface. It is expected that the pitch will become fully operational from November 2019.

Table 6.1: Rugby union sites in Warrington

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Clubs playing at pitches	Notes of ownership/ management
2	Appleton Thorn Playing Fields (New Lane)	South	Warrington RUFC (ad hoc)	Rented from WBC on an ad-hoc basis.
13	Bridgewater High School (Lower)	South	-	Available for community use but not used on a consistent basis.
14	Bridgewater High School (Upper)	South	-	Available for community use but not used on a consistent basis.
66	Lymm High School	South	-	Available for community use but currently unused.
69	Lymm Rugby Club	South	Lymm Rugby Club	Owned by club
127	Thornton Road Recreation Ground	West	Eagle RUFC	Rented from WBC on annual seasonal fee.
130	University of Chester (Warrington Campus)	East	-	Owned and managed by University

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Clubs playing at pitches	Notes of ownership/ management
133	Warrington Sports Club	South	Warrington RUFC	Owned by sports club. Rugby Club is independent section within the club with secured use of the facilities.

Table 6.2: Summary of grass rugby union pitches available for community use

Analysis area	Available for community use	
	No. of senior pitches	No. of mini pitches
Central neighbourhood	0	0
East neighbourhood	1	0
South neighbourhood	12	3
West neighbourhood	1	0
Warrington	14	3

As shown above, the vast majority of rugby union pitches are located within the South Area (88%). Both the East and West neighbourhoods have one senior rugby union pitch. There are no rugby union pitches in the Central Area.

Ownership/ management

Pitch ownership and management across Warrington is varied. Of the 17 pitches available three are managed by Warrington Borough Council, eight are managed in house by schools/ colleges/ universities; four are owned and managed by Lymm RUFC with the remaining two owned and managed by Warrington Sports Club. Warrington Rugby Club is an independent section of the main club with secured use of the rugby union facilities available at the site.

Lapsed/ disused sites

As part of the audit, two sites were identified as being lapsed. Sow Brook Playing Fields was considered disused in the previous iteration of the Playing Pitch Strategy but has since become lapsed given that it has not been maintained as a playing field since 2013. The site is reported to have drainage issues.

Bridge Lane, owned by Warrington Borough Council, and the former home of Warrington RUFC the site became disused in 2004 following a fire which destroyed the club house at the site. Warrington RUFC continues to lease the site under terms dating back to 1959 however the condition of the site and the associated pitches has deteriorated significantly. The current lease has around 40 years still to run.

The site previously provided two pitches, a senior and a junior pitch; one of which was floodlit. As part of the consultation Warrington RUFC indicated aspirations to return to the site in the future.

Future supply

As part of the needs assessment any pitch development plans that have funding in place and/or planning permission (where required) have been highlighted in this section.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Lymm Rugby Club (south neighbourhood analysis area)

Lymm Rugby Club had planning permission granted in February 2017 to build a new 2,390 square metre purpose-built clubhouse, along with four illuminated tennis courts, all-weather 3G pitch, squash courts and changing rooms.

The proposed work will see the existing clubhouse transformed into four homes, with a further 10 also to be built.

The RFU is fully supportive of the clubs plans to redevelop their home site and have approved the design for the changing rooms. Whilst work is yet to start on clubhouse developments, the Rugby Turf Artificial Grass Pitch at Lymm Rugby Club is nearing completion and is expected to be operational from November 2019. The RFU identified the Lymm Rugby Union site as one that could host an RFU operated Artificial Grass Pitch through the RFUs 'Rugby Turf' Investment Programme and will be used to support rugby union activity in both Warrington and the surrounding areas.

Pitch quality

The methodology for assessing rugby pitch quality looks at two key elements; the maintenance programme and the level of drainage on each pitch. An overall quality based on both drainage and maintenance can then be generated.

The agreed rating for each pitch type also represents actions required to improve pitch quality. A breakdown of actions required based on the ratings can be seen below:

Table 6.3: Definition of maintenance categories

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

Table 6.4: Definition of drainage categories

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

Table 6.5: Quality ratings based on maintenance and drainage scores

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

The figures are based upon a pipe-drained system at 5m centres that has been installed in the last eight years and a slit drained system at 1m centres that has been installed in the last five years.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 6.6: Rugby union pitch ratings (2016)²¹

Site ID	Site name	Agreed quality rating
2	Appleton Thorn Playing Fields (New Lane)	M0 / D0
2	Appleton Thorn Playing Fields (New Lane)	M0 / D0
13	Bridgewater High School (Lower site)	M0 / D0
14	Bridgewater High School (Upper site) (mini pitch)	M0 / D0
14	Bridgewater High School (Upper site)	M0 / D0
14	Bridgewater High School (Upper site)	M0 / D0
66	Lymm High School	M0 / D1
66	Lymm High School	M0 / D1
66	Lymm High School	M0 / D1
69	Lymm Rugby Club (mini pitch)	M2 / D2
69	Lymm Rugby Club (mini pitch)	M2 / D2
69	Lymm Rugby Club	M2 / D2
69	Lymm Rugby Club	M2 / D2
127	Thornton Road Recreation Ground	M0 / D1
130	University of Chester (Warrington Campus)	M0 / D0
133	Warrington Sports Club	M1 / D2
133	Warrington Sports Club	M1 / D2

Of the four pitches at Lymm Rugby Club, each of the pitches has pipe and slit drainage systems that were installed in 2009 with financial support from the RFU.

Of the remaining pitches, only pitches at Thornton Road Recreation Ground and Warrington Sports Club have pipe drainage installed. The age of these systems is not known and is therefore considered natural (adequate) but maintenance regimes at the sites are identified as requiring significant improvements.

The remaining pitches assessed have no drainage systems and inadequate maintenance regimes.

Ancillary facilities (2016)

Ancillary facilities including the condition of the clubhouse, changing accommodation, toilets, showers, medical room, car parking and boundary fencing.

Eagle RUFC identified that the ancillary facilities at Thornton Road Recreation were poor, and this was confirmed through consultation with Warrington Borough Council. The two remaining WBC owned and managed sites at Appleton Thorn Playing Fields and Sow Brook Playing Fields were also deemed to be poor quality.

Both Lymm RUFC and Warrington RUFC home grounds were identified as having standard quality ancillary facilities overall, this has been supported through significant investment by both the clubs and the RFU in recent years. Warrington RUFC has invested significantly in its changing rooms in recent years and the quality of their changing facilities is good. Lymm RUFC changing rooms and club house are poor quality and require improvement.

²¹ A senior pitch at Lymm Rugby Club has been removed from this table as it is currently being converted to a World Rugby compliant 3G pitch.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 6.7: Agreed site ancillary ratings for community use sites

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Agreed ancillary facilities rating	Comments (2016)
2	Appleton Thorn Playing Fields (New Lane)	South	Poor	Limited car parking capacity. No changing room facilities.
14	Bridgewater High School (Upper site)	South	None	Car parking available.
69	Lymm Rugby Club	South	Standard	Recent minor improvements to changing rooms but still fall short of standard and configuration required. Clubhouse in poor condition. Planning permission granted for a scheme that will provide state of the art ancillary improvements for the club when delivered.
97	Sow Brook Playing Fields	South	Poor	Replacement changing rooms required. Car parking limited and poor condition.
127	Thornton Road Recreation Ground	West	Poor	Limited car parking and poor quality. Recent minor improvements to changing rooms but still fall short of standard and quantity required.
130	University of Chester (Warrington Campus)	East	Good	
133	Warrington Sports Club	South	Standard	Changing rooms underwent significant refurbishment in 2012/13 and are good quality.

Demand (2019)

Demand for rugby union pitches falls within the categories of competitive play and organised training.

Competitive Play

There is a total of 34 competitive rugby union teams within Warrington during the 2019 season. A breakdown of the number of teams within each club is shown in the table below. This is a decrease from 2016, with the number of senior teams decreasing for both Lymm RUFC and Warrington RUFC.

Table 6.8: Summary of demand from clubs

Club	Analysis area	No. of rugby union teams			
		Mini	Junior	Colts	Senior
Eagle RUFC	West neighbourhood	0	0	0	2
Lymm RUFC	South neighbourhood	6	4	2	3
Warrington RUFC	South neighbourhood	6	4	2	2
Warrington		12	8	4	7

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Organised training

Consultation in 2016 confirmed that each club train at their home ground during the winter, however, the training facilities vary greatly between clubs. A breakdown of the training facilities utilised by each club from 2016 is shown below. This is still known to be reflective of the current (2019) situation.

Table 6.9: Summary of training facilities

Club	Facilities available	Organised training
Eagle RUFC	1 floodlit tarmac strip. <i>The RFU are currently working with Eagle RUFC to support them with a funding application for portable floodlights which would enable them to train on a more appropriate facility.</i>	Senior – Tuesday & Thursday 7.00pm
Lymm RUFC	1 floodlit pitch	Touch Rugby – Thursday 7.30pm Senior - Tuesday and Thursday 7.00-9:00pm Colts Academy – Thursday 6.00–7.00pm U16 – Wednesday 6.00-7.00pm U15 – Wednesday 6.00-7.00pm U14 –Thursday 6.00-7.00pm U13 – Tuesday 6.00-7.00pm U12 – Friday 6.00-7.00pm Mini (U5 – U12) – Sunday (match or training. In late season March/April a number of these age groups may organise mid-week training to coincide with better weather and lighter evenings)
Warrington RUFC	1 grassed paddock area with 3 x portable floodlights	Senior – Thursday 7.00pm Senior Colts – Tuesday & Thursday 7.00pm Junior Colts – Wednesday 7.00pm U15 – Wednesday 6.00pm U14 – Wednesday & Friday 6.30pm U13 – Friday 6.30pm U11 – Wednesday 6.00pm U10 – Friday 6.30pm Mini & Micros (U7 – U12) – Sunday (match or training)

In addition to the summary above, one of Warrington RUFC mini teams train at a 3G pitch at Whitecross Community Centre.

Warrington RUFC identified through the consultation process that their portable floodlights are at the end of their life and require replacing. The RFU indicated that they are aware of this and are looking to support the Club with funding to secure replacement portable floodlights.

Training facilities identified by Warrington RUFC is actually located on WBC land which is managed as an overflow car park as part of Walton Hall Gardens and Estate. WBC has not granted Warrington RUFC permission for training to take place on the area.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

At present the floodlit pitch at Lymm Rugby Club is being converted to a WR compliant 3G pitch; therefore, midweek training is temporarily being accommodated elsewhere on the site utilising portable floodlights.

Casual or other use

Warrington RUFC identified that the rugby union pitches at Warrington Sports Club are used by the rugby union team from University of Chester (Warrington Campus) usually for approximately 2-3 fixtures per season when its pitch is waterlogged.

Furthermore, Warrington RUFC currently has a partnership with Bridgewater High School. This partnership sees the school play Saturday morning matches on Warrington Sports Club rugby union pitches.

Warrington Sports Club pitches are also used for two sessions per season as part of the Sale Sharks Developing Player Pathway (DPP) programme.

Displaced demand

Displaced demand is existing demand that is being met by provision outside of the Warrington boundary. There are a number of reasons why displacement may occur such as Central Venue League, where one location/site is used as the venue for all competitive fixtures with no teams having home or away fixtures or because teams choose to hire pitches outside of the boundary due to pitch quality or hire costs.

Warrington RUFC identified that it had demand that is currently expressed outside of the Warrington boundary at Moore Rugby Club. This currently consists of senior training on a Wednesday evening, at a cost of £90 per session and approximately eight junior matches when pitches at Warrington Sports Club are unavailable due to condition or capacity.

Lymm RFC combines with Ashton on Mersey RFC (Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council) to operate a U18, senior colts, team. This means that home games are divided equally between each clubs' respective home venues, resulting in 0.25 MES of displaced demand.

Unmet demand

Unmet demand is existing demand that is not getting access to pitches. It is usually expressed, for example, when a team is already training but is unable to access a match pitch, or when a league has a waiting list due to a lack of pitch provision, which in turn is hindering growth.

Warrington RUFC identified that it has unmet demand due to not having enough access to pitches. The Club stated that they cannot train or play as frequently at home (Warrington Sports Club) or in Warrington which means that they have to organise to play a higher percentage of games away from home.

Due to the lack of appropriate training facilities available for all three clubs there is some unmet demand with regards to training, however this amount is not quantified.

Future demand

Future demand can be defined in three ways, through participation increases, housing growth and using population forecasts.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Participation increases (2016)

Consultation with clubs suggests that they have a desire to increase the number of teams within their club in the near future.

During the consultation Lymm RUFC stated that it is always looking to increase the playing membership at all levels and actively encourage new members to join and past members to re-join. Of specific interest at this time is the;

- ✦ Development of a Ladies section, however this is currently limited by the number and type of changing rooms that we have within our current club house.
- ✦ Retention of senior players at ages range 19-45 to ensure we can continue to field 4 senior sides
- ✦ Expansion of our Touch Rugby activities.

Table 6.10: Future demand of clubs (2016)

Club	Analysis area	Future demand	Match equivalent sessions required ²²
Eagle RUFC	West neighbourhood	1 x senior	1
Lymm RUFC	South neighbourhood	1 x senior 1 x junior	1.75
Warrington RUFC	South neighbourhood	2 x senior 3 x junior	4.25
Warrington		4 x senior 4 x junior	7

In addition to the above Warrington RUFC also indicated that it hopes to develop Touch Rugby teams in the future. Future demand expressed by clubs equates to an increase of eight teams (four senior and four junior in Warrington). This is converted into requirements for seven match equivalent sessions per week (based on both competitive match play and training). The majority of this future demand is aligned to the south neighbourhood analysis area (six match equivalent sessions) with the remainder being aligned to the west neighbourhood (one match equivalent session).

Population increases (2019)

Table 6.11: Team Generation Rates (2037)

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams	Team Generation Rate	Future population within age group (2037)	Predicted future number of teams	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population
Senior Men's (19-45)	35,097	8	1:4,387	35,947	8.2	0
Senior Women (19-45)	34,416	0	0	34,506	0.0	0
Junior Boys (13-18)	7,412	10	1:741	8,491	11.5	1
Junior Girls (13-18)	7,010	0	0	8,071	0.0	0
Mini rugby mixed (7-12)	15,129	11	1:1,375	4,053	2.9	0

²² Also factors in additional training demand that will be generated by these teams e.g. two teams training on one pitch one evening = one match equivalent session

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Based on population growth by 2037 in Warrington it is anticipated that there will be an increase of one junior boys' team only; this team will be based in the South Area. Any additional participation increases will be accommodated within existing playing squads. It should be noted, however, that TGRs do not account for any participation initiatives from either NGBs or individual clubs.

Capacity analysis (2019)

The capacity for pitches to accommodate competitive play, training and other activity over a season is most often determined by quality. As a minimum, the quality and therefore the capacity of a pitch affects the playing experience and enjoyment of playing rugby. In extreme circumstances, it can result in the inability of a pitch to cater for all or certain types of play during peak and off-peak times. To enable an accurate supply and demand assessment of pitches, the following assumptions are applied to site-by-site analysis:

- ◀ All sites that are used for competitive rugby matches (regardless of whether this is secured community use) are included on the supply side.
- ◀ Use of school pitches by schools reduces potential capacity.
- ◀ All competitive play is on senior sized pitches (except for where dedicated mini and junior pitches are provided).
- ◀ From u13s upwards, teams play 15v15 and use a full pitch.
- ◀ Mini teams (u6-u12) play on half of a senior pitch i.e. two teams per senior pitch
- ◀ For senior and junior teams, the current level of play per week is set at 0.5 for each match played based on all teams operating on a traditional home and away basis.
- ◀ For mini teams playing on a senior pitch, play per week is set at 0.25 for each match played based on all teams operating on a traditional home and away basis and playing across half of one senior pitch.
- ◀ Senior rugby generally takes place on Saturday afternoons.
- ◀ Colt's rugby generally takes place on Sunday afternoons.
- ◀ Junior rugby generally takes place on Sunday mornings.
- ◀ Mini rugby generally takes place on Sunday mornings.
- ◀ Women's and girls' rugby generally takes place on Sunday afternoons.
- ◀ Training taking place on pitches is met by the addition of match equivalent sessions.
- ◀ Team equivalents have been calculated on the basis that 30 players (two teams) train on the pitch for 90 minutes (team equivalent of one) per night.

As a guide, the RFU has set a standard number of matches that each pitch should be able to accommodate:

Table 6.12: Pitch capacity (matches per week) based on quality assessments

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

Capacity is based upon a basic assessment of the drainage system and maintenance programme ascertained through a combination of the quality assessment and consultation. This guide, however, is only a very general measure of potential pitch capacity. It does not account for specific circumstances at time of use and it assumes average rainfall and an appropriate end of season rest and renovation programme.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

The peak period

In order to fully establish actual spare capacity, the peak period needs to be established. Peak time for senior male rugby union matches in Warrington is Saturday PM, for senior female rugby union peak time is Sunday PM with all junior and mini rugby taking place on Sunday. As the majority of junior and mini rugby in Warrington takes place on senior pitches, the overall peak time for senior pitches is Sunday.

Education sites

To account for curricular/ extra-curricular use of education pitches it is deemed that usage should be adjusted by one match equivalent session per pitch. The only time this does not apply is when a school does not use its pitches at all, and the sole use is that made by the community.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 6.13: Rugby union quality and capacity summary (2019)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	Quality rating	Floodlit?	Actual match equivalent sessions (MES) per week	Pitch capacity (MES per week)	Capacity rating (MES per week) ²³	Comments
2	Appleton Thorn Playing Fields (New Lane)	South	Senior	M0 / D0	No	0.5	0.5	-	Pitches are used by Warrington RUFC on an ad-hoc basis
			Senior	M0 / D0	No	0.5	0.5	-	
13	Bridgewater High School (Lower)	South	Senior	M0 / D0	No	1	0.5	0.5	A senior pitch that is overplayed by 0.5 MES. All use is from school demand.
14	Bridgewater High School (Upper)	South	Mini	M0 / D0	No	0.5	0.5	-	A mini pitch that is at capacity from school demand.
			Senior	M0 / D0	No	1	0.5	0.5	A senior pitch that is overplayed by 0.5 MES. All use is from school demand.
			Senior	M0 / D0	No	1	0.5	0.5	A senior pitch that is overplayed by 0.5 MES. All use is from school demand.
66	Lymm High School	South	Senior	M0 / D1	No	1	1.5	-0.5	A senior pitch with 0.5 MES of potential capacity.
			Senior	M0 / D1	No	1	1.5	-0.5	A senior pitch with 0.5 MES of potential capacity.
			Senior	M0 / D1	No	1	1.5	-0.5	A senior pitch with 0.5 MES of potential capacity.

²³ One match equivalent session equates to 90 minutes of pitch usage per week and could be made up of training sessions and/or competitive match play. One team playing on a home and away basis i.e. a home match every other week is equal to 0.5 match equivalent sessions for senior and junior teams or 0.25 match equivalent sessions for mini teams

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	Quality rating	Floodlit?	Actual match equivalent sessions (MES) per week	Pitch capacity (MES per week)	Capacity rating (MES per week) ²³	Comments
69	Lymm Rugby Club	South	Senior	M2 / D2	No	4.75	3.25	1.5	A senior pitch that is overplayed by 1.5 MES. The pitch accommodates both match and training demand.
			Senior	M2 / D2	No	4.5	3.25	1.25	A senior pitch that is overplayed by 1.25 MES. The pitch accommodates both match and training demand.
			Mini	M2 / D2	No	1.5	3.25	-1.75	A mini pitch that has 1.75 MES of potential capacity.
			Mini	M2 / D2	No	1.5	3.25	-1.75	A mini pitch that has 1.75 MES of potential capacity.
127	Thornton Road Recreation Centre	West	Senior	M0 / D1	No	2	1.5	0.5	An overplayed senior pitch, used by Eagle RFC.
130	University of Chester (Warrington Campus)	East	Senior	M0 / D0	No	1	0.5	0.5	A senior pitch that is overplayed by 0.5 MES. All use is from university demand.
133	Warrington Sports Club	South	Senior	M1 / D2	No	3	2.5	0.5	A senior pitch that is overplayed by 0.5 MES. The pitch is used by Warrington RFC for match and training demand. Overmarked onto cricket outfield which causes seasonal issues.
			Senior	M1 / D2	No	2.5	2.5	-	A senior pitch that is at capacity. The pitch is used by Warrington RFC for match demand. Overmarked onto cricket outfield which causes seasonal issues.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Supply and demand analysis

Actual spare capacity

The next step is to ascertain whether or not any identified 'potential capacity' can be deemed 'actual capacity'. There may be situations where, although a site is highlighted as potentially able to accommodate some additional play, this should not be recorded as spare capacity against the site. For example, a site may be managed to regularly operate slightly below full capacity to ensure that it can cater for a number of regular friendly matches and other activities that are difficult to quantify on a weekly basis.

Table 6.14: Actual spare capacity

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Spare capacity (match equivalent sessions)	MES available in the peak period	Comments
66	Lymm High School	South	Senior	3	1.5	1.5	Actual spare capacity is discounted due to the unsecure nature of the site.
69	Lymm Rugby Club	South	Mini	2	3.5	0	No actual spare capacity at the peak time
Total						0	

There are three senior pitches identified as having potential spare capacity to accommodate additional demand, but in practice none of these is considered to have actual spare capacity during the peak period for senior match play (Saturday PM). Any actual spare capacity has been discounted from Lymm High School due to the unsecure nature of the site; whilst previous actual spare capacity at Lymm Rugby Club has been eliminated with midweek training demand temporarily accommodated on senior pitches, resulting in overplay.

There is no actual spare capacity available on mini pitches during the peak period for this demand (Sunday AM).

Table 6.15: Overplay by site

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Match equivalent sessions	Quality rating
13	Bridgewater High School (Lower)	South	Senior	1	0.5	M0 / D0
14	Bridgewater High School (Upper)	South	Senior	2	1	M0 / D0
69	Lymm Rugby Club	South	Senior	2	2.75	M2 / D2
127	Thornton Road Recreation Centre	West	Senior	1	0.5	M0 / D1
130	University of Chester (Warrington Campus)	East	Senior	1	0.5	M0 / D0

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Match equivalent sessions	Quality rating
133	Warrington Sports Club	South	Senior	1	0.5	M1 / D2
Total				7	5.75	

Overplay in Warrington has decreased since the last PPS, but the number of pitches that are overplayed has increased. Currently there are seven grass rugby union pitches that are overplayed by a total of 5.75 match equivalent sessions; each of these pitches is senior size.

Previously there were six senior rugby union pitches that were overplayed by a combined eight match equivalent sessions per season. This reduction can be attributed to a decrease in the number of senior competitive teams in the Area.

It is expected that overplay at Lymm Rugby Club will be eliminated once the WR compliant 3G on the site is operational; reducing overplay in Warrington to three match equivalent sessions across five senior pitches.

Supply and demand balance (2019)

Having considered supply and demand above, the table below identifies the overall supply/demand balance in each of the analysis areas, based on match equivalent sessions.

Table 6.16: Spare capacity of match equivalent sessions per week

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity ²⁴	Current Demand (match equivalent sessions)		Future demand (match equivalent sessions)		Total
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand (pop. growth)	Future demand (participation increase)	
Central neighbourhood	-	-	-	-	-	-
East neighbourhood	-	0.5	0.5	-	-	0.5
South neighbourhood	-	4.75	4.75	0.5	6	11.25
West neighbourhood	-	0.5	0.5	-	1	1.5
Warrington	-	5.75	5.75	0.5	7	13.25

Overall in Warrington there is a current shortfall of 5.75 match equivalent sessions, a decrease from 11 match equivalent sessions in the previous iteration. When future demand is considered the shortfall is exacerbated, increasing to 13.25 match equivalent sessions per week. This is lower than the previous, predicted, future capacity of 22 match equivalent session.

The majority of the shortfall, both at present and in the future is located in the South neighbourhood Analysis Area, where two of the three community clubs in Warrington are based.

²⁴ In match equivalent sessions

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Rugby union summary

- ◀ **There is insufficient supply of rugby union pitches in Warrington to meet demand.**
- ◀ **Overall in Warrington there is a current shortfall of 5.75 match equivalent sessions.**
- ◀ **Overall in Warrington there is a predicted shortfall of 13.25 match equivalent sessions based on anticipated future demand.**
- ◀ There is a total of 17 grass rugby union pitches that are available for community use. The vast majority of these are located in the South neighbourhood area (88%). There is one pitch located in the East neighbourhood area, one in the West and none in Central.
- ◀ 14 of the pitches are senior size; with the remaining three pitches considered mini.
- ◀ There is no actual spare capacity for additional demand during the peak period in Warrington.
- ◀ A total of 30 teams were identified as playing competitive teams from community clubs within Warrington. This consists of eight senior teams, four colt's teams, six junior teams and 12 mini teams.
- ◀ All but two of the teams in Warrington are based in the South neighbourhood area.
- ◀ Warrington RUFC identified significant displaced demand and also indicated it had unmet demand, although the latter was not quantified.
- ◀ Team generation rates predict an increase of one junior boys' team, specifically in the South Area.
- ◀ All three clubs report aspirations to increase the number of teams they provide. Based on this there is a predicated growth of four senior men's teams and four junior teams.
- ◀ Overplay amounts to 5.75 match equivalent sessions. The South neighbourhood analysis area has the highest level of overplay (4.75 match equivalent sessions) and the West and East neighbourhoods have 0.5 match sessions of overplay each.
- ◀ One of the main reasons for overplay is training on match pitches.
- ◀ In addition to the grass pitches there is a WR compliant 3G pitch being installed at Lymm Rugby Club as part of the RFU's Rugby Turf programme. The pitch will support rugby union activity in both Warrington and the surrounding areas.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

PART 7: CRICKET

Cheshire Cricket Board (CCB) is the main governing body for cricket across Warrington. In its aims and objectives, the CCB identifies the importance of recruiting, retaining and developing players and volunteers, and acknowledges a need to nurture a strong Club network which it identifies as the bedrock of Cheshire Cricket.

For adult cricket in Warrington, the Vivio Cheshire County Cricket League and the UK Fast Cheshire Cricket League provide the main offering with fixtures generally taking place on Saturdays and Sundays for males, Sundays for females and weekdays for veteran teams. The majority of junior provision takes place during mid-week and on Sunday mornings through regionalised, club based matches.

Consultation

During the 2016 season, there were seven cricket clubs located in Warrington. Of these, six responded to an online survey resulting in a response rate of 86% (Rylands Cricket Club did not respond). Results from this consultation were used to inform the key issues within this section of the needs assessment. Updates from 2019 season have been made through consultation with the County Board which has been in contact with the clubs but not completed new surveys.

During 2019 season there were six cricket clubs playing in Warrington. Since the previous PPS, Rylands CC folded at the end of 2016.

Supply (2019)

There is a total of 19 cricket sites within Warrington, providing a total of 20 cricket pitches. Of these 11 pitches are available for community use, six pitches are not available for community use.

In total there are 10 grass cricket squares providing 105 natural grass cricket wickets. Of these, nine grass cricket squares are available for community use providing 100 natural grass wickets. The grass cricket square not available for community use is at Lymm High School and this also has a non-turf wicket accompanying the grass square.

In the latest capacity analysis (see Table 7.12), the number of grass wickets is also broken down by use for seniors and 'juniors only'.

Table 7.1: Summary of pitches available for community use by neighbourhood area

Analysis area	Number of pitches available for community use	Number of natural grass wickets available for community use	Number of non-turf wickets available for community use
Central neighbourhood	0	0	0
East neighbourhood	2	8	1
South neighbourhood	8	92	0
West neighbourhood	1	0	1
Warrington	11	100	2

All of the cricket club based pitches provide separate artificial grass wicket practice nets which provide areas for training and can help reduce overplay on grass wickets. In addition, there are seven standalone non-turf wicket pitches.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 7.2: Table of cricket facilities

Site ID	Site name	Available for community use?	Analysis area	No. of Natural grass wickets	No. of non-turf wickets
1	Appleton Cricket Club	Yes	South	15 (11 senior, 4 junior)	-
11	Birchwood Community High School	No	East	-	1
13	Bridgewater High School (Lower)	Yes	South	5	-
24	Cardinal Newman High School	No	South	-	1
35	Culcheth Sports Club	Yes-unused	East	-	1
36	Dakota Park	Yes	West	-	1
45	Glazebury Cricket Club	Yes	East	8	-
48	Grange Sports & Social Club	Yes	South	5	-
49	Grappenhall Cricket Club	Yes	South	19 (13 senior, 6 junior)	-
60	HM Prison (Thorn Cross)	No	South	-	-
66	Lymm High School	No	South	5	1
68	Lymm Oughtlington Park Cricket Club	Yes	South	13 (11 senior 2 junior)	-
86	Pewterspear Sports Pavilion	Yes	South	8 (7 senior, 1 junior)	-
106	St Gregory's High School	No	West	-	1
129	Padgate Academy Warrington	No	East	-	1
133	Warrington Sports Club (top square)	Yes	South	11 (10 senior, 1 junior)	-
133	Warrington Sports Club (bottom square)	Yes	South	16 (14 senior, 2 junior)	-

Table 7.3: List of disused sites

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Comments
50	Grappenhall Hall School	South neighbourhood	The school closed in July 2015 and the site is current vacant with consultation currently being undertaken to inform whether or not the land will be sold off. No community use has ever been recorded for this site.
91	Rylands Recreation Club	Central neighbourhood	Rylands CC folded in 2016, with the grounds now used by a local football academy.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Management and security of tenure

The ownership and management of cricket pitches in Warrington is mixed. Nine of the cricket pitches identified are located on education sites and managed in house. Three of these sites, however, have pitches that have become disused within the last five years.

In terms of the cricket pitches used by the six local cricket clubs, the majority of these are owned or leased by the clubs. Appleton CC, Grappenhall CC and Warrington CC all own their home grounds. Glazebury CC and Stretton CC both lease their grounds from trusts, whilst Lymm Oughtrington Park CC lease their pitch from Lymm High School for a peppercorn rent.

Table 7.4: Table of cricket ownership

Club	Home ground	Analysis area	Own, lease or rent
Appleton Cricket Club	Appleton Cricket Club	South neighbourhood	Own
Glazebury Cricket Club	Glazebury Cricket Club	East neighbourhood	Lease
Grappenhall Cricket Club	Grappenhall Cricket Club	South neighbourhood	Own
Lymm Oughtrington Park Cricket Club	Lymm Oughtrington Park Cricket Club	South neighbourhood	Lease
Stretton Cricket Club	Pewterspear Sports Pavilion	South neighbourhood	Lease
Warrington Cricket Club	Warrington Sports Club	South neighbourhood	Own

No clubs identified any issues with regards to security of tenure during the consultation process. At the time of writing, however, Stretton Cricket Club's future at Pewterspear Sports Pavilion appears to be in doubt after their home matches for the remainder of the 2019 season were moved to Chelford Cricket Club with the permission of the UK Fast Cheshire Cricket League.

Future supply/current developments

As part of the needs assessment any pitch development plans that have funding in place and planning permission (where required) have been highlighted in this section. There are a number of aspirational plans for facility improvements that either do not yet have funding and/or planning permission. The aspirational plans can be viewed in appendix 1.

The only known development identified through the needs assessment was the planned installation of an artificial wicket at Rylands Recreation Ground, linked to the ECB Last Man Stands initiative. Rylands Cricket Club folded in 2016 however, with the ground now used by a local football academy.

Pitch quality

The non-technical assessments (carried out in 2016) of grass wicket cricket pitches in Warrington found nine pitches to be good quality, with the remaining one assessed as standard quality. Of the standalone non-turf wickets still in use, five were assessed as standard and one was assessed as poor.

Further to the site assessments, four responding clubs viewed their pitches as good quality and two as standard quality.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Grappenhall CC identified that its pitch quality had got much better over the last few years following a grant from Sport England that led to their entire outfield being replaced resulting in significant pitch improvements and led to their good quality pitch rating.

Appleton, Glazebury and Lymm Oughtrington CC's all indicated that they believed their pitches had slightly improved over the past 12 months.

Appleton CC identified their pitch as being good quality citing their new groundsman providing more dedicated hours to pitch preparation as a key reason along with the purchase of improved roller equipment. A big issue for Appleton CC, however, is its outfield suffers from poor drainage and severe undulations in places.

Appleton CC also uses other local cricket pitches for competitive match play. It uses the cricket pitches at Grange Sports and Social Club and Bridgewater High School, although it has not used the High School in 2019 and reports the square is no longer fit to host hard ball cricket. The pitches at the Grange are identified as standard quality.

Glazebury CC rated its pitch as standard quality but stated that it can produce a better pitch as it now has the added advantage of covers. It indicated, however, that it had struggled to keep the uncovered squares and the outfield in as good condition due to issues with the maintenance equipment.

Lymm Oughtrington CC rated its pitch as good quality citing improved treatment of pitch as the reason behind the improvements.

Stretton CC deemed its pitch to be standard quality. It felt that the quality of the pitch had become slightly poorer in the last year due to extremely wet weather over the winter period and because time spent on the wicket preparation has decreased due to cost.

Following review of the site assessment reports, feedback from clubs and through discussions with CCB, a quality rating was agreed for each pitch as follows.

Table 7.5: Grass wicket pitch ratings

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Agreed quality rating
1	Appleton Cricket Club	South neighbourhood	Good
13	Bridgewater High School (Lower)	South neighbourhood	Poor
45	Glazebury Cricket Club	East neighbourhood	Standard
48	Grange Sports & Social Club	South neighbourhood	Standard
49	Grappenhall Cricket Club	South neighbourhood	Good
66	Lymm High School	South neighbourhood	Standard
68	Lymm Oughtrington Park Cricket Club	South neighbourhood	Good
86	Pewterspear Sports Pavilion	South neighbourhood	Good
133	Warrington Sports Club	South neighbourhood	Good
133	Warrington Sports Club	South neighbourhood	Good

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 7.6: Non-turf wicket pitch ratings

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Agreed quality rating
11	Birchwood Community High School	East neighbourhood	Poor
35	Culcheth Sports Club	East neighbourhood	Poor
36	Dakota Park	West neighbourhood	Poor
106	St Gregory's High School	West neighbourhood	Poor
129	Padgate Academy Warrington	East neighbourhood	Poor

Ancillary facilities

All cricket clubs in Warrington have access to changing room facilities at their main home ground. The quality does, however, vary from site to site. Appleton, Grappenhall, Stretton and Warrington CC view their changing facilities as good quality. Lymm Oughtrington CC rate its changing facilities as standard whilst Glazebury CC consider its changing facilities to be of a poor quality.

Car parking is identified as an issue at Glazebury CC and the car parking at Appleton CC is also limited.

At Pewterspear Sports Pavilion, there is a current (2019) planning application in for proposed single storey extension to create a larger function room and new indoor exercise/studio room, conversion of redundant existing rooms into a new dance studio and remodel and refurbish of existing changing rooms and shower facilities. This will result in the current four changing rooms will be reduced to two. However, ECB and FF have indicated they are satisfied with the reduction.

Training facilities

Access to artificial grass cricket wickets and/or cricket nets is very important for cricket clubs to enable them to carry out their training, both during the season and the winter months. Three of the six clubs that responded to the consultation report a demand for additional training facilities.

Appleton CC highlighted a good non turf pitch, to ECB standard and which is easy to maintain as a need. In addition, they suggested a mobile net cage may be useful plus access to indoor training facilities.

Glazebury CC identified a need for indoor practice nets or all non-turf practice areas. Stretton CC stated that an artificial turf wicket on the cricket square would support them.

Demand (2019)

The cricket clubs in Warrington vary in size with some having several senior teams and junior teams of various age-groups whilst others just have a handful of senior and junior teams. During 2019 season, a total of six clubs provided a total of 23 senior male teams, five senior female teams and 23 junior teams (boys and girls).

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 7.7: Club by club breakdown of teams (including All Stars)

Club	Senior men's teams	Senior women's teams	Junior boys' teams	Junior girls' teams	Total teams	All Stars
Appleton	5	2	3	0	10	39
Glazebury	2	0	0	0	2	14
Grappenhall	4	0	7	0	11	13
Lymm	4	1	3	0	8	16
Stretton	2	0	1	0	1	27
Warrington	6	2	9	0	17	71
Totals	23	5	23	0	49	180

As shown in the table below, most teams are based in the South Area of Warrington, with a small number of teams in the Central and East areas.

Table 7.8: Summary of teams by analysis area

Analysis area	Number of competitive teams		
	Senior male	Senior female	Junior
Central neighbourhood	0	0	0
East neighbourhood	2	0	0
South neighbourhood	21	5	23
West neighbourhood	0	0	0
Warrington	23	5	23

Through the consultation both Glazebury CC and Stretton CC identified that the number of teams they have as a club have reduced over recent years. The other four clubs engaged in the consultation indicated that their number of members and teams had either remained at a similar level or increased slightly over recent years.

All Stars Cricket

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

The programme seeks to achieve the following aims:

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

All clubs in Warrington have run All Stars Cricket centres and will again in 2020, with sessions held on the outfield at their respective home grounds. Subsequently this is likely to experience significant interest and growth in junior participation.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Softball cricket

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

Each match consists of two teams of six to eight people, with everyone having an opportunity to bat and bowl. Each team bats once, with a pair of batters facing two or three overs. Batters are dismissed in traditional ways, but bowling can be either overarm or underarm, depending on the bowler's preference. Each batting team starts with a score of 200 runs, with runs added to this total by running between the wickets or by hitting the ball to a boundary. Two runs are added to the total for each wide ball; whilst five runs are removed when a batter is out.

The highest score at the conclusion of play wins. Playing equipment is supplied by festival organisers, with all participants provided with a t-shirt for taking part.

This activity is held on the outfield areas at their respective main home grounds.

Educational use of education sites

To account for curricular/ extra-curricular use of education pitches it is deemed that usage should be increased by 7 match equivalent session per season. The only time this does not apply is when a school does not use its pitches at all and the sole use is that made by the community.

The only cricket pitch located on an education site and with both school and community use was located at Bridgewater High School, which up until 2019 was used by Appleton CC.

Displaced demand

None of the clubs that engaged in the consultation identified any demand that was displaced outside of the Warrington boundary.

Future demand

Future demand can be defined in three ways, through participation increases, housing growth and using population forecasts.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Population increases (2019)

Team generation rates are used to calculate the number of teams likely to be generated in the future (2037) based on population growth.

Table 7.9: Team Generation Rates up to 2037

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams	Team Generation Rate	Future population within age group (2037)	Predicted future number of teams	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population
Senior Men (18-55)	52,425	23	1:2,279	52,297	22.9	0
Senior Women (18-55)	51,951	5	1:10,390	50,725	4.9	0
Junior Boys (7-17)	15,232	23	1:662	16,612	25.1	2
Junior Girls (7-17)	14,319	0	0	15,862	0.0	0

There is a projected increase of two junior boys' teams, although it should be noted that a number of girls do participate in predominantly male junior teams in Warrington.

When TGRs are applied to specific analysis areas it is predicted that population increases will result in the creation of one junior boys' team in the South Area; with population increases in other areas insufficient to lead to the formation of additional teams. It is assumed that any participation increases as a result of increased population will be assimilated within existing playing squads.

Based on the average number of home matches played by junior teams (eight match equivalent sessions) per season; it is predicted that there will be a requirement to accommodate eight match equivalent sessions of additional demand within the South Area.

Participation increases (2016)

A number of clubs report aspirations to increase the number of teams they provide.

Table 7.10: Future demand expressed by clubs

Club	Analysis area	Senior	Junior
Appleton CC	South neighbourhood	-	1
Glazebury CC	East neighbourhood	1	3
Grappenhall CC	South neighbourhood	-	-
Lymm Oughtrington Park CC	South neighbourhood	-	2
Stretton CC	South neighbourhood	-	1
Warrington CC	South neighbourhood	-	-
Warrington		1	7

During the consultation Appleton, Glazebury, Lymm Oughtrington Park and Stretton CC indicated they had plans to increase their number of teams.

Appleton CC is hoping to increase numbers in its U9 and U11 age-groups to establish an extra junior team by working with CCB and developing improved school-club links. Stretton CC is also looking to increase the number of participants at U9 age, although there are plans to merge the junior section with neighbouring Appleton.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Glazebury CC hope to get the three junior teams it recently lost re-established as well as introducing an additional senior male team within the next five years.

Lymm Oughtrington Park CC is focusing on increasing participation amongst females and hope to introduce a junior girls' team at U9 and U18 level.

All the clubs indicated that they expect to be able to accommodate these new teams on their current pitches.

The table below summarises the future demanded suggested by the cricket clubs consulted along with TGRs. This equates to the need for 10 match equivalent sessions per year during the relevant peak period for senior men's cricket (Saturday) on the basis that a senior team will play an average of 10 home matches per year.

The increased demand for junior cricket equates to the need for 64 match equivalent sessions per season during the relevant peak periods for junior cricket (mid-week or Sunday), on the basis that a junior team will play an average of eight home matches per year.

Table 7.11: Projected future demand by analysis area (club aspirations & TGRs combined)

Analysis area	Senior (teams)	Junior (teams)
Central neighbourhood	-	-
East neighbourhood	1	3
South neighbourhood	-	5
West neighbourhood	-	-
Warrington	1	8

Peak time demand

An analysis of match play data provided by cricket clubs indicates that peak time for cricket pitches in Warrington is dependent on the type of cricket being played. The peak period for senior match play is Saturday; whilst for peak time for junior cricket is midweek.

Capacity analysis (2019)

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

The capacity of a square to accommodate matches is driven by the number and quality of wickets. This section of the report presents the current pitch stock available for cricket and illustrates the number of competitive matches per season that each square can accommodate against the number of matches currently taking place.

For good quality squares, capacity is considered to be five matches per wicket per season, whilst for a standard quality square, capacity is four matches per wicket per season. For poor quality squares, no capacity is considered to exist due to health and safety issues. This has changed since the original PPS was carried out as previously, the capacity of each wicket was five matches per season regardless of quality. The impact of this alteration means that standard and poor quality squares in Warrington are now deemed to have less capacity than they did in 2016 (for the original study).

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Adult wickets		Junior wickets	
Pitch quality	Matches per week	Pitch quality	Matches per week
Good	5	Good	7
Standard	4	Standard	4
Poor	0	Poor	0

The above guidance is used to allocate capacity ratings as follows:

Potential capacity	Play is below the level the site could sustain
At capacity	Play matches the level the site can sustain
Overused	Play exceeds the level the site can sustain

The number of matches played by each team has been derived from information supplied by the ECB as well as from consultation with clubs. Where such information was not made available, all senior teams play a maximum of 12 home matches per year and all junior teams play a maximum of eight matches per year depending on their age and level of competition.

The ECB suggests that a non-turf wicket can accommodate 60 matches per season. As no non-turf wickets are recorded as accommodating more than this in Warrington, they are all considered to have spare capacity. This translates to actual spare capacity as they are generally accessed during mid-week by junior teams and as a result can be used on a variety of days. For this reason, non-turf wicket capacity has been discounted from the table overleaf so that it does not distort the capacity of grass wickets.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 7.12: Cricket pitch capacity 2019 (natural grass pitches identified as available for community use only)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	No. of pitches	Pitch quality rating	Wicket type	No. of grass wickets	Carrying capacity (per season)	Community use (per season)	Potential capacity rating (per season)
1	Appleton Cricket Club	South	1	Good	Senior	11	55	48	-7
					Junior	4	28	6	-22
13	Bridgewater High School (Lower site)	South	1	Poor	Senior	5	0	-	-
45	Glazebury Cricket Club	East	1	Standard	Senior	8	32	16	-16
48	Grange Sports & Social Club	South	1	Standard	Senior	5	20	13	-7
49	Grappenhall Cricket Club	South	1	Good	Senior	13	65	80	15
					Junior	6	42	33	-9
68	Lymm Oughtrington Park CC	South	1	Good	Senior	11	55	70	15
					Junior	2	14	10	-4
86	Pewterspear Sports Pavilion	South	1	Good	Senior	7	35	22	-13
					Junior	1	7	6	-1
133	Warrington Sports Club (top square)	Central	1	Good	Senior	10	50	50	-
					Junior	1	7	14	7
133	Warrington Sports Club (bottom square)	Central	1	Good	Senior	14	70	50	-20
					Junior	2	14	22	8

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Supply and demand analysis (2019)

Spare capacity

The next step is to ascertain whether or not any identified 'potential capacity' can be deemed 'actual spare capacity' by which it is available at peak time. There may be situations where, although a site is highlighted as potentially able to accommodate some additional play, this should not be recorded as spare capacity against the site. For example, a site may be managed to regularly operate slightly below full capacity to ensure that it can cater for a number of regular training sessions, or to protect the quality of the site.

In order to fully establish actual spare capacity, the peak period needs to be established. An analysis of match play identifies that peak time demand for natural turf squares for senior cricket is Saturday (18 teams), though there is also some demand for Sunday (seven teams) and midweek cricket (three teams).

Those sites which display potential capacity of less than ten matches per season have been excluded from the capacity analysis on the basis that they do not exhibit enough spare capacity to accommodate another senior men's' club team, based on an average of ten home matches per team each season. Two sites with some potential spare capacity have been ruled out on this basis.

Pitches at unsecure sites have also been excluded from the table below given that their continued presence is not guaranteed.

Of those sites with existing community use, there are three sites which show sufficient potential spare capacity on senior natural turf squares in Warrington, totalling 49 match sessions per season. However, where there is a significant amount of potential capacity available, this may not represent actual space capacity (i.e. whether a pitch is available at the peak time).

The average number of junior matches played at home venues in Warrington is eight match equivalent sessions per season. On this basis, any squares with junior wickets that have potential capacity lower than eight match equivalent sessions have been discounted from the table below. This has ruled out two sites. Peak time for junior cricket in Warrington is midweek (16 teams) although there is some demand on Sundays (seven teams). It is assumed that there is sufficient actual spare capacity available during the peak period (midweek) to accommodate additional demand on squares with sufficient potential capacity available.

Table 7.13: Actual square capacity on natural turf cricket squares at senior peak time

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Capacity rating (sessions per season)	Match equivalent sessions available (Saturday)	Comment
45	Glazebury Cricket Club	East	16	0	No actual spare capacity during the peak period.
86	Pewterspear Sports Pavilion	South	13	0	No actual spare capacity during the peak period.
133	Warrington Sports Club (bottom square)	Central	20	0	No actual spare capacity during the peak period.
Total			49	0	

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

In practice, although three sites display potential spare capacity, none of these pitches are considered to have any actual spare capacity available during the peak period for senior match play (Saturday). Alternatively, both Pewterspear Sports Pavilion and Warrington Sports Club have actual spare capacity for more competitive senior teams on Sunday.

Overplay

Guidance on cricket pitches is that any pitch having more matches per wicket per season than the identified carrying capacity is overplayed. Senior wickets on two squares are considered overplayed; whilst junior wickets on both squares at Warrington Sports Club are also overplayed.

Both Grappenhall Cricket Club and Lymm Oughtrington Park Cricket Club were previously identified as being overplayed; and this has remained the case when updated capacity analysis is applied.

The recommendation therefore is a reduction in play on these sites in order to ensure that there is no detrimental effect on quality over time. This, however, is dependent on alternative pitches being available which suit the users and allows teams to continue to play at the appropriate level.

Table 7.14: Overplay by site

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Overplay (matches per season)	
			Senior	Junior
49	Grappenhall CC	South neighbourhood	15	-
68	Lymm Oughtrington CC	South neighbourhood	15	-
133	Warrington Sports Club (top square)	Central neighbourhood	-	7
133	Warrington Sports Club (bottom square)	Central neighbourhood	-	8
Warrington			30	15

All the identified overplay on senior wickets occurs within the South neighbourhood Analysis Area which is not surprising given the significant infrastructure and prevalence of clubs in this area. Overplay on junior wickets is isolated to the Central neighbourhood Analysis Area, specifically at Warrington Sports Club.

Supply/demand analysis (2019)

Consideration must be given to the extent in which provision can accommodate current and future demand.

As previously mentioned, junior teams generally play midweek across a variety of days; consequently, spare capacity is considered to exist for junior matches both now and in the future given that no NTPs are operating at or over capacity. Furthermore, each grass wicket square that is not overplayed is thought to have spare capacity during mid-week.

For senior cricket, the table below looks at available spare capacity during the peak period (Saturday) against overplay and future demand highlighted during consultation.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Please note that match equivalent sessions for actual spare capacity are calculated using the average number of matches played per season by senior teams (10 matches) multiplied by the number of additional teams that can be fielded at peak time (one team per 0.5 squares that are available).

Similarly, match equivalent sessions for future demand are based on the average number of matches played per season by senior teams (10 matches for senior men's matches and seven matches for senior women's).

Table 7.15: Capacity of senior cricket pitches by analysis area and peak period

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (MES)	Demand (pitches)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Central neighbourhood	-	-	-	-	-
East neighbourhood	-	-	-	10	10
South neighbourhood	-	30	30	-	30
West neighbourhood	-	-	-	-	-
Warrington	-	30	30	10	40

Taking into account current demand only, there is a shortfall of capacity across Warrington equating to 30 match equivalent sessions. This shortfall is exacerbated when future demand is considered, increasing to 40 match equivalent sessions per season.

The shortfall is affected by a lack of actual spare capacity during the peak period for senior match play. Any future senior teams that are created should be accommodated either on Sundays or midweek when actual spare capacity is available for additional demand.

Given that junior cricket can be accommodated midweek; and that this peak period is larger than Saturday or Sunday; it is considered that there is sufficient actual spare capacity available to accommodate future junior demand during this period.

At sites where junior wickets are not available, then clubs should consider either establishing specific junior wickets, or potentially accommodating some junior demand on non-turf pitches.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Cricket summary

- ◀ **Overall in Warrington there is currently a shortfall of 30 match equivalent sessions per season on senior wickets.**
- ◀ **When accounting for future demand based on team generation rates and club aspirations the shortfall increases to 40 match equivalent sessions.**
- ◀ In total, there are 19 cricket pitches identified in Warrington, of which, 11 are available for community use. Six are not available for community use whilst three have become disused.
- ◀ Of the 11 pitches available for community use, 10 have grass cricket squares providing 100 natural grass wickets.
- ◀ There are a total 4 non-turf wickets available for community use across the Borough.
- ◀ Despite three pitches showing potential spare capacity there is no actual spare capacity available during the peak period.
- ◀ In total there are six clubs in Warrington providing a total of 23 senior male teams, five senior female teams and 23 junior teams.
- ◀ 47 of these teams are based on the South neighbourhood analysis area, with both the East and Central areas accommodating two teams each.
- ◀ A number of clubs report aspirations to increase the number of teams they provide. Based on this & TGRs there is a predicated growth of one senior team and eight junior teams.
- ◀ Three of the five clubs reported a demand for additional training facilities, with a good quality non turf wicket being cited as a need.
- ◀ There is overplay of 30 match equivalent sessions per season on senior wickets; and 15 match equivalent sessions of overplay on junior wickets.
- ◀ The audit of community use grass wicket cricket pitches found six pitches to be good quality and the remaining three to be standard quality.
- ◀ All of the non-turf wicket pitches were rated as poor quality.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

APPENDIX ONE: SPORTING CONTEXT

The following section outlines a series of national, regional and local policies pertaining to the study and which will have an important influence on the Strategy.

National context

The provision of high quality and accessible community outdoor sports facilities at a local level is a key requirement for achieving the targets set out by the Government and Sport England. It is vital that this strategy is cognisant of and works towards these targets in addition to local priorities and plans.

Department of Media Culture and Sport Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation (2015)

The Government published its strategy for sport in December 2015. This strategy confirms the recognition and understanding that sport makes a positive difference through broader means and that it will help the sector to deliver five simple but fundamental outcomes: physical health, mental health, individual development, social and community development and economic development. In order to measure its success in producing outputs which accord with these aims it has also adopted a series of 23 performance indicators under nine key headings, as follows:

- ◀ More people taking part in sport and physical activity.
- ◀ More people volunteering in sport.
- ◀ More people experiencing live sport.
- ◀ Maximising international sporting success.
- ◀ Maximising domestic sporting success.
- ◀ A more productive sport sector.
- ◀ A more financially and organisationally sustainable sport sector.
- ◀ A more responsible sport sector.

Sport England: Towards an Active Nation (2016-2021)

Sport England has recently released its new five year strategy 'Towards an Active Nation'. The aim is to target the 28% of people who do less than 30 minutes of exercise each week and will focus on the least active groups; typically women, the disabled and people from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

Sport England will invest up to £30m on a plan to increase the number of volunteers in grassroots sport. Emphasis will be on working with a larger range of partners with less money being directed towards National Governing Bodies.

The Strategy will help deliver against the five health, social and economic outcomes set out in the Government's Sporting Future strategy.

- ◀ Physical Wellbeing
- ◀ Mental Wellbeing
- ◀ Individual Development
- ◀ Social & Community Development
- ◀ Economic Development

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

National Planning Policy Framework (2018)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out planning policies for England. It details how these changes are expected to be applied to the planning system. It also provides a framework for local people and their councils to produce distinct local and neighbourhood plans, reflecting the needs and priorities of local communities.

The NPPF states the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It identifies that the planning system needs to focus on three themes of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. A presumption in favour of sustainable development is a key aspect for any plan-making and decision-taking processes. In relation to plan-making the NPPF sets out that Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs.

The 'promoting healthy communities' theme identifies that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficiencies or surpluses in local areas should also be identified. This information should be used to inform what provision is required in an area.

As a prerequisite, the NPPF states existing open space, sports and recreation buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

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

In order for planning policies to be 'sound' local authorities are required to carry out a robust assessment of need for open space, sport and recreation facilities.

The FA National Football Facilities Strategy (2018-2028)

The Football Association's (FA) National Football Facilities Strategy (NFFS) provides a strategic framework that sets out key priorities and targets for the national game (i.e., football) over a ten-year period.

The Strategy sets out shared aims and objectives it aims to deliver on in conjunction with The Premier League, Sport England and the Government, to be delivered with support of the Football Foundation.

These stakeholders have clearly identified the aspirations for football to contribute directly to nationally important social and health priorities. Alongside this, the strategy is clear that traditional, affiliated football remains an important priority and a core component of the game, whilst recognising and supporting the more informal environments used for the community and recreational game.

Its vision is: *"Within 10 years we aim to deliver great football facilities, wherever they are needed"*

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

£1.3 billion has been spent by football and Government since 2000 to enhance existing football facilities and build new ones. However, more is needed if football and Government's shared objectives for participation, individual well-being and community cohesion are to be achieved. Nationally, direct investment will be increased – initially to £69 million per annum from football and Government (a 15% increase on recent years).

The NFFS investment priorities can be broadly grouped into six areas, recognising the need to grow the game, support existing players and better understand the different football environments:

- ◀ **Improve 20,000 Natural Turf pitches**, with a focus on addressing drop off due to a poor playing experience;
- ◀ **Deliver 1,000 3G AGP 'equivalents'** (mix of full size and small sided provision, including MUGAs - small sided facilities are likely to have a key role in smaller / rural communities and encouraging multi-sport offers), enhancing the quality of playing experience and supporting a sustainable approach to grass roots provision;
- ◀ **Deliver 1,000 changing pavilions/clubhouses**, linked to multi-pitch or hub sites, supporting growth (particularly in women and girls football), sustainability and providing a facility infrastructure to underpin investment in coaching, officials and football development;
Support access to flexible indoor spaces, including equipment and court markings, to support growth in futsal, walking football and to support the education and skills outcomes, exploiting opportunities for football to positively impact on personal and social outcomes for young people in particular;
- ◀ **Refurbish existing stock to maintain current provision**, recognising the need to address historic under-investment and issues with refurbishment of existing facilities;
- ◀ **Support testing of technology and innovation**, building on customer insight to deliver hubs for innovation, testing and development of the game.

Local Football Facility Plans

To support in delivery of the NFFS, The FA has commissioned a national project. Over the next two years to 2020, a Local Football Facility Plan (LFFP) will be produced for every local authority across England. Each plan will be unique to its area as well as being diverse in its representation, including currently underrepresented communities.

Identifying strategic priorities for football facilities across the formal, recreational and informal game, LFFPs will establish a ten-year vision for football facilities that aims to transform the playing pitch stock in a sustainable way. They will identify key projects to be delivered and act as an investment portfolio for projects that require funding. As such, around 90% of all will be identified via LFFPs. LFFPs will guide the allocation of 90% of national football investment (The FA, Premier League and DCMS) and forge stronger partnerships with local stakeholders to develop key sites. This, together with local match-funding will deliver over one billion pounds of investment into football facilities over the next 10-years.

It is important to recognise that a LFFP is an investment portfolio of priority projects for potential investment - it is not a detailed supply and demand analysis of all pitch provision in a local area. Therefore, it cannot be used as a replacement for a Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) and it will not be accepted as an evidence base for site change of use or disposal.

A LFFP will; however, build on available/existing local evidence and strategic plans and may adopt relevant actions from a PPS and/or complement these with additional investment priorities.

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

The FA: National Game Strategy (2018-2021)

The FA launched its new National Game Strategy in July 2018 which aims to inspire a life-long journey in football for all. To achieve this, the strategy will focus on five key aspects of the game:

- ◀ A high quality introduction to football
- ◀ Developing clubs and leagues
- ◀ Embrace all formats of football and engage all participants
- ◀ Recruit, develop and support the workforce
- ◀ Develop sustainable facilities

Through these five pillars, The FA's objectives are to:

- ◀ Increase the number of male affiliated and recreational players by 10%.
- ◀ Double the number of female affiliated and recreational players via a growth of 75%.
- ◀ Increase the number of disability affiliated and recreational players by 30%.
- ◀ Ensure affiliated Futsal is available across the country in order to increase the number of Futsal affiliated and recreational players.

The sustainable football facilities should provide support to an agreed portfolio of priority projects that meet National Football Facility Strategy (NFFS) investment priorities.

The Rugby Football League Facility Strategy

The RFL's Facilities Strategy was published in 2011. The following themes have been prioritised:

- ◀ Clean, Dry, Safe & Playable
- ◀ Sustainable clubs
- ◀ Environmental Sustainability
- ◀ Geographical Spread
- ◀ Non-club Facilities

The RFL Facilities Trust website www.rflfacilitiestrust.co.uk provides further information on:

- ◀ The RFL Community Facility Strategy
- ◀ Clean, Dry, Safe and Playable Programme
- ◀ Pitch Size Guidance
- ◀ The RFL Performance Standard for Artificial Grass Pitches
- ◀ Club guidance on the Annual Preparation and Maintenance of the Rugby League Pitch

Further to the 2011 Strategy detail on the following specific programmes of particular relevance to pitches and facility planning are listed below and can be found via the trust link (see above):

- ◀ The RFL Pitch Improvement Programme 2013 – 2017
- ◀ Clean, Dry and Safe programmes 2013 - 2017

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Rugby League World Cup ‘Inspired by 2021’ Legacy Programme

The Rugby League World Cup 2021 will develop a £10 million legacy programme with funds driven into local clubs and community projects. The government investment, delivered by Sport England, is part of RLWC 2021’s ambitious plan to grow the sport and make it more visible, engaging and welcoming to current and potential participants.

The funding will be split into large transformational community projects, such as changing room improvements and new artificial grass pitches with the remaining funding used for smaller scale initiatives such as supplying new kit and equipment to promote club and community development.

The investment will focus on the following four key areas:

- ◀ Creating welcoming environments
- ◀ Encouraging participation growth
- ◀ Building community engagement
- ◀ Cultivating further investment

The Rugby Football Union Strategic Plan (2017-2021)

The RFU has released its new strategic vision for rugby in England. The strategy is based on four main elements which are; Protect, Engage, Grow and Win. It covers all elements of rugby union ranging from elite rugby to grassroots, although the general relevancy to the PPS is centred around growing the game.

The RFU exists to promote and develop rugby union in England and ensure the long-term sustainability of clubs by growing player numbers and retaining them across all age groups. Responding to wider market influences, work will continue on developing new ways to take part in all forms of the game, without comprising the sports traditions. This will ensure a lasting legacy from elite success by attracting new players and encouraging current male and female adult players to play.

The four key aims to ensure long term sustainability are to:

- ◀ Improve player transition from age grade to adult 15-a-side rugby
- ◀ Expand places to play through Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs)
- ◀ Engage new communities in rugby
- ◀ Create a community 7’s offering

England Hockey Strategy

England Hockey’s Facilities Strategy can be found [here](#).

Vision: For every hockey club in England to have appropriate and sustainable facilities that provide excellent experiences for players.

Mission: More, Better, Happier Players with access to appropriate and sustainable facilities

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

The 3 main objectives of the facilities strategy are:

1. PROTECT: To conserve the existing hockey provision

- There are currently over 800 pitches that are used by hockey clubs (club, school, universities) across the country. It is important to retain the current provision where appropriate to ensure that hockey is maintained across the country.

2. IMPROVE: To improve the existing facilities stock (physically and administratively)

- The current facilities stock is ageing and there needs to be strategic investment into refurbishing the pitches and ancillary facilities. England Hockey works to provide more support for clubs to obtain better agreements with facilities providers & education around owning an asset.

3. DEVELOP: To strategically build new hockey facilities where there is an identified need and ability to deliver and maintain. This might include consolidating hockey provision in a local area where appropriate.

England Hockey has identified key areas across the country where there is a lack of suitable hockey provision and there is a need for additional pitches, suitable for hockey. There is an identified demand for multi pitches in the right places to consolidate hockey and allow clubs to have all of their provision catered for at one site.

England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) Inspiring Generations (2020-2024)

The England and Wales Cricket Board unveiled a new strategic plan in 2019. The strategic plan aims to connect communities and improve lives by inspiring people to discover and share their passion for cricket

The plan sets out six important priorities and activities, these are:

◀ ***Grow and nurture the core***

- ◀ Create an infrastructure investment fund for First Class County Clubs (FCCs)
- ◀ Introduce a new Community Investment Funding for FCCs and County Cricket Boards (CCBs)
- ◀ Invest in club facilities
- ◀ Develop the role of National Counties Cricket
- ◀ Further invest in County Competitions

◀ ***Inspire through elite teams***

- ◀ Increase investment in the county talent pathway
- ◀ Incentivise the counties to develop England Players
- ◀ Drive the performance system through technology and innovation
- ◀ Create heroes and connect them with a new generation of fans

◀ ***Make cricket accessible***

- ◀ Broaden crickets appeal through the New Competition
- ◀ Create a new digital community for cricket
- ◀ Install non-traditional playing facilities in urban areas
- ◀ Continue to deliver South Asian Action Plans
- ◀ Launch a new participation product, linked to the New Competition

WARRINGTON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

- ◀ **Engage children and young people**
 - ◀ Double cricket participation in primary schools
 - ◀ Deliver a compelling and coordinated recreational playing offer from age five upwards
 - ◀ Develop our safeguarding to promote safe spaces for children and young people

- ◀ **Transform women's and girls' cricket**
 - ◀ Grow the base through participation and facilities investment
 - ◀ Launch centres of excellence and a new elite domestic structure
 - ◀ Invest in girls' county age group cricket
 - ◀ Deliver a girls' secondary school programme

- ◀ **Support our communities**
 - ◀ Double the number of volunteers in the game
 - ◀ Create a game-wide approach to Trust and Foundations through the cricket network
 - ◀ Develop a new wave of officials and community coaches
 - ◀ Increase participation in disability cricket