

WIGAN BOROUGH

PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

ASSESSMENT REPORT

AUGUST 2017

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



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ABBREVIATIONS

3G	Third Generation (artificial turf)
AGP	Artificial Grass Pitch
CFA	County Football Association
ECB	England and Wales Cricket Board
EH	England Hockey
ET	England Touch
FA	Football Association
FC	Football club
FE	Further Education
FIT	Fields in Trust
FPM	Facilities Planning Model
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
HE	Higher Education
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh and Page
LANFA	Lancashire County Football Association
LCB	Lancashire Cricket Board
NGB	National Governing Body
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PPS	Playing Pitch Strategy
RFL	Rugby Football League
RFU	Rugby Football Union
RUFC	Rugby union football club
S106	Section 106
TGR	Team generation rate
WBC	Wigan Borough Council
WR	World Rugby

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

PART 1: INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

This is the Playing Pitch Assessment Report prepared by Knight Kavanagh & Page (KKP) for Wigan Borough Council (WBC) and its partners. 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.

The 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.

Stage A: Prepare and tailor the approach

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 across Wigan. The Strategy will be produced in accordance with Sport England Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance (October 2013 as updated in March 2014) and the national planning guidance and provide robust and objective justification for future playing pitch provision throughout the Borough.

One of the core planning principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (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 73 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.

The Wigan Local Plan needs to be based upon a robust evidence base. Paragraphs 73 and 74 of the NPPF discuss assessments and the protection of "existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields".

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Why the PPS is being developed

A Playing Pitch Strategy will support delivery of outcomes under The Deal for the Future¹, Wigan Borough's asset-based strategy to work with local communities to achieve growth and reform:

'Our part' (Wigan Borough Council)

- ◀ Keep Council Tax as one of the lowest
- ◀ Help communities to support each other
- ◀ Cut red tape and provide value for money
- ◀ Build services around you and your family
- ◀ Create opportunities for young people
- ◀ Support the local economy to grow
- ◀ Listen, be open, honest and friendly
- ◀ Believe in our Borough

'Your part' (residents)

- ◀ Recycle more, recycle right
- ◀ Get involved in your community
- ◀ Get online
- ◀ Be healthy and be active
- ◀ Help protect children and the vulnerable
- ◀ Support your local businesses
- ◀ Have your say and tell us if we get it wrong
- ◀ Believe in our Borough

The Wigan Deal is an informal agreement between Wigan Borough Council and all residents to work together to improve the Borough. As part of this programme the Council created the Deal for Communities Investment Fund to encourage residents to get involved in their communities. Organisations can apply for three tiers of funding:

- ◀ Small investment – Up to £2000 for one year to achieve something new and address key priorities.
- ◀ Start Up - Up to £10,000 (in addition to guidance) for one year to help progress and nurture an idea
- ◀ Big Idea - Greater than £10,000 and up to £1 million. A three year investment for innovative ideas which are well developed.

The Wigan Locality Plan² (updated July 2016) states that "Currently only 48% of adults in Wigan are physically active compared to England average of 56%. The Council recognises the importance of leisure services in engaging people to increase physical activity and reduce inactivity ... Increasing physical activity and reducing inactivity in targeted areas of our communities will positively impact on the causes of premature, preventable illness and deaths, contribute to reducing the health inequalities gap, improve people's self-esteem, their mental wellbeing and decrease social isolation"

Planning Policy and other relevant sport related corporate strategies must be based upon a robust evidence base in order to ensure planning and sports development policy can be implemented efficiently and effectively.

¹ <https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Council/The-Deal/The-Deal.aspx>

² Further, Faster Towards 2020: the Wigan Locality Plan for Health and Care Reform. -- July 2016

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Corporate and strategic:

- ◀ It ensures a strategic approach to playing pitch provision. The PPS will act as a tool for Wigan Borough Council and partner organisations to guide resource allocation and set priorities for pitch sports in the future.
- ◀ It provides robust evidence for capital funding. As well as proving the need for developer contributions towards pitches and facilities a playing pitch strategy can provide evidence of need for a range of capital grants. Current funding examples include the Sport England Funding Programmes, Heritage Lottery Fund (for park improvements), the Football Foundation and the Big Lottery. The site specific action plan that will form an integral part of this PPS will identify and prioritise sites that require improvements and where the funding should be secured from.

Planning:

- ◀ The Playing Pitch Strategy will provide important evidence to support the Wigan Local Plan.
- ◀ It will support strategic policies on green infrastructure, leisure, outdoor sports facilities and health and well-being in the emerging Wigan Local Plan.
- ◀ Evidence for Community Infrastructure Levy and Developer Contributions

Operational:

- ◀ It can help improve management of assets management, which should result in more efficient use of resources and reduced overheads.
- ◀ The Action Plan will identify sites where quality of provision can be enhanced.
- ◀ An assessment of all pitches (in use and lapsed) will be undertaken to understand how pitches are used and whether the current maintenance and management regimes are appropriate or require change.

Sports development:

- ◀ It helps identify which sites have community use and whether that use is secure or not.
- ◀ It helps identify where community use of school sports pitches is most needed to address any identified deficits in pitch provision.
- ◀ It provides better information to residents and other users of sports pitches available for use. This includes information about both pitches and sports teams/user groups.
- ◀ It promotes sports development and can help unlock latent demand by identifying where the lack of facilities might be suppressing the formation of teams/community needs.

Aims and objectives

The key drivers for developing the Playing Pitch Strategy include:

- ◀ Aims and objectives for improving health and well-being and increasing participation in sport.
- ◀ Sports development programmes and changes in how the sports are played.
- ◀ The need for 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.
- ◀ Budgetary pressures to ensure the most efficient management and maintenance of playing pitch provision.

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- ◀ The need 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.
- ◀ Prioritisation of internal capital and revenue investment.
- ◀ The need to provide evidence to help secure internal and external funding.

The objectives of the project will be to:

- ◀ Provide a carefully quantified and documented assessment of current and future needs for playing pitches;
- ◀ Provide information to assist performance management and asset management,
- ◀ Provide information to underpin:
 - the protection, enhancement and improvement of the existing pitch stock,
 - improvements in community access to educational and non-local authority pitches;
- ◀ To provide a basis for establishing new pitch requirements arising from new housing developments or improvements to existing where demand can be satisfied by increasing capacity.
- ◀ To provide a framework for delivering government policies for social inclusion, environmental protection, community involvement and healthy living;
- ◀ To provide good-quality information and evidence of need for funding bids for new and improved provision;
- ◀ To ensure that the WBC strategy has strong links to all NGB facilities strategies;
- ◀ To provide the context for sports development of pitch sports which aims to develop the range of opportunities available.

Agreed scope

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

Pitch sports

- ◀ Football pitches
- ◀ Cricket pitches
- ◀ Rugby league pitches
- ◀ Rugby union pitches
- ◀ Hockey/artificial grass pitches (AGPs)
- ◀ Third generation turf pitches (3G pitches)
- ◀ American football and Touch (rugby)

Pitch sports have been assessed using the guidance set out in Sport England's Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance: An approach to developing and delivering a playing pitch strategy.

Management arrangements

A Project Team from the Council has worked with KKP to ensure that all relevant information is readily available and to support the consultants as necessary to ensure that project stages and milestones are delivered on time.

A strong and effective steering group has and will continue to lead and drive this PPS forward during its development and also to ensure the delivery of its recommendations and actions.

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The membership of the group is balanced and representative of the different parties and key drivers behind the work and the providers and users of playing pitches in the study area.

The 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. The Steering Group is made up of representatives from Wigan Borough Council, Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles, Leigh Sports Village, Greater Sport, Sport England and National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs). Please see Appendix 2 for a list of Steering Group contacts.

It will be important for the 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 that the PPS is kept up to date and refreshed.

Study area

Wigan's Deal for the Future is centred around two key ambitions: "confident place, confident people". It places improving the health and wellbeing of residents at the heart of the Council's strategy – and sees sport as an important way to achieve this: *"Wigan has a strong sporting tradition, embedding passion and belief within the fiercely proud local population. The amateur sports scene is particularly prevalent in Wigan and Leigh, with a wide range of sports clubs ensuring that people are able to engage in regular physical activity to improve health and wellbeing"*³.

Community involvement and participation are central to the Deal: the Council aims to increasingly co-design and co-produce services with residents: *"In 2020, more services will be delivered for communities by communities. Voluntary groups are encouraged through The Deal to deliver services including, for example, sports and leisure provision"*.

An asset-based approach does not ignore the challenge faced by the Borough: the Wigan Locality Plan (updated July 2016) states that *"Currently only 48% of adults in Wigan are physically active compared to England average of 56%. We recognise the importance of leisure services in engaging people to increase physical activity and reduce inactivity ... Increasing physical activity and reducing inactivity in targeted areas of our communities will positively impact on the causes of premature, preventable illness and deaths, contribute to reducing the health inequalities gap, improve people's self-esteem, their mental wellbeing and decrease social isolation"*. According to Sport England, the health costs associated with physical inactivity are 36% in Wigan than in England as a whole (and 18% higher than in the rest of the North West)⁴:

Health costs of physical inactivity per 100,000 population	Wigan	North West	England
	£2,468,514	£2,145,919	£1,817,285

³ <https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Docs/PDF/Council/Strategies-Plans-and-Policies/Corporate/Deal-for-future/The-plan.pdf>

⁴ [Sport England – Local Sport Profile for Wigan](#)

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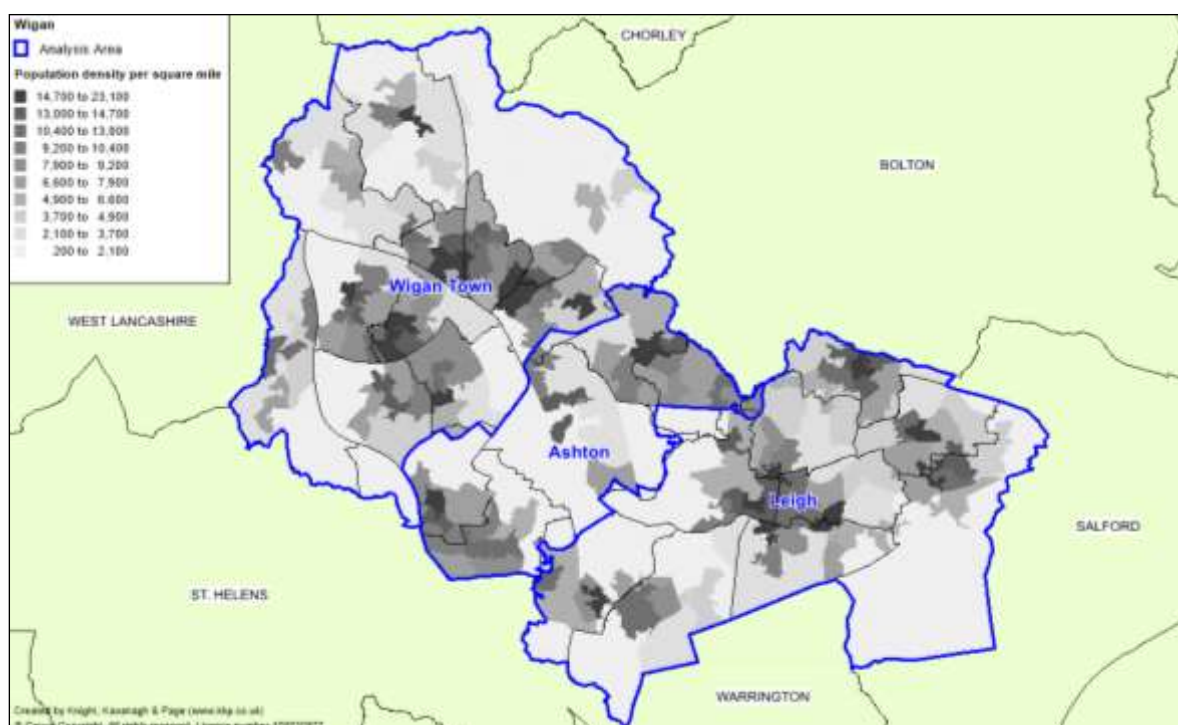
In addition to the many grass roots sport clubs active in the Borough, Wigan Council works closely with local partner organisations. This includes Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles (formerly Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust); and Leigh Sports Village. These two organisations manage a range of leisure and sporting facilities and physical activity programmes – including playing pitches. It also includes professional sports clubs in football (Wigan Athletic) and rugby league (Wigan Warriors and Leigh Centurions) – all these clubs have both playing pitches and active community/grassroots sport development and engagement programmes, as well as a demonstrable willingness to work in partnership for the benefit of the Borough.

The Wigan Borough Open Space, Sport and Recreation Provision and Needs Assessment (2015) gives indication of the playing pitches current situation for all sports considered in this project brief. It shows, for instance, that artificial grass pitches are mostly concentrated around the Wigan town area, with much sparser provision in the rest of the Borough. A high proportion of these AGPs are on school sites – which may impact on their wider availability.

The strategy covers the Borough boundary area of Wigan; however, the data gathered has been presented in such a way as to be further analysed by smaller Analysis Areas. There are also a number of sports teams from outside the specified area that use pitches within Wigan and sports teams from inside Wigan that use facilities outside of the Borough. This cross-boundary movement has been taken into consideration when producing this assessment report.

For the purpose of this analysis, Wigan Borough has been broken down into three analysis areas. They are: Ashton, Wigan (town) and Leigh. The analysis areas fit in line with the Council's new community strategy and ward based plans to support the Council's ambition to provide Wigan residents with access to high quality sport facilities at a neighbourhood level. The study area is aligned with police boundaries and the National Health Service, clinical commissioning groups in Wigan and illustrated in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1: Analysis area map



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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 of and demand for playing pitches. This section provides details about how this information has been gathered in Wigan.

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'.⁵ 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

- ◀ ***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.

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, for example, 5v5 mini 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 Wigan. 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, exclusion 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. For each site, the following details were recorded in the project database (which will be 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

⁵ www.sportengland.org>Facilities and Planning> Planning Applications

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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 74 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.

Table 1.1: Disused and lapsed sites in Wigan Borough

Site name	Analysis area	Sport(s)	Status (last used)	Comments
Bryn Gates Playing Fields	Ashton	Football	2011/12 Lapsed site	Youth 9v9 pitch located on playing fields behind allotments. No onsite changing provision.
Furlong Close Playing Fields	Ashton	Football	2013/14 Disused site	Previously marked with an adult football pitch and goalposts remain in place, though last recorded pitch marked was youth sized 60x40 metres.
Heath Lane	Leigh	-	2015/16 Disused site	Former primary school site located off Heath Lane on land south of Watson’s Field. School playing field last known to be maintained circa 2000, now overgrown scrub land.
Lodge Lane Playing Fields	Leigh	Football	2010/11 Lapsed site	Previously marked with four football pitches of adult, youth and mini (two) sizes. No longer in use or marked and often waterlogged. One pitch still has goalposts in place but the site has no changing provision and car parking provision is poor.

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Site name	Analysis area	Sport(s)	Status (last used)	Comments
Melrose Tip	Leigh	Football	2012/13 Disused site	Previously had one adult football pitch on a slope, reported subject to vandalism and damage. No onsite changing provision. Was allocated with the North Leigh Park residential development however the developer has since entered administration, though the Council is keen for the scheme to be delivered. Mitigation proposed to be drainage improvements at Marsh Playing Fields and new pitch provision at Howe Bridge Leisure Centre.
Moseley Common	Leigh	Football	2011/12 Disused site	One adult and one youth 9v9 pitch now unmarked due to no local demand, reportedly because the site drains poorly. Now retained as recreational open space and the local Friends group has recently funded the installation of 16x7 feet goalposts for recreational play. WBC reports interest from a team looking to hire the pitch for 2017/18.
Rose Bridge High School Sports Field	Wigan Town	Football Rugby league	Disused site	School playing field across from the main school building. Previously had three rugby league pitches marked, two with goalposts installed, however the school has ceased to use or maintain the site since circa 2012. No onsite changing provision. The school has recently signed a 125-year lease on the site from the Council.
Seaman Way - Former Sports Club	Wigan Town	Football	Lapsed site	Former industry sports ground which has an adult football pitch. Also had a tennis court and bowling green which have since been lost.
Spa Road Recreation Ground	Leigh	Football	2004/5 Lapsed site	Youth 9v9 pitch not presently used or marked. The site neighbours Crilly Park (Atherton Laburnum Rovers FC) and the Council states it would like to retain site for community use.
St John Street	Ashton	Football	2006/7 Lapsed site	Large playing field which previously had one adult, one youth and one mini football pitch. Publicly accessible. Changing rooms available.

Furthermore, there are some sites with disused playing pitches no longer marked, however the sites as a whole remain operational as they are either protected or serve a wider function such as a public park and therefore are not likely to be considered for potential development.

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Table 1.2: Disused pitches in Wigan Borough

Site name	Analysis area	Sport(s)	Status (last used)	Comments
Central Park Playing Fields	Leigh	Football/ Rugby union	2017	Two mini pitches previously used for either mini football or mini rugby union. Opposite Atherton Community School. Proposals for residential development and re-provision of pitches elsewhere.
Coronation Park	Wigan Town	Rugby league	2009/10	Previously an adult football pitch circa 2005, now has rugby posts 70 metres apart, equivalent to a junior pitch but not formally marked. No onsite changing provision. Adjacent to St Anne's C of E Junior & Infant School which reports that it does not use the playing field.
Ellesmere Street Playing Fields	Leigh	Football	2017	Youth 11v11 pitch previously marked as recent as 2013. No onsite changing provision. Adjacent scout building and play area also onsite.
King George V Field (KGV) - Ashton	Ashton	Football	2014/15	Youth 9v9 pitch with no onsite changing provision. Last marked in 2016. Protected as recreational open space by Fields in Trust King George V Fields programme. The Council has held discussions with Ashton Park Juniors FC regarding asset transfer of the site.

In addition to the above, there are a number of existing sites containing pitches which are presently marked but unused. These are listed within the relevant sport section.

Any sites omitted from the PPS either intended or having been overlooked, whether used, disused or lapsed, are subject to the same conditions as those detailed herein. Any such site is not to be considered as not required or surplus as part of the planning process.

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.

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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 Wigan 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 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.

Local sports development officers, county associations and regional governing body officers advised which of the clubs to include in the face to face consultation. Sport England was also included within the consultation process prior to the project commencing. Issues identified by clubs returning questionnaires were followed up by telephone or face to face interviews.

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The response rates of such consultation are as follows:

Sport	Total number	Number responding	Response rate	Methods of consultation
Football clubs	93	64	69%	Face to face
Football teams	575	491	85%	Online survey Telephone
Cricket clubs	14	15	93%	Face to face Online survey Telephone
Rugby union clubs	6	6	100%	Face to face Online survey
Rugby league clubs	13	16	81%	Face to face Online survey Telephone
Hockey clubs	4	4	100%	Face to face Telephone
American football clubs	1	-	-	Online survey
Touch clubs	2	2	100%	Online survey
Secondary schools/colleges	25	22	88%	Face to face Telephone
Primary/SEN schools	112	30	27%	Online survey Telephone

The consultation process sought to capture demand information and associated issues relating to all affiliated sports clubs using playing pitches in Wigan.

For face to face consultation, key clubs were identified by NGBs and the Council and were selected based on sporting issues most pertinent to the study, for example, for having high levels of demand, specific facility issues including quality, threat of loss of access or related issues to playing pitch provision.

Where applicable, the consultation process also considers clubs and teams playing within leagues and organisations specifically focused on providing opportunities for or being outwardly inclusive of certain societal groups. Though there are no such leagues identified within the Borough, they tend to serve a wider catchment, for example, the South Manchester & Cheshire Christian Football League and Manchester Jewish Soccer League serve the Greater Manchester region, whilst Manchester Canalsiders RL (Manchester), Manchester Village Spartans RUFC (Trafford), Northern Aces Tennis Club (Manchester/Trafford/Bolton) and Manchester Frontrunners running club (Manchester) all offer LGBT focused/inclusive opportunities within the Greater Manchester area.

Future demand

Alongside current demand, it is important for a PPS to assess whether the future demand for playing pitches can be met. Using population projections, and proposed housing growth (if available), an estimate can be made of the likely future demand for playing pitches.

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Population growth

The current resident population in Wigan is 322,022⁶. By 2026 (the period to which this assessment projects population based future demand, in line with the Wigan Local Plan period) the Borough's population is projected to increase to 335,255 representing an increase of 13,233 (or equivalent to a percentage increase of 4.1%) according to ONS data.

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 in the study area.

Future demand for pitches is calculated by adding the percentage increases, to the ONS population increases in each Analysis Area. This figure is then applied to the TGRs and is presented on a sport by sport basis within the relevant sections of this report.

Other information sources that were used to help identify future demand include:

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

Housing growth

The Draft Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF – October 2016) is proposing 227,000 new homes up to 2035, with 22,500 of those proposed to be within Wigan Borough if adopted.

High Speed 2

High Speed 2 (HS2) is a new high-speed railway proposed by the Government to connect major cities in Britain. It will be built in phases.

Phase Two of HS2 will be from the West Midlands to Leeds and Manchester. Phase Two forms a 'Y' shape from the West Midlands up towards Manchester and the North West with proposed stations at Manchester Airport and Manchester Piccadilly. It is anticipated that Phase Two of HS2 will begin operating trains around 2033.

Should the rail scheme go ahead, initial plans show that Hesketh Meadow Playing Fields would be affected as part of the proposed route. The site is presently used for football, has six pitches of various sizes and presently caters for 25 teams at differing formats.

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 Wigan. It focused on how much use each site could potentially accommodate (on an area by area basis) compared to how much use is currently taking place.

⁶Source: ONS Mid-2015 Population Estimates for Lower Layer Super Output Areas in England and Wales by Single Year of Age and Sex

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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 sessions⁷ 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 this 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.

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 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 findings and issues relating to the supply, demand and adequacy of playing pitch provision in Wigan. 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 (Section D).

The following sections summarise the local administration of the main grass pitch sports in Wigan Borough. Each provides a quantitative summary of provision and a map showing the distribution of facilities. It also provides information about the availability of facilities to/for the local community and, the governing body of each sport and regional strategic plan (where they exist). Local league details are provided in order to outline the competitive structure for each sport. The findings of club consultation and key issues for each sport are summarised.

⁷ A match equivalent session (MES) can be either a match or a training session

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PART 2: FOOTBALL

2.1: Introduction

The organisation primarily responsible for the development of football in Wigan Borough is Lancashire FA. It is also responsible for the administration, in terms of discipline, rules and regulations, cup competitions and representative matches, development of clubs and facilities, volunteers, referees, coaching courses and delivering national football schemes. There are a number of teams which instead affiliate to Liverpool FA and Manchester FA, though all teams are considered within the assessment regardless of which County Football Association (CFA) they affiliate to.

This section of the report focuses on the supply and demand for grass football pitches. Part 7 captures supply and demand for third generation pitches (3G pitches) which are the preferred AGP (artificial grass pitch) surface type for football. In future, it is anticipated that there will be a growing demand for the use of 3G pitches for competitive football fixtures, especially to accommodate mini and youth football.

The FA Parklife Programme

The FA, the Premier League and Sport England (along with the Football Foundation together commonly referred to as ‘the Football stakeholders’) have developed the Parklife Football Hubs Programme to target areas where pressures on the local game are greatest. The aim of the programme is to create a sustainable model for football facilities based around artificial grass pitches on hub sites. The fund will provide significant new investment into local, accessible facilities. It differs from traditional football investment streams as the funding partners are keen to see a portfolio approach that provides an area-wide solution, rather than a one-off site investment. Parklife Football Hubs will:

- ◀ Be strategically planned and programmed
- ◀ Be financially sustainable and based on strong business plans, with sites capable of income generation helping sustain a portfolio approach and reduce reliance on public subsidy
- ◀ Be designed collaboratively with local partners including the FA, County FA, local professional club(s), the local football community and local authorities
- ◀ Encourage people to play more regularly, or to become active and in doing so, achieve wider social outcomes
- ◀ Be affordable, open and accessible to all
- ◀ Be flexible – catering for football activity, other sports and also other programmes such as education, health and wider community development initiatives as appropriate
- ◀ Offer a high-quality customer experience and provide a safe and welcoming environment for football-led and other demand-led local programmes to flourish
- ◀ Provide a new management and operational approach to grassroots football facilities.

The aim of the Parklife programme is to develop football hub sites where a multiple 3G pitch (minimum 2 full sized) approach is required on all in order to develop a sustainable business case across a portfolio of sites within an area. The creation of football hubs in this manner will include the creation of a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) with revenue generated by it to be reinvested into the sustainability of football facilities, such as sinking funds for 3G pitch repair and resurfacing in the long term, as well as into improved maintenance, remediation and drainage of grass pitches to improve the local football offer.

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This approach aims to drive increased participation levels, quality of experience and more broadly delivering wider social benefits. The main focus of delivery will be around increasing the number of 3G pitches available for competitive play with a shift towards increased use of 3G pitches to accommodate mini soccer and youth 9v9 play, also serving to increase 3G training provision available and opportunities for small sided play and as potential women's and girl's development hubs.

To be eligible for the programme local authorities must have a qualifying population of at least 200,000 people, however those with a lesser population are able to adopt a partnership approach with neighbouring authorities to qualify. Following an expression of interest submitted by Wigan Borough Council in January 2017, Wigan has successfully been progressed to the second of a three-stage funding process for the Parklife programme.

Consultation

In addition to face to face consultation with key clubs, an electronic survey was sent to all football clubs playing in Wigan Borough and leagues accommodating Wigan based teams with contact details having been provided by the three CFAs. Consultation (either through a survey or face to face interview) represents a 69% club response rate and 85% team response rate. The results are used to inform key issues within this section of the report. The following clubs and leagues were met with face to face:

- ◀ Astley & Tyldesley JFC
- ◀ Cherrybrook FC
- ◀ Golborne Sports JFC
- ◀ Hindley Juniors
- ◀ Wigan Athletic FC
- ◀ Winstanley Warriors FC
- ◀ Bolton and Bury District Football League (BBDJFL)

2.2: Supply

The audit identifies a total of 251 grass football pitches across 121 sites in Wigan Borough. However, 212 pitches across 93 sites are identified as being available for community use on some level⁸, whilst 39 pitches across 28 sites are unavailable for community use.

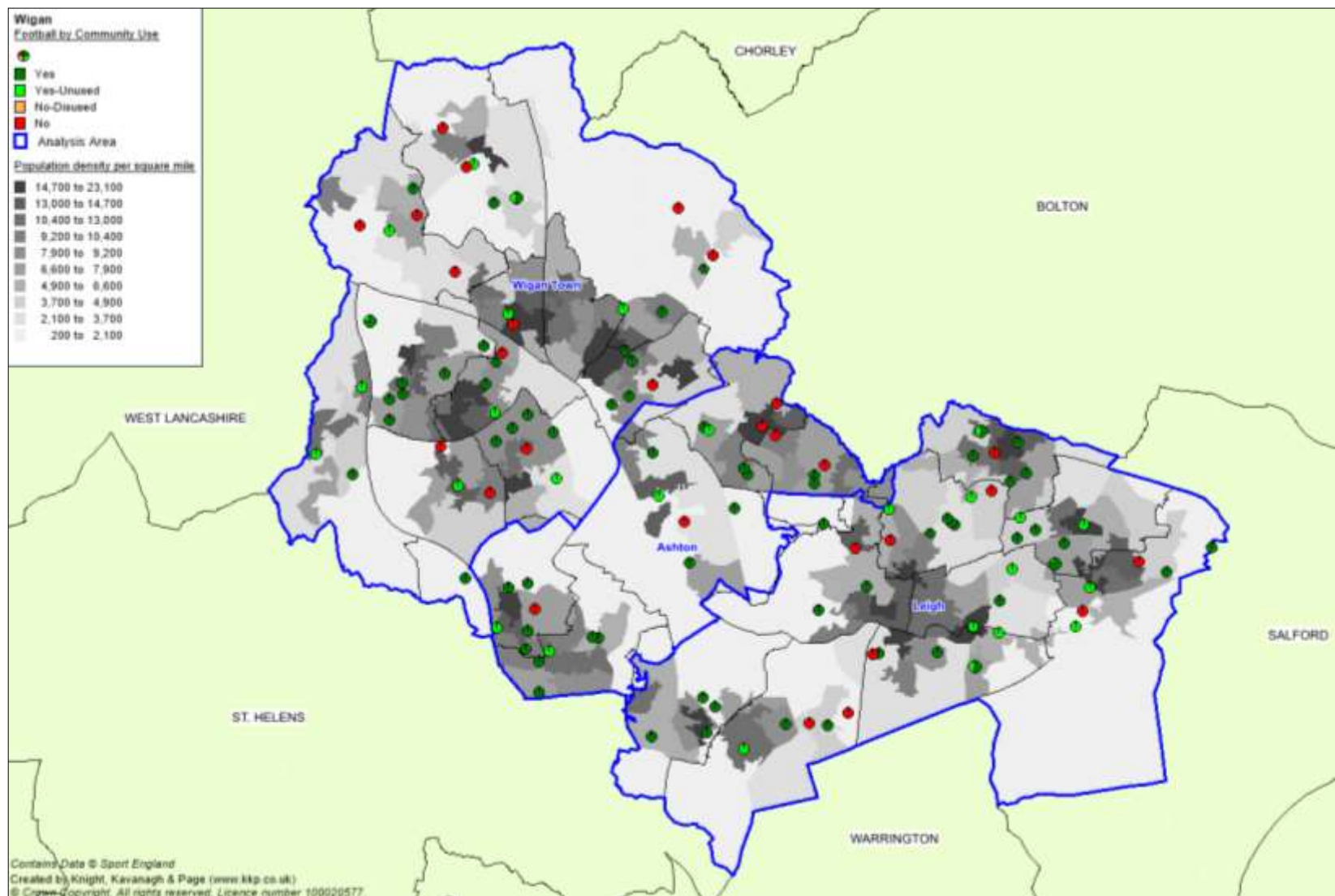
Of those pitches available for community use, 34 are identified as being available but have no regular competitive club use throughout the traditional winter football season. However, in some cases these pitches may serve a wider benefit in terms of informal play and training.

There are six FA or FIFA certified 3G pitches in Wigan Borough of differing sizes on which competitive football matches are permitted to be played, detailed later in the section and further in Part 7.

⁸ During the 2016/17 season

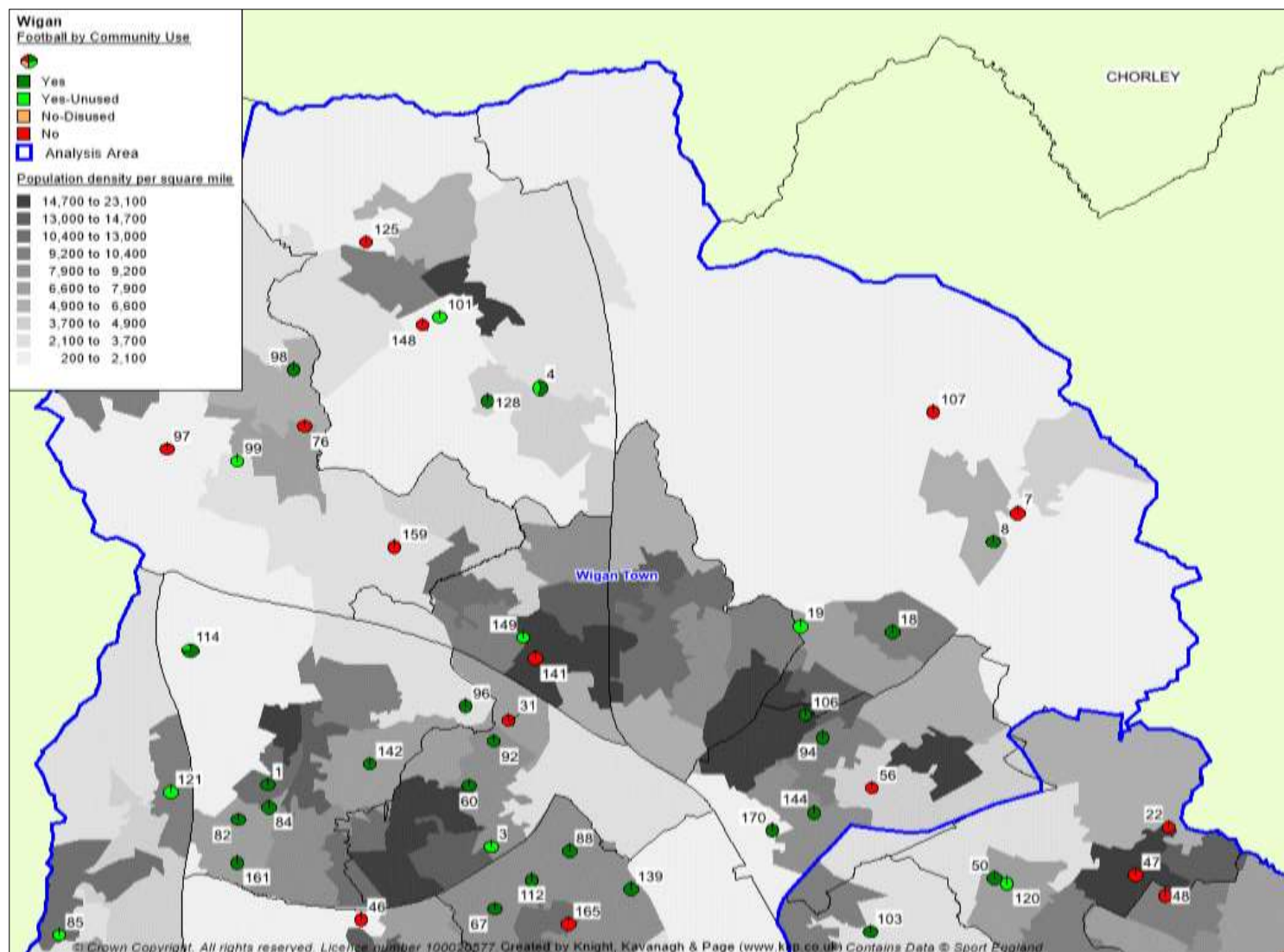
WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Figure 2.1: Map of sites with football pitch provision within Wigan Borough



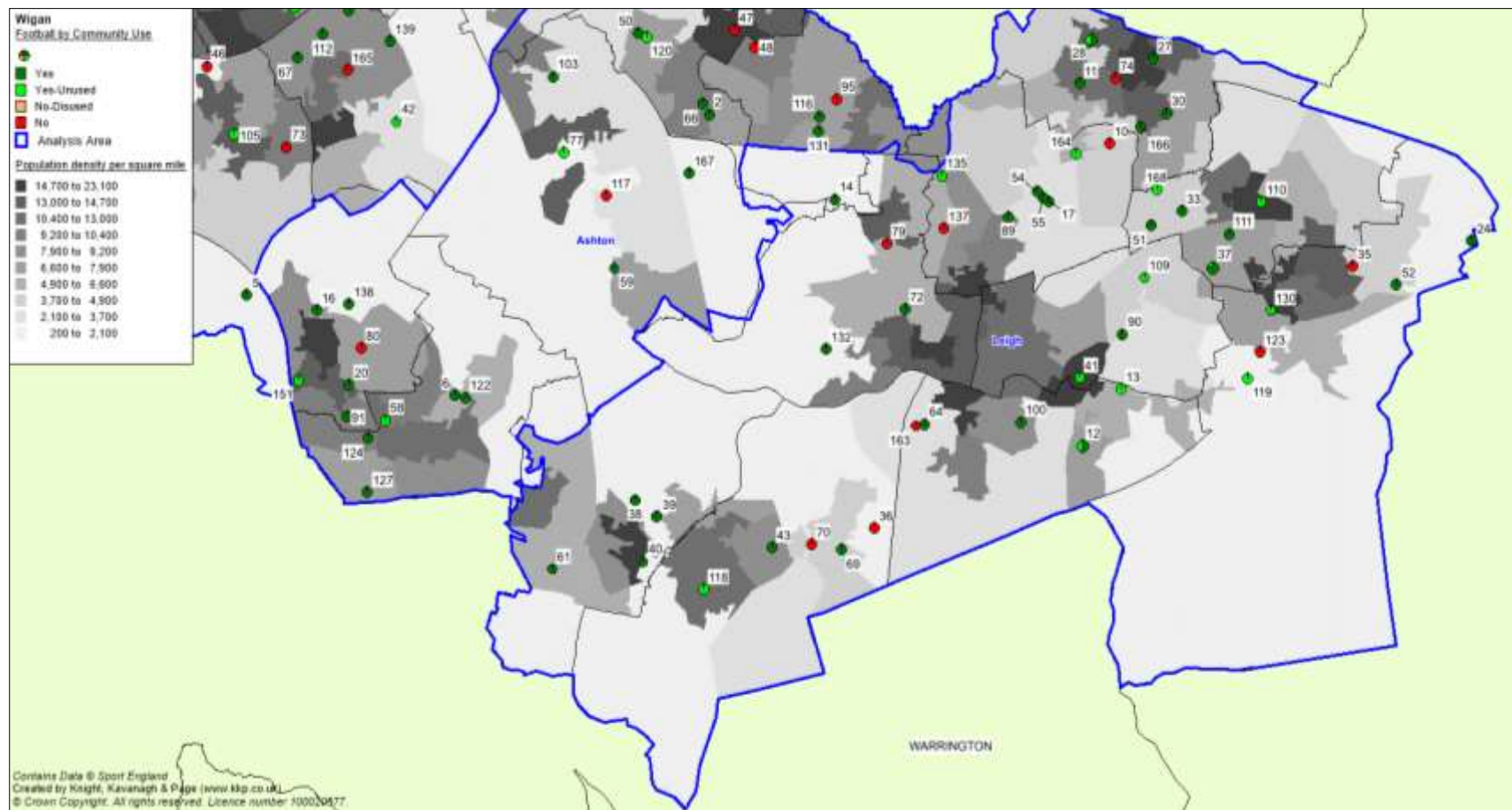
WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Figure 2.2: Map of sites with football pitch provision within Wigan Borough



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Figure 2.3: Map of sites with football pitch provision within Wigan Borough



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Table 2.1: Summary of grass pitches available for community use

Analysis area	Pitch type					Total
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	
Ashton	14	3	8	10	6	41
Leigh	42	12	19	17	3	93
Wigan Town	37	9	13	15	4	78
Total	93	24	40	42	13	212

Most available pitches in Wigan Borough (44%) are adult sized which is, in part, due to youth 11v11 teams playing on adult pitches. This is not ideal for youth players and is not in line with the recent FA Youth Review. Just 24 available pitches are youth 11v11 sized representing 11% of the available supply in Wigan Borough which is low in relation to the proportion of youth teams (136 teams – 24% of all teams) which should be playing matches on this sized pitch.

In accordance with the FA Youth Review, U17 and U18 teams can play on adult pitches. The FA's recommended pitch size for adult football is 100x64 metres. Please refer to the table below for more detail:

Table 2.2: FA recommended grass/3G pitch sizes

Age group	Playing format	Recommended pitch dimensions (metres excluding run offs)	Recommended pitch dimensions (metres including run offs)
Mini-Soccer U7/U8	5v5	37x27	43x33
Mini-Soccer U9/U10	7v7	55x37	61x43
Youth U11/U12	9v9	73x46	79x52
Youth U13/U14	11v11	82x50	88x56
Youth U15/U16	11v11	91x55	97x61
Youth U17/U18	11v11	100x64	106x70
Over 18/Adult	11v11	100x64	106x70

St James' C of E Primary School (Worsley Mesnes) currently has a mini 7v7 pitch used by two mini soccer teams from Hawkley FC. The pitch has surrounding fencing to prevent public access, though the primary school reports a desire to extend the fencing to allow for the reconfiguration of the pitch to a larger youth 9v9 size so that that Hawkley FC teams can continue to use the site as they transition from mini soccer to youth 9v9 format football.

Disused sites/lapsed sites

There are a number of disused or lapsed playing field sites which previously accommodated football pitch provision (detailed fully in Part 1: Introduction and Methodology). They are:

- ◀ Bryn Gates Playing Fields
- ◀ Furlong Close Playing Fields
- ◀ Lodge Lane Playing Fields
- ◀ Melrose Tip
- ◀ Moseley Common
- ◀ Rose Bridge High School Sports Field
- ◀ Spa Road Recreation Ground
- ◀ St John Street
- ◀ King George V (KGV) Field - Ashton

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Reinstatement of pitches

Further to those sites considered lapsed or disused, additional playing fields at Central Park Playing Fields and Ellesmere Street Playing Fields were initially considered disused when the non-technical site assessments were undertaken in December 2016. Since then, demand has come forward for use of these sites for summer football within the BBDJFL. In the absence of non-technical assessment, the Council reports that pitches at these sites are considered standard quality. Given that these pitches are now deemed operational, they have been accounted for within the audit (which captures winter season demand) as available but unused.

Central Park Playing Fields had two mini pitches previously used for either mini football or on occasion mini rugby union. A mini soccer pitch provision has been reinstated for use by newly formed club Central Park Juniors FC for use throughout the BBDJFL summer season.

Ellesmere Street Playing Fields previously accommodated a youth 11v11 pitch though offers no onsite changing provision. The pitch has over the summer been marked instead for youth 9v9 football for use by two teams from Tiki Taka FC playing within the BBDJFL.

Future supply

Shevington Sports and Horticultural Club has recently obtained a 30-year lease from Shevington Parish Council for a piece of land know as Vicarage Lane, with financial assistance by Sport England and Wigan Borough Council. The piece of land is to be developed to include a dedicated rugby league pitch, two dedicated adult football pitches and allotments in order to serve the three branches; Shevington Sharks ARLFC, Shevington FC and Shevington Horticultural and Allotments Society. Work is to start on the pitches in 2017 and will take approximately two years to complete. The site does not currently host any ancillary facilities and as such the Club is exploring potential funding streams to provide them

Hindsford AFC reports it is in discussions with its lease holder, Tarleton Estates, on the potential development of new pitches located at Hindsford Brook and the improvement of pitches, already used by its junior section, at Fred Longworth High School.

Pitch quality

The quality of football pitches in Wigan Borough has been assessed via a combination of non-technical assessments (as determined by The FA) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating. Percentage parameters used for the non-technical assessments were as follows;

- ◀ Poor = 0-49.9%
- ◀ Standard = 50-79.9%
- ◀ Good = 80%+

As such, each pitch within Wigan Borough has a quality rating of good, standard or poor.

Pitch quality is primarily influenced by the carrying capacity of the site; often pitches are over used and lack the required routine maintenance work necessary to improve drainage and subsequent quality. It is likely that pitches which receive little to no ongoing repair or post-season remedial work will be assessed as poor, therefore limiting the number of

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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 of a higher standard and capable of taking a number of matches without a significant reduction in surface quality.

Table 2.3: Summary of football pitch quality (community use pitches)

Pitch type	Good	Standard	Poor
Adult	18	59	16
Youth 11v11	-	20	4
Youth 9v9	7	21	11
Mini 7v7	4	25	14
Mini 5v5	1	6	6
Total	30	131	51

The pitch quality ratings determined through a combination of non-technical assessments and user feedback show most (62%) pitches available for community use are rated as standard quality, with 24% rated as poor and only 30 pitches as good, equating to just 14%.

Specific comments from clubs relating to the pitch conditions at individual sites can be seen in the table below.

Table 2.4: Summary of pitch quality comments

Site ID	Site name	Comments
4	Ashfield Park	Issues with dog fouling and limited maintenance.
33	Fred Longworth High School	Pitches suffer from poor drainage often becoming unusable.
38	Golborne High School	Unauthorised access from quads and motorbikes affecting pitch quality.
50	Hindley Town FC	Issues with unauthorised use and small patches of poor drainage.
60	Laithwaite Park	Issues with unauthorised use, poor drainage, littering and dog fouling on all pitches. Investment planned through funding from the Wigan Deal for the Community investment fund to improve pitch quality.
67	Little Lane Playing Field	Pitches are good quality and well used after obtaining funding from the FA assisted in improved maintenance and drainage. Investment provided from the Wigan Deal for the Community.
69	Lowton Church of England High School	Pitches are good quality after 2015 FA and Premier League funding.
88	Parsons Meadow Playing Fields	Two adult pitches suffer from limited maintenance with one of these pitches also suffering drainage issues.
96	Scot Lane Playing Field	Issues with poor drainage, dog fouling and littering on the pitches.
98	Shevington High School	Issues with poor drainage and mole infestation.
100	Siddow Park	Poor drainage and limited maintenance.
106	St Catherine's Playing Fields	Issues with dog fouling and limited grass cuts.

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Wigan Borough Council is limiting use at several sites to protect pitches with perceived quality issues. At the sites listed below, it is proactively stopping any play for periods of time at the weekends to try and sustain levels of quality:

- ◀ Alexandra Park Playing Fields
- ◀ Ashfield Park
- ◀ Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields
- ◀ Howe Bridge Leisure Centre New Pitches
- ◀ Legh Street Playing Fields
- ◀ Leyland Park
- ◀ Parsons Meadow Playing Field
- ◀ Queensway Playing Fields
- ◀ Scot Lane Playing Field
- ◀ St Catherine's Playing Fields
- ◀ St Georges Playing Fields
- ◀ William Fosters Playing Field

The Council additionally closes the use of its pitches in adverse weather conditions to help protect the pitches for future use.

Private sites (e.g. sports clubs) typically offer better quality facilities than Council parks/playing fields and school pitches. In general, such sports clubs tend to have dedicated ground staff or volunteers working on pitches and the fact that they are often secured by fencing prevents unofficial use. Private site hire is often at full cost recovery. However, the cost of self-maintenance can be limited by funds or equipment available and consequently some clubs may not be able to carry out the required level of maintenance each year, instead targeting specific areas of the pitch or times of the year, sometimes not every season.

One of the main reasons cited by clubs for a decline in pitch quality is related to reports of limited pitch maintenance or a lack of available funds to carry out appropriate maintenance. Other reasons cited for the decline in pitch quality include:

- ◀ Over marked pitches
- ◀ Uneven and hard surfaces
- ◀ Overplay in bad weather
- ◀ Casual use
- ◀ Unauthorised usage
- ◀ Quads and motorbikes usage
- ◀ Dog fouling/litter
- ◀ Lack of investment and limited maintenance including infrequent grass cutting
- ◀ Lack of remedial work i.e. seeding
- ◀ Adult matches churning up pitches before afternoon youth games

The Wigan Deal

The Wigan Deal is an informal agreement between Wigan Borough Council and all residents to work together to improve the Borough. As part of this programme the Council created the Deal for Communities Investment Fund to encourage residents to get involved in their communities.

A number of football clubs have accessed this fund already to help improve pitch quality and obtain better maintenance equipment.

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For a full breakdown of quality ratings at each site, please refer to Table 2.18

FA Pitch Improvement Programme (PIP)

With quality of grass pitches becoming one of the biggest influences on participation in football, the FA has made it a priority to work towards improving quality of grass pitches across the country. This has resulted in the creation of the FA Pitch Improvement Programme (PIP). As part of the PIP, grass pitches identified as having quality issues undergo a pitch inspection from a member of the Institute of Groundsmanship (IOG). Four sites in Wigan Borough have received an assessment as part of the PIP process, which are:

- ◀ William Fosters Playing Fields
- ◀ Westleigh High School
- ◀ Laithwaite Park
- ◀ Ashton Athletic FC

It should be stated that all these inspections were carried out last year. Summaries of the reports are shown below:

Westleigh High School (27th May 2016)

- ◀ No renovation or repairs are carried out and selective weed killer is applied.
- ◀ Limited amount of maintenance, however, pitch quality can improve if additional work is undertaken.
- ◀ Groundcover is below average with large amounts of weeds and annual meadow grass present.
- ◀ Soil is heavily compacted which causes water to drain slowly.
- ◀ An intensive maintenance schedule is required with the correct machinery and equipment managed by trained and motivated ground staff including decompaction, fertiliser application and seeding.

William Fosters Playing Fields (21st October 2016)

- ◀ Groundcover is good with the quality of the grass poor with large amounts of weeds and annual meadow grass present.
- ◀ Soil is heavily compacted which causes water to drain slowly. Further investigation is needed regarding issues with drainage.
- ◀ An intensive maintenance schedule is required with the correct machinery and equipment managed by trained and motivated ground staff including decompaction, fertiliser application and seeding.

Laithwaite Park (7th June 2016)

- ◀ Groundcover is good with the quality of the grass poor with large amounts of weeds and annual meadow grass present.
- ◀ Substantial amount of postponements due to poor quality of pitches.
- ◀ Limited amounts of maintenance carried out, especially in heavily worn goalmouth areas.
- ◀ Football markings appear to be burnt into the surface
- ◀ Soil is heavily compacted which causes water to drain slowly.
- ◀ An intensive maintenance schedule is required with the correct machinery and equipment managed by trained and motivated ground staff including decompaction, fertiliser application and seeding.

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Ashton Athletic FC

- ◀ Groundcover is good with the quality of the grass also good. Some presence of weed and annual meadow grass.
- ◀ Pitches receive verti draining, fertilising and sand dressing and a standard level of maintenance.
- ◀ Ground slopes and has historic drainage towards a brook at the rear of the ground.
- ◀ Weeds present require attention and should be controlled by spraying selective weed killer.
- ◀ An intensive maintenance schedule is required with the correct machinery and equipment managed by trained and motivated ground staff including decompaction, fertiliser application and seeding.

Over marked pitches

Over marking of pitches is an issue at some sites in Wigan Borough, with youth 9v9 pitches often marked into the middle of adult pitches or mini pitches marked onto adult or youth pitches. Some are regularly subject to youth and mini play followed by adult and youth play. This sustained and intense use over short periods of time can impact on pitch quality and allows little time for the surface to rest and recover. Use of smaller pitches marked within larger pitches typically causes focused and specific wear due to the high traffic on certain overlapping areas such as the middle third of adult pitches.

Clubs use over marked pitches at the following sites:

- ◀ Ashton Athletic FC
- ◀ Fred Longworth High School
- ◀ Golborne Sports and Social Club
- ◀ Hindley Green CP School
- ◀ Bankes Playing Fields

It is not uncommon for pitches to be dually used for more than one grass pitch sport; particularly at schools where the curriculum may be structured in a way that the pitches are used for one sport for a number weeks followed by another within the same season. The most common in Wigan Borough is football with rugby league with many of the sites having combination goals on the pitches in question. Some pitches are also used throughout the summer for various activities; the following sites have dual pitches with football and rugby league:

- ◀ Abraham Guest Academy
- ◀ Golborne High School
- ◀ Hawkley Hall High School
- ◀ Leigh Harrier Athletic Stadium
- ◀ Rose Bridge Sports & Community Centre
- ◀ St John Rigby College
- ◀ Leigh Sports Village (Stadium Pitch)
- ◀ Hindley Green CP School
- ◀ Marcus Bridge Primary School
- ◀ R L Hughes Primary School
- ◀ St Luke's C of E Primary School
- ◀ Wood Fold Primary School

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Ancillary facilities

Changing facilities are a key issue at several football sites. Some of the facilities are described as poor quality by users and some responding clubs state they do not have access or have demand for greater access to changing rooms or increased quantity to sufficiently cater for the number of pitches onsite. Clubs mentioned particular sites Laithwaite Park and Howe Bridge Leisure Centre as poor quality stating the issues were with the interior of the buildings rather than the exterior, with common references made to changing rooms needing modernisation and refurbishment.

Table 2.5: Club response to changing facility quality

Good	Standard	Poor
39%	44%	17%

It should be noted that not all clubs that provided information via consultation could provide feedback on changing facility quality as the Club does not access changing rooms. In some cases, clubs may play at sites without changing facilities but in reality do not want to access them even if they are available. This is a particular trend nationwide in that most mini and youth teams are using changing facilities increasingly less and that access to toilet facilities are of greater priority. The following sites in Wigan Borough do not have changing facilities:

- ◀ Cale Lane Playing Fields
- ◀ City Road Playing Fields
- ◀ Hesketh Meadow Playing Fields
- ◀ Scot Lane Playing Field

Additionally, just over half (54%) of all clubs which responded to consultation mention various schools, council and club managed facilities that have suffered from vandalism within the previous three years. Gidlow Athletics FC and Orrell Athletics FC report graffiti of ancillary facilities and substantial amounts of litter at Laithwaite Park whereas Pennington FC and Hindley Town FC state equipment has stolen from their sites and storage containers at Pennington Football Club and Hindley Town FC, respectively. Other clubs report graffiti, fly tipping and motor biking on and around pitches to be a common issue.

Hindsford AFC reports it is looking to develop ancillary facilities alongside the aforementioned potential development with assistance from its lease holder; Tarleton Estates. The Club has aspirations to replace the current roof of its clubhouse and enlarge it to create overhang for spectators to stand under. The proposed development will also include solar panels on the new roof to power floodlighting for its recently built small sized multi use games area (MUGA).

Security of tenure

The majority of teams in Wigan Borough play on Council managed pitches and are therefore considered to have secured tenure as part of the Council's maintained sports and leisure provision offering. Unlike many local authorities, Wigan Borough Council has frozen the cost of pitch hire since 2014 to at least the end of the 2016/17 season.

Schools and academies generally state their own hire policies and are more likely to restrict levels of community use. In total, 28 educational providers do not allow community

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use of some or all of their pitches with the majority of these accommodating mini or youth football.

The reasons for not allowing community use vary. The most common example is that the schools want to protect pitches for curricular and extra-curricular purposes due to existing quality issues. Other reasons include staffing issues, health and safety issues and a lack of profitability.

Moreover, some schools that do provide community use, do so without providing security of tenure, meaning they could cease external use at any point. To prevent this, it is recommended that club users enter more formal community use agreements with schools. An example of this is Leigh Genesis FC, which signed in 2016, a 25 year community use agreement at Lowton Church of England High School for the use of its pitches. This agreement helped obtain Premier League and FA Facilities Funding to improve the quality of the pitches onsite through improved maintenance and drainage system.

Wigan Borough Council has long term leases of several sites such Laithwaite Park (Wigan Football Association including Cherrybrook FC), Little Lane Playing Fields (Winstanley Warriors FC) and William Fosters Playing Fields (Wigan Cosmos FC). The Council continues to work towards supporting the transfer of management to local clubs, community groups and trusts. These long-term leases allow clubs to develop facilities and obtain possible funding streams to help improve ancillary and pitch quality.

Upon consultation Hindley Juniors FC reports aspirations for the asset transfer of Leyland Park. The Club already leases AFC Hindley Juniors Football Club from Wigan Borough on a 25 year agreement, however, it has quickly outgrown this site and requires more pitch space. The Club has already approached the Council regarding this matter but due to a new road being built, which may affect the pitches located at Leyland Park, nothing has been agreed until the road layout has been confirmed.

Community asset transfer

A community asset transfer (CAT) is a sports association or trust based model of management at multi-sport sites, for example by formation of a Community Interest Company (CIC) or a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). By transferring management to such an organisation which represents all sporting user groups and clubs playing onsite rather than just the interests of one, it offers equal responsibility for all sports. This would help to protect against sudden threat of loss, where sporting users may have little or no influence over the management of the site but access provision on it.

This could present opportunities for clubs to take on greater responsibility for maintenance and to develop playing provision. However, clubs looking to do so should contact Lancashire FA, before approaching Wigan Borough, as a club would need to be considered to have a robust infrastructure, sufficient personnel resource, be financially sound and able to realistically sustain and take responsibility for such an asset, whilst fully understanding the financial and legal implications of doing so.

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2.2: Demand

A total of 584 teams are identified as playing matches on football pitches within Wigan Borough, shown below. Of these, 485 teams are recorded as consistently playing home matches on grass pitches during 2016/17 season. The remaining 99 teams are recorded as playing on 3G pitches according to the FA affiliation data 2016/17 season.

Table 2.6: Summary of football team demand in Wigan Borough

Age group	Number of teams playing on grass	Number of teams playing on 3G
Senior Men's (16-45) ⁹	91	9
Senior Women's (16-45)	3	3
Youth Boys (10-15)	227	3
Youth Girls (10-15)	25	0
Mini-Soccer Mixed	139	84
Total	485	99

There is a substantial amount of mini soccer teams playing on 3G in Wigan Borough, the majority of demand is focused at Lucozade Powerleague Soccerdome (Wigan) which hosts as a central venue for the Wigan and District Youth Football League. In total 37% of all mini soccer is played on small sized 3G pitches across the Borough.

Increases in the number of mini teams does not always lead to an increase in adult teams because nationally and locally there has been a trend of 11 aside adult men's teams decreasing due to players opting to play small sided versions of the game or choosing to drop out of the sport altogether. The way in which people, especially adult men, want to play football is changing. People want to be able to fit it in to their busy lifestyle and the small sided formats and shorter games allow players to do this without giving up their weekends. If this trend continues there is likely to be an increase in demand for 3G pitches.

Clubs that responded to consultation were asked whether there had been a change in the number of teams over the previous three years. The response rates for those that answered this question can be seen in the table below.

Table 2.7: Change in the number of teams over the previous three years

Team type	Clubs response		
	Increased	Decreased	Stayed the same
Adult	11%	23%	66%
Youth	39%	8%	53%
Mini	51%	4%	45%

The highest increase in teams is seen at mini soccer, with just over half (51%) of clubs reporting an increase over the last three years, whereas 39% of clubs report an increase in youth teams. The 23% decrease in adult football is particularly relevant as it agrees with national trends, with most local authorities reporting an overall reduction in adult participation. It must be noted, however, that these figures do not include numerous adult only clubs that have folded during this time frame.

⁹ For the purposes of demand U17 and U18 teams are considered to require adult pitches, though it should be noted that these age groups affiliate to their respective County FA as junior teams.

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Bolton and Bury District Junior Football League (BBDJFL)

The Bolton and Bury District Junior Football League (BBDJFL) is large mini and youth football league which encompasses Wigan Borough football clubs. There are currently 108 teams from Wigan Borough which play in the BBDJFL ranging from mini U7s to U21s football. This year the League is to start a three year pilot summer football league which has been approved by the Lancashire FA. The pilot is to involve clubs in Wigan Borough and is based on a home and away structure, instead of using a central venue, in order to increase the number of teams accessing grass pitches. Ages for teams are between U7s (Mini 5v5) to U11s (Youth 9v9) with the season taking place between March and October.

BBDJFL reports consulting with all clubs, which play in the regular winter season league, 18 months prior to discuss any potential issues regarding starting a summer league. An issue raised regarded pitch maintenance and quality, as pitches will be used by teams throughout the year and therefore there will be less time for maintenance and recuperation. BBDJFL to address this issue will be using pitches on a rotational basis in order for each pitch to receive dedicated maintenance, however, the rotation of pitches and maintenance will still be at each clubs' discretion. Any Council used sites will be rotated in order to carry out remedial work to ensure pitch quality for winter football.

Football pyramid demand

The football pyramid is a series of interconnected leagues for adult men's football clubs in England. It begins below the football league (the National League) and comprises of seven steps, with various leagues at each level and more leagues lower down the pyramid than at the top. The system has 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.

Clubs within the step system must adhere to ground requirements set out by the FA. The higher the level of 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 requirements for Step 1 clubs.

In Wigan Borough, Wigan FC is the only professional club that plays above the football pyramid. A further five teams from five clubs play within the football pyramid, as seen in following table.

Table 2.8: Summary of teams playing within the football pyramid structure

Team	League	Level
Ashton Athletic FC	North West Counties Football League	Step 5
Atherton Collieries FC	North West Counties Football League	Step 5 ¹⁰
Atherton Labernum Rovers FC	North West Counties Football League	Step 6
Ashton Town FC	North West Counties Football League	Step 6 ¹¹
Hindsford AFC	Manchester Football League	Step 7

¹⁰ Atherton Collieries FC was promoted from the North West Counties Football League this season (2016/17) From the start of the 2017 season the Club will play in the Evo Stik Division One North (Step 4)

¹¹ Ashton Town FC was relegated from the North West Counties Football League this season (2016/17). From the start of the 2017 season the Club will play at Step 7.

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Additionally, Winstanley Warriors, Pennington, Atherton Town and Golborne Sports Seniors football clubs all have teams that are just one promotion short of joining the football pyramid subject to meeting Step 7 league facilities requirements.

A common issue for clubs entering the pyramid is changing facilities. For Step 7 football (ground grading H), changing rooms must be a minimum size of 18 square metres, exclusive of shower and toilet areas. The general principle for clubs in the football pyramid is that they have to achieve the appropriate grade by March 31st of their first season after promotion, which therefore allows a short grace period for facilities to be brought up to standard. This, however, does not apply to clubs being promoted to Step 7 (as they must meet requirements immediately).

All clubs are currently able to meet their league requirements, although improvements may be needed in some instances for clubs to progress.

It should be noted Ashton Town FC has plans to relocate from its current home, Ashton Town AFC, which is owned by Redrow Housing. Upon purchasing the site *circa* 2004, Redrow Housing agreed to relocate the Club within 25 years and assist in the building of a new facility. Recently, the Club approached Wigan Borough regarding possibly moving to Bryn Gates Playing Fields, however, there may be a covenant on the land specifying permanent community access, meaning it is currently unknown if this is a suitable location.

Anecdotal evidence suggests there is substantial amount of funding in place to develop a site having aspirations for a grass stadium pitch and a full sized community accessible 3G pitch.

Training

Access to affordable floodlit training facilities is a key issue for most clubs in Wigan Borough, particularly those with a large number of youth and mini teams. Of the 30 clubs that responded to the online survey and stated a demand for additional training facilities, 25 specifically stated a need for increased use of 3G pitches.

There are seven full sized 3G pitches in the Wigan Borough, all of which are available for community use. Not only is it difficult for teams to access sufficient training capacity but those at larger clubs are spread across a number of venues to find available timeslots, including on small sized 3G pitches. There are also 21 available small sized 3G pitches that are used by teams for training whilst sand based AGPs both full and small sized are able to be used, however, clubs still report demand for greater access to floodlit 3G provision. Access to AGPs for training is covered further in Part 7: Third Generation Artificial Grass Pitches.

Some teams report occasionally training on match pitches on Saturday mornings, particularly junior teams. However, with most junior matches taking place at the same time there is a limited number of available pitches for teams to use. Training at this time eliminates the need to access floodlit training provision or AGPs.

In Wigan Borough there are a number of clubs which have feeder teams. These teams consist of children under the age of seven who are not old enough to participate in formalised league matches and instead train on a regular basis. Clubs with feeder teams have aspirations for them to eventually progress to compete in competitive fixtures once they have reached the required age. Leigh Genesis, Golborne Sports Juniors, Cherrybrook, Wigan Junior Latics football clubs all have multiple feeder teams. Leigh

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Genesis FC, Cherrybrook FC and Golborne Sports Junior FC, as well as feeder teams, have development teams which also train on a regular basis but do not have aspirations to move to competitive football. These teams are often community based and are created to promote healthy lifestyles, such as weight loss, or improve football participation / skills in all demographics, such as goalkeeping, futsal and walking football.

Walking football

Walking football¹² is a slower paced version of football, primarily aimed at people over 50 years of age. The rules are adapted so not to permit running, allow very little contact and for example throw-ins are replaced by kick-ins. Walking football forms part of the FA Just Play! Initiative which aims to give the casual participant a chance to just turn up to a venue and play football on a less formal basis, as opposed to the regular commitment of club training and fixtures. The rules of Walking football were formally agreed and launched by the FA in February 2017 and participation across the Country is reported to be growing.

Walking football is generally played on 3G pitches or indoors, whilst matches are permitted to be held on grass pitches though considered less preferable. Walking football may also offer participation opportunities for disabled players, though disability formats of football exist exclusively and are generally played indoors in sports halls.

Walking football sessions in Wigan Borough are held at Lucozade Powerleague Soccerdome on Wednesday mornings between 10.30-11.30am at a cost of £4 per session. Competitive walking football opportunities are available as part of the Greater Manchester Walking Football League which is affiliated to Lancashire FA. The league is held on a central venue basis on the 3G pitch at Heywood Sports Village (Rochdale) and operates four fixture dates per season, one per month, over two seasons in Spring and Autumn. The League presently has nine teams playing across two divisions.

Unmet and latent 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.

Latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from the current population should they have access to more or better provision.

Table 2.9: Summary of latent demand expressed by clubs

Club	Analysis area	Future demand	Pitch size	Match equivalent sessions¹³
Whelley FC	Wigan Town	1 x Adult	Adult	0.5
Standish St. Wilfrids FC	Wigan Town	1 x Adult	Adult	0.5
Standish Panthers Junior FC	Wigan Town	2 x Mini	(7v7)	1
Leigh United FC	Leigh	2 x Mini	(5v5)	1
Atherton Labernum Rovers FC	Leigh	2 x Youth	(9v9) (11v11)	1

¹² <http://www.lancashirefa.com/more/walking-football>

¹³ Two teams require one pitch to account for playing on a home and away basis; therefore, 0.5 pitches can therefore be seen in the table where there is latent demand for one team.

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Club	Analysis area	Future demand	Pitch size	Match equivalent sessions ¹³
Hindley Town FC	Ashton	2 x Adult	Adult	1
Winstanley St. Aidan's FC	Wigan Town	1 x Adult	Adult	0.5
Hindsford AFC	Leigh	1 x Adult	Adult	0.5
Tyldesley United	Leigh	1 x Youth	(11v11)	0.5
Ashton Athletic FC	Wigan Town	2x Youth	(11v11)	1
Leigh Foundry FC	Leigh	2 x Mini	(7v7)	1

The majority of clubs that express latent demand do so in the Leigh Analysis Area, with a total of four match equivalent sessions. In total, latent demand amounts to 2.5 match equivalent sessions on adult pitches, two on youth 11v11 pitches, 0.5 on youth 9v9 pitches, two on mini 7v7 and one on mini 5v5 pitches.

In addition, the following seven clubs indicate that they would field more teams if more or better training facilities were available:

- ✦ Pennington FC
- ✦ Allstars FC
- ✦ Highfield Grange FC
- ✦ Wigan Cosmos FC
- ✦ Hindley Green FC
- ✦ Hindsford Junior FC
- ✦ Leigh Rangers AFC

Displaced/exported demand

Displaced or exported demand refers to Wigan Borough based teams that are currently accessing pitches outside of the local authority for their home fixtures, normally because their pitch requirements cannot be met, which is usually because of pitch supply, in some cases quality issues or stipulated league requirements for access to certain facilities.

According to Lancashire FA affiliation data 2016/17, there are 11 Wigan Borough based teams training in Wigan Borough but playing matches on venues outside of the local authority area, these are as follows:

- ✦ Atherton L R Juniors FC
- ✦ Astley & Tyldesley Junior FC
- ✦ Atherton Town FC
- ✦ Gidlow Athletic FC

Atherton L R Junior, Astley & Tyldesley Junior and Atherton football clubs state that this is not an issue. This is primarily due to the fact the majority of displaced teams are accessing Bolton Arena (Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council) as a central venue for their mini teams. This is located close proximity to Wigan Borough and does not cause an issue for teams to access.

The only club which states it wishes to return within Wigan Borough is Gidlow Athletic. The Club has two adult teams which accesses a grass pitch at Bolton Arena for its competitive fixture and reports the desire to return back to a more central venue within Wigan Borough. This equates to one match equivalent sessions of exported demand.

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Imported demand

Based on data collated in the 2016/17 season, there are 11 teams based outside of Wigan Borough but playing matches and/or training at venues within.

At youth and mini age groups a number of leagues operate on a central venue basis which accounts for a proportion of imported demand. This applies vice versa for Wigan based teams playing at central venues outside of the Borough which once they progress through the age groups are likely to require access to grass pitches within the Borough.

Numerous teams are not displaced out of choice but rather they play at central venues as part of the league that they participate in; for example, the Wigan and District Youth League has a central venue (Lucozade Powerleague Soccerdome) which hosts multiple matches on a Sunday, negating the need for teams to have a dedicated home venue. Three clubs (Young Gate FC – St Helens, Ladybridge FC – Bolton, Appley Bridge FC – West Lancashire) have a total of seven teams all importing demand to the central venue in Wigan Borough.

In addition, two clubs (FC Bridgewater of Worsley – Salford, Town Green Athletic JFC – St Helens) import demand which is not due to central venue play. FC Bridgewater of Worsley currently uses Holy Family Catholic Primary School for two of its U12s teams equating to one youth 9v9 match equivalent session per week. Town Green Athletic JFC imports an U9 and an U12 team to Cansfield High School equating to 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week each on mini 7v7 and youth 9v9 pitches. Both clubs are based near to the authority border in other areas and pitch provision within Wigan Borough may be considered more accessible than elsewhere within their respective Districts.

Future demand

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

Team generation rates (TGRs) are used below as the basis for calculating the number of teams likely to be generated in the future based on population growth up to 2026¹⁴.

Table 2.10: Team generation rates (Borough wide level)

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
Senior Men's (16-45)	60,090	119	1:505	58,487	115.8	0
Senior Women (16-45)	60,004	7	1:8,572	59,276	6.9	0
Youth Boys (12-15)	7,228	110	1:66	7,985	121.5	11
Youth Girls (12-15)	6,765	14	1:483	7,716	16	2
Youth Boys (10-11)	3,692	101	1:37	3,825	104.6	3
Youth Girls (10-11)	3,586	10	1:359	3,632	10.1	0
Mini-Soccer Mixed (8-9)	7,735	110	1:70	7,507	106.8	0

¹⁴ TGRs are based on population forecasts to 2026 which is in line with Wigan Borough's Local Plan timeframe.

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Mini-Soccer Mixed (6-7)	7,977	113	1:71	7,590	107.5	0
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Table 2.11: Team generation rates (by analysis area)

Age group	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population (by Analysis Area)			
	Ashton	Leigh	Wigan Town	Total
Senior Men (16-45)	0	0	0	0
Senior Women (16-45)	0	0	0	0
Youth Boys (12-15)	0	4	6	10
Youth Girls (12-15)	0	1	0	1
Youth Boys (10-11)	0	1	1	2
Youth Girls (10-11)	0	0	0	0
Mini-Soccer Mixed (8-9)	0	0	0	0
Mini-Soccer Mixed (6-7)	0	0	0	0
Total	0	6	7	13

Population increases are likely to result 16 additional teams in Wigan Borough; however, this is when TGRs are applied district wide. Once TGRs are applied to individual Analysis Areas a more detailed representation of where exactly the predicated growth will occur emerges. It is indicated that both the Leigh and Wigan Town Analysis Areas will have the most growth with a projected increase of six and seven teams, respectively. Furthermore, it shows that the youth boys (12-15) will have the largest potential increase, amounting to total of ten teams. Whereas, youth girls (12-15) potential increase is just one team in the Leigh Analysis Area and youth boys (10-11) is a single team in both the Leigh and Wigan Town Analysis Areas.

Team generation rates (TGRs) are based exclusively on future population forecasts and do not account for societal factors or changes in the way people may wish to play sport. Similarly, TGRs cannot account for specific targeted development work within certain areas or focused towards certain groups, such as NGB initiatives or coaching within schools. For example, there is a focus on developing girl's football both within Wigan Borough and nationally which is likely to lead to more girls' teams in the future and therefore increased demand for pitches.

It is important to note that there has been a recent decrease nationally in participation at adult level and that the number of FA affiliated adult teams playing competitive football has dropped. Similarly, there has been a decline in the number of youth players making the transition from youth football to adult leagues.

Participation increases

A number of teams shown below highlight clear plans to increase the number of teams for next season, totalling a requirement for a further 26.5 match equivalent sessions across different pitch types.

The Clubs in the Wigan Town Analysis Area provide the majority of the aspirations for participation increases, providing 14 match equivalent sessions across the various pitch types, with the Leigh Analysis Area providing 11.5 match equivalent sessions across the various pitch types. The Ashton Analysis Area provides the smallest amount of future participation, just one match equivalent sessions across the varying pitch types.

The largest amount of future demand, in relation to pitch type, will be for mini 5v5 pitches, with clubs, collectively, planning an additional 26 future mini 5v5 teams equating to 13

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match equivalent sessions which will need to be accommodated. Clubs report aspirations to create nine additional adult teams, meaning an additional 4.5 match equivalent sessions will need to be supported. Additionally, clubs state aspirations for eight youth 11v11 teams (4 match equivalent sessions) and ten youth 9v9 teams equating to five match equivalent sessions.

The Strategy Report will contain a Housing Growth Scenario that will estimate the additional demand for football arising from housing development.

Table 2.12: Summary of future demand reported by clubs

Club	Future demand	Analysis area	Match equivalent sessions	Pitch type
Pennington FC	Adult Men's	Leigh	0.5	Adult
	Youth 9v9 Boys Youth 9v9 Girls		1	Youth 9v9
	2 x Mini 5v5		1	Mini 5v5
Leigh Foundry FC	Adult Men's	Leigh	0.5	Adult
Whelley FC	Adult Men's	Wigan Town	0.5	Adult
Hawkley FC	Youth 11v11 Boys	Wigan Town	0.5	Youth 11v11
	Mini 5v5		0.5	Mini 5v5
Standish Panthers JFC	Youth 9v9 Boys	Wigan Town	0.5	Youth 9v9
	Mini 5v5		0.5	Mini 5v5
Leigh United FC	2 x Mini 5v5	Leigh	1	Mini 5v5
Atherton Laburnum Rovers FC	Adult Men's	Leigh	0.5	Adult
	Youth 9v9 Boys Youth 9v9 Girls		1	Youth 9v9
	Youth 11v11 Girls Youth 11v11 Boys		1	Youth 11v11
	Mini 5v5		0.5	Mini 5v5
Standish Sabres FC	Adult Men's	Wigan Town	0.5	Adult
Highfield Grange FC	2 x Mini 5v5	Wigan Town	1	Mini 5v5
Ince Central FC	Adult Men's	Wigan Town	0.5	Adult
Hindley Town FC	Adult Men's	Ashton	0.5	Adult
Wigan Cosmos FC	Adult Men's Adult Women's	Wigan Town	1	Adult
	Youth 9v9 Boys Youth 9v9 Girls		1	Youth 9v9
	Youth 11v11 Girls Youth 11v11 Boys		1	Youth 11v11
	5 x Mini 5v5		2.5	Mini 5v5
Newtown AFC	Adult Men's	Wigan Town	0.5	Adult
	Youth 9v9 Boys		0.5	Youth 9v9
	Youth 11v11 Boys		0.5	Youth 11v11
Hindsford JFC	Youth 9v9 Boys Youth 9v9 Girls	Leigh	1	Youth 9v9
	Youth 11v11 Boys		0.5	Youth 11v11
	2 x Mini 5v5		1	Mini 5v5

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Club	Future demand	Analysis area	Match equivalent sessions	Pitch type
Spring View FC	Mini 5v5	Ashton	0.5	Mini 5v5
Astley & Tyldesley JFC	2 x Mini 5v5	Leigh	1	Mini 5v5
	Youth 11v11 Boys		0.5	Youth 11v11
Cherrybrook FC	4 x Mini 5v5	Wigan Town	2	Mini 5v5
Golborne Sports JFC	2 x Mini 5v5	Leigh	1	Mini 5v5

2.3: Supply and demand analysis

Having considered supply and demand, the tables below identify the overall spare capacity 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) which are driven by population increases as well as club development plans.

Table 2.13: Supply/demand balance of adult pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity ¹⁵	Demand (match equivalent sessions)				
		Overplay	Current total	Latent demand	Future demand	Future total
Ashton	2	-2	-	1	0.5	-1.5
Wigan Town	7.5	-9	-1.5	1.5	2	-5
Leigh	21	-4	17	0.5	1.5	15
Total	30.5	-15	15.5	3	4	8.5

The table above shows that currently there is available capacity of 15.5 match equivalent sessions per week overall when taking into account overplay. However, when considering reported future growth of clubs and the prospect of accommodating latent demand, future capacity is reduced to 8.5 match equivalent sessions per week. The Leigh Analysis Area has current spare capacity of 21 match equivalent sessions which reduces to 17 match equivalent sessions, making it clear that the area there will continue to have the largest proportion of spare capacity for adult pitches.

Table 2.14: Supply/demand balance of youth 11v11 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity ¹⁹	Demand (match equivalent sessions)				
		Overplay	Current total	Latent demand	Future demand	Future total
Ashton	1	-	1	-	-	1
Wigan Town	2	-7	-5	1	7	-13
Leigh	7	-2.5	4.5	0.5	7	-3
Total	10	-9.5	0.5	1.5	14	-15

The table above shows that there is minimal capacity of 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week in Wigan Borough on youth 11v11 pitches. The need to accommodate anticipated future demand, TGRs by analysis area and latent demand would result in an overall future shortfall of 15 match equivalent sessions for youth 11v11 pitches.

¹⁵ In match equivalent sessions per week

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The current shortfalls are likely to be greater given the number of youth 11v11 teams playing on adult pitches. In reality, it is likely that a proportion of future demand will also play on adult pitches like many teams currently do in Wigan Borough, though this is contrary to guidance in the FA Youth Review. As such, there is a clear need for an increase in youth 11v11 provision in order for this play to be transferred on to the correct pitch size.

Table 2.15: Supply/demand balance of youth 9v9 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity ¹⁶	Demand (match equivalent sessions)				
		Overplay	Current total	Latent demand	Future demand	Future total
Ashton	3	-3	-	-	-	-
Wigan Town	-	-4.5	-4.5	-	2	-6.5
Leigh	3.5	-4	-0.5	1	4	-5.5
Total	6.5	-11.5	-5	1	6	-12

Overall, the current picture shows shortfalls on youth 9v9 pitches amounting to five match equivalent sessions. When accounting for future demand, the potential overplay increases meaning that overall there will be a future requirement for 12 match equivalent sessions on youth 9v9 pitches.

Table 2.16: Supply/demand balance of mini 7v7 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity ²⁰	Demand (match equivalent sessions)				
		Overplay	Current total	Latent demand	Future demand	Future total
Ashton	0.5	-0.5	-	-	-	-
Wigan Town	1	-1.5	0.5	1	-	-1.5
Leigh	-	-	-	1	-	-1
Total	1.5	-2	-0.5	2	-	-2.5

Across Wigan Borough there is currently an overall shortfall of 0.5 match equivalent sessions on mini 7v7 pitches. Future demand from clubs is less for mini 7v7 pitches with most clubs planning to add mini teams at the lowest age group (U7) each year (mini 5v5). Considering this and latent demand, there is a future shortfall of 2.5 match equivalent sessions. Given the preference for play on 3G pitches, it is likely that this future requirement will be accommodated across both grass and 3G pitches.

Table 2.17: Supply/demand balance of mini 5v5 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity ²⁰	Demand (match equivalent sessions)				
		Overplay	Current total	Latent demand	Future demand	Future total
Ashton	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wigan Town	-	-1	-1	-	4	-5
Leigh	-	-	-	1	5	-6
Total	-	-1	-1	1	9	-11

¹⁶ In match equivalent sessions per week

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Currently, mini 5v5 pitches are overplayed by one match equivalent sessions. However, when accounting for substantial amounts of future demand there will be an overall shortfall of 11 match equivalent sessions. Similarly, given the preference for play on 3G pitches, it is likely that this future requirement will be accommodated across both grass and 3G pitches.

2.4: Capacity analysis

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 was concluded in Wigan Borough:

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

Table 2.18 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

The level of pitch usage is recorded in match equivalent sessions per week (MES). For football, pitches relate to a typical week within the season and one match per week equates to one match equivalent session per week if it occurs every week or more typically 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week if it occurs every other week (i.e. reflecting home and away fixtures).

Informal use

Where information is known, informal and unofficial use of pitches has been factored into current play. It must be noted, however, that informal use of these sites is not recorded and it is therefore difficult to quantify on a site-by-site basis. Instead, it is recommended that open access sites be protected through an improved maintenance regime and through retaining some spare capacity to protect quality.

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Education sites

To account for curricular/extra-curricular use of education pitches it is likely that use additional to recorded community use will need to be factored into the total current weekly usage. 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 extent of use added is typically dependent on the level of play, the number of pitches onsite and whether there is access to an AGP elsewhere onsite allowing rotation and protection of impact on grass pitches.

Table 2.18 shows community usage of available pitches. Where not overplayed as a result of community use, school sites are considered to have no spare capacity to accommodate further community use based on assumed curricular and extracurricular activity beyond the level of community use shown in Table 2.18. Schools sites which are available for community use but currently do not have any external use have been accredited one match equivalent session per week, per pitch, to indicate use for curricular and extracurricular activity as opposed to being completely unused.

Tenure at school sites is generally considered to be unsecure given the nature of rental unless a formal community use or service level agreement (SLA) exists.

Peak time

Peak time demand for adult football pitches is Sunday morning. All other youth and mini pitch formats have a peak time of Saturday morning, which negates any potential issues, such as kick-off time clashes on adult pitches which are over marked for junior and mini football, or child welfare issues at sites where there are not sufficient changing facilities to service all pitches, as junior and mini teams require exclusive changing and shower areas which need to be carefully coordinated and managed.

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Table 2.18: Football pitch capacity analysis (used or available)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use availability	Management	Security of tenure ¹⁷	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Over marked	Agreed quality rating	Current play (MES)	Site capacity ¹⁸ (MES)	Capacity balance ¹⁹	Comments
1	Abraham Guest Academy	Wigan Town	Yes	School	Unsecure	Adult		1	No	Standard	1	2	-	Pitch receives both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.
1	Abraham Guest Academy	Wigan Town	Yes	School	Unsecure	Adult		1	Yes	Standard	1	2	-	Pitch receives both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality. Dual use pitch with Rugby combination goals.
2	AFC Hindley Juniors Football Club	Ashton	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		1	No	Good	2.5	3	0.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
2	AFC Hindley Juniors Football Club	Ashton	Yes	Club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	3	No	Good	8.5	18	9.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
2	AFC Hindley Juniors Football Club	Ashton	Yes	Club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Good	4	4	-	Pitch is played to capacity.
3	Alexandra Park Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes-unused	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Standard	-	4	4	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
4	Ashfield Park	Wigan Town	Yes	Council ²⁰	Secure	Adult		2	No	Standard	1	4	3	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
4	Ashfield Park	Wigan Town	Yes-unused	Council ²⁰	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	2	No	Standard	-	4	4	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
5	Ashton Athletic FC	Wigan Town	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		1	Yes	Standard	4.5	2	-2.5	Pitch is overplayed by 2.5 match equivalent sessions.
5	Ashton Athletic FC	Wigan Town	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		1	Yes	Standard	4.5	2	-2.5	Pitch is overplayed by 2.5 match equivalent sessions.
5	Ashton Athletic FC	Wigan Town	Yes	Club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Poor	2	2	-	Pitch is played to capacity.
5	Ashton Athletic FC	Wigan Town	Yes	Club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Yes	Standard	2	2	-0.5	Pitch is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions.
6	Ashton Town AFC	Ashton	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		1	No	Standard	2	2	-	Pitch is played to capacity.
8	Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		2	No	Standard	3	4	1	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
8	Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Standard	1.5	4	2.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
8	Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Standard	2	2	-	Pitch is played to capacity.
11	Atherton St George's C of E Primary School	Leigh	Yes	School	Unsecure	Adult		1	No	Standard	1.5	2	-	Pitch receives both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.
11	Atherton St George's C of E Primary School	Leigh	Yes	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Standard	1	4	-	Pitch receives both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.

¹⁷ Unless local information suggests otherwise it can be assumed that the availability of all pitches in Council, town and parish Council and sports club ownership will be secure.

¹⁸ Based on pitch quality The FA recommends a maximum number of match equivalent sessions to be accommodate per pitch type. Please refer to Section 2.4 for the full breakdown.

¹⁹ Red indicates overplay, green indicates potential spare capacity and amber indicates at capacity.

²⁰ Nominated Asset of Community Value (ACV)

**WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY
ASSESSMENT REPORT**

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use availability	Management	Security of tenure ¹⁷	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Over marked	Agreed quality rating	Current play (MES)	Site capacity ¹⁸ (MES)	Capacity balance ¹⁹	Comments
12	Bedford Hall Methodist Primary School	Leigh	Yes-unused	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Standard	1	4	3	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
12	Bedford Hall Methodist Primary School	Leigh	Yes	School	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Standard	0.5	2	-	Pitch receives both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.
13	Bedford High School	Leigh	Yes-unused	School	Unsecure	Adult		1	No	Standard	1	2	1	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
13	Bedford High School	Leigh	Yes-unused	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Standard	1	4	3	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
13	Bedford High School	Leigh	Yes-unused	School	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	No	Standard	1	2	1	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
14	Brunswick Park	Leigh	Yes	Trust	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	2	No	Standard	0.5	4	3.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
16	Bryn St. Peters CE Primary School	Ashton	Yes	School	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	2	No	Standard	1.5	8	-	Pitch receives both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.
17	Butler Park	Leigh	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		1	No	Good	1.5	3	1.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
17	Butler Park	Leigh	Yes	Club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Good	1.5	6	4.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
18	Cale Lane Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	No	Standard	2.5	2	-0.5	Pitch is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions.
18	Cale Lane Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Standard	1.5	2	0.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
19	Canon Sharples School	Wigan Town	Yes-unused	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Standard	1	4	3	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
20	Cansfield High School (Ashton Leisure Centre)	Ashton	Yes	School/Trust	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	No	Standard	2	2	-	School site which is played to capacity.
23	Central Park Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes-unused	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Standard	-	4	4	Capacity available during the winter season but used for 0.5 MES per week over summer
24	City Road Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		1	No	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
27	Crilly Park	Leigh	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		1	No	Standard	1	2	1	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
28	Devonshire Road Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		1	No	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
28	Devonshire Road Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes-unused	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	No	Standard	-	2	2	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
30	Douglas Park	Leigh	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		2	No	Standard	0.5	4	3.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
31	DW Stadium	Wigan Town	No	Club	Secure	Adult		1	Yes	Good	0.5	3	-	Professional club site with no external community use.
32	Ellesmere Street Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes-unused	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Standard	-	2	2	Potential spare capacity at peak time in winter. Summer use of one MES per week.

**WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY
ASSESSMENT REPORT**

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use availability	Management	Security of tenure ¹⁷	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Over marked	Agreed quality rating	Current play (MES)	Site capacity ¹⁸ (MES)	Capacity balance ¹⁹	Comments
33	Fred Longworth High School	Leigh	Yes	School	Unsecure	Adult		2	Yes	Poor	1.5	2	-	Pitch receives both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.
33	Fred Longworth High School	Leigh	Yes	School	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	2	Yes	Poor	3	4	-	Pitch receives both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.
33	Fred Longworth High School	Leigh	Yes	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	2	Yes	Poor	0.5	4	-	Pitches receive both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.
33	Fred Longworth High School	Leigh	Yes	School	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Yes	Poor	0.5	1	-	Pitch receives both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.
33	Fred Longworth High School	Leigh	Yes	School	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Poor	1	1	-	Pitch receives both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.
37	Gin Pit Village Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		2	No	Standard	7.5	4	-3.5	Pitches are overplayed by 3.5 match equivalent sessions.
37	Gin Pit Village Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes- unused	Club	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	1	No	Standard	-	4	4	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
37	Gin Pit Village Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes	Club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Standard	4	4	-	Pitch is played to capacity.
37	Gin Pit Village Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes	Club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Standard	5	2	-3	Pitch is overplayed by three match equivalent sessions.
38	Golborne High School	Leigh	Yes	School	Unsecure	Adult		2	No	Poor	0.5	2	-	Pitches receive both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.
38	Golborne High School	Leigh	Yes	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Poor	1	2	-	Pitch receives both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.
38	Golborne High School	Leigh	Yes	School	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	No	Poor	2	1	-1	Pitch is overplayed by one match equivalent session.
38	Golborne High School	Leigh	Yes	School	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	2	No	Poor	3	2	-1	Pitches are overplayed by one match equivalent sessions.
39	Golborne Parkside Sport & Community Club	Leigh	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		1	No	Poor	0.5	1	0.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
40	Golborne Sports and Social Club	Leigh	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		1	No	Standard	2	2	-	Pitch is played to capacity.
40	Golborne Sports and Social Club	Leigh	Yes	Club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Yes	Standard	2.5	4	1.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
41	Hawkhurst Park	Leigh	Yes	School	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Poor	0.5	2	1.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
42	Hawkley Hall High School	Wigan Town	Yes- unused	School	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Yes	Standard	1	2	1	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
43	Hesketh Meadow Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		2	No	Standard	1	4	3	Potential spare capacity at peak time.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use availability	Management	Security of tenure ¹⁷	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Over marked	Agreed quality rating	Current play (MES)	Site capacity ¹⁸ (MES)	Capacity balance ¹⁹	Comments
43	Hesketh Meadow Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes	Club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	2	No	Standard	6	8	2	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
43	Hesketh Meadow Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes	Club	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	No	Standard	3.5	2	-1.5	Pitch is overplayed by 1.5 match equivalent sessions.
43	Hesketh Meadow Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes	Club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Standard	2	2	-	Pitch is played to capacity.
50	Hindley Town FC	Ashton	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		1	No	Poor	2.5	1	-1.5	Pitch is overplayed by 1.5 match equivalent sessions.
51	Hindsford AFC	Leigh	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		1	No	Poor	1.5	1	-0.5	Pitch is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions.
52	Holy Family Catholic Primary School	Leigh	Yes	School	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Standard	1	2	-	Pitch receives both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.
54	Howe Bridge Leisure Centre	Leigh	Yes	Council /Trust	Secure	Adult		1	No	Good	1	3	2	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
55	Howe Bridge New Pitches	Leigh	Yes	Council /Trust	Secure	Adult		4	No	Good	6	12	6	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
55	Howe Bridge New Pitches	Leigh	Yes	Council /Trust	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	4	No	Good	2.5	16	13.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
58	King George V Playing Fields	Ashton	Yes-unused	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Standard	-	2	2	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
59	Kingsdown Road Playing Field	Ashton	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		1	No	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
60	Laithwaite Park	Wigan Town	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		3	No	Poor	4.5	3	-1.5	Pitches are overplayed by 1.5 match equivalent sessions.
60	Laithwaite Park	Wigan Town	Yes	Club	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	1	No	Poor	3	2	-1	Pitch is overplayed by one match equivalent session.
60	Laithwaite Park	Wigan Town	Yes	Club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Poor	3.5	2	-1.5	Pitch is overplayed by 1.5 match equivalent sessions.
60	Laithwaite Park	Wigan Town	Yes	Club	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	2	No	Poor	8.5	2	-6.5	Pitches are overplayed by 6.5 match equivalent sessions.
60	Laithwaite Park	Wigan Town	Yes	Club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	3	No	Poor	6	3	-3	Pitches are overplayed by three match equivalent sessions.
61	Legh Street Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		2	No	Standard	0.5	4	3.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
64	Leigh Harriers Athletics Stadium – Track (at Leigh Sports Village)	Leigh	Yes	Private	Secure	Adult		1	Yes	Good	3	3	-	Dual use pitch also used for rugby league. Pitch is played to capacity.
64	Leigh Harriers Athletics Stadium (at Leigh Sports Village)	Leigh	Yes	Private	Secure	Adult		1	Yes	Good	3	3	-	Dual use pitch also used for rugby league. Pitch is played to capacity.
66	Leyland Park	Ashton	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		2	No	Standard	1	4	3	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
66	Leyland Park	Ashton	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Standard	1	2	1	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
67	Little Lane Playing Field	Wigan Town	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		3	No	Good	8	9	1	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
67	Little Lane Playing Field	Wigan Town	Yes	Club	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	1	No	Good	2	6	4	Potential spare capacity at peak time.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use availability	Management	Security of tenure ¹⁷	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Over marked	Agreed quality rating	Current play (MES)	Site capacity ¹⁸ (MES)	Capacity balance ¹⁹	Comments
67	Little Lane Playing Field	Wigan Town	Yes	Club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Good	3	4	1	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
69	Lowton Church of England High School	Leigh	Yes	School	Secure	Adult		3	No	Good	6	9	3	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
69	Lowton Church of England High School	Leigh	Yes	School	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Good	3.5	4	0.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
72	Marsh Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		2	No	Standard	1	4	3	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
77	Miners Welfare Playing Fields	Ashton	Yes-unused	Council	Secure	Adult		1	No	Standard	-	2	2	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
82	Oldhams Fold	Wigan Town	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		1	No	Poor	2.5	1	-1.5	Pitch is overplayed by 1.5 match equivalent sessions.
84	Orrell Lamberhead Green Community Primary School	Wigan Town	Yes	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	2	No	Standard	3	8	-	Pitches receive both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.
85	Orrell Newfold Community Primary School	Wigan Town	Yes-unused	School	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Standard	1	2	1	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
88	Parsons Meadow Playing Field	Wigan Town	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		3	No	Standard	1	6	5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
89	Pennington Football Club	Leigh	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		2	No	Standard	2.5	4	1.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
89	Pennington Football Club	Leigh	Yes	Club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Standard	3.5	4	0.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
89	Pennington Football Club	Leigh	Yes	Club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
90	Queensway Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Standard	1	4	3	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
90	Queensway Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Standard	1	2	1	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
91	R L Hughes Primary School	Ashton	Yes	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	2	No	Standard	2	8	-	Pitches receive both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.
92	Robin Park Arena Sports and Tennis Centre	Wigan Town	Yes	Commercial	Secure	Adult		1	Yes	Standard	2	2	-	Pitch is played to capacity.
94	Rose Bridge Sports & Community Centre	Wigan Town	Yes	School	Unsecure	Adult		1	No	Standard	0.5	2	-	Pitch receives both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.
96	Scot Lane Playing Field	Wigan Town	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		4	No	Standard	4.5	8	3.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
98	Shevington High School	Wigan Town	Yes	School	Unsecure	Adult		1	No	Poor	1.5	1	-0.5	Pitch is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions.
98	Shevington High School	Wigan Town	Yes	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	2	No	Poor	0.5	4	-	Pitches receive both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.
98	Shevington High School	Wigan Town	Yes	School	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Poor	2	1	-1	Pitch is overplayed by one match equivalent sessions.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use availability	Management	Security of tenure ¹⁷	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Over marked	Agreed quality rating	Current play (MES)	Site capacity ¹⁸ (MES)	Capacity balance ¹⁹	Comments
99	Shevington Recreational Ground	Wigan Town	Yes	Parish Council	Secure	Adult		1	No	Poor	-	1	1	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
100	Siddow Park	Leigh	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		1	No	Standard	1.5	2	0.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
101	Southlands Avenue Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes-unused	Council ²¹	Secure	Adult		1	No	Poor	-	1	1	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
103	Spring View Community Sports Association	Ashton	Yes	Club	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	No	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
103	Spring View Community Sports Association	Ashton	Yes	Club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
105	St Aidan's RC School	Wigan Town	Yes-unused	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	2	No	Standard	2	8	6	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
106	St Catherine's Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		2	No	Standard	1	4	3	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
109	St Gabriel's Catholic Primary School	Leigh	Yes	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Standard	1	4	3	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
110	St George's Central C of E Primary School	Leigh	Yes-unused	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Standard	1	4	3	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
111	St Georges Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		2	No	Good	0.5	6	5.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
112	St James' C of E Primary School	Wigan Town	Yes	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Poor	1	2	-	Pitch receives both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.
114	St John Rigby College	Wigan Town	Yes	Archdiocese/School	Unsecure	Adult		1	Yes	Poor	1.5	1	-0.5	Pitch is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions.
114	St John Rigby College	Wigan Town	Yes-unused	Archdiocese/School	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	2	No	Poor	1	4	-	Pitches receive both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.
114	St John Rigby College	Wigan Town	Yes	Archdiocese/School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Poor	0.5	2	-	Pitch receives both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.
114	St John Rigby College	Wigan Town	Yes	Archdiocese/School	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	No	Poor	0.5	1	-	Pitch receives both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.
114	St John Rigby College	Wigan Town	Yes	Archdiocese/School	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	2	No	Poor	1	2	-	Pitches receive both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.
116	Hindley Green CP School	Ashton	Yes	School	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	2	Yes	Standard	1	8	-	Pitches receive both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.

²¹Nominated Asset of Community Value (ACV)

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use availability	Management	Security of tenure ¹⁷	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Over marked	Agreed quality rating	Current play (MES)	Site capacity ¹⁸ (MES)	Capacity balance ¹⁹	Comments
116	Hindley Green CP School	Ashton	Yes	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	2	No	Standard	2.5	8	-	Pitches receive both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.
116	Hindley Green CP School	Ashton	Yes	School	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Yes	Standard	4.5	2	-2.5	Pitch is overplayed by 2.5 match equivalent sessions.
118	St Luke's C of E Primary School	Leigh	Yes-unused	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Poor	1	2	1	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
119	St Mary's Catholic High School	Leigh	Yes-unused	School	Unsecure	Adult		1	No	Standard	1	2	1	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
119	St Mary's Catholic High School	Leigh	Yes-unused	School	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	No	Standard	1	2	1	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
120	St Peter's C of E Primary School	Ashton	Yes-unused	School	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	No	Standard	1	4	3	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
121	St Peters Catholic High School	Wigan Town	Yes-unused	School	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	No	Standard	1	2	1	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
122	St Wilfrids Catholic Primary School	Ashton	Yes	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Poor	1	2	-	Pitch receives both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.
122	St Wilfrids Catholic Primary School	Ashton	Yes	School	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Poor	1	1	-	Pitch is played to capacity.
124	St. Oswald's Catholic Primary School	Ashton	Yes	School	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	No	Poor	2	2	-	Pitch is played to capacity.
124	St. Oswald's Catholic Primary School	Ashton	Yes	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Poor	2.5	2	-0.5	Pitch is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions.
127	The Byrchall High School	Ashton	Yes	School	Unsecure	Adult		3	No	Standard	3.5	6	-	Pitches receive both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.
128	The Convent Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		1	No	Poor	1	1	-	Pitch is played to capacity.
128	The Convent Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes	Club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Poor	1	2	1	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
130	The Ley Recreation Ground	Leigh	Yes-unused	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	2	No	Standard	-	4	4	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
131	Thomas Street Recreation Ground	Ashton	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	No	Standard	2	2	-	Pitch is played to capacity.
132	Watsons Field	Leigh	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		1	No	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
135	Westleigh High School Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes-unused	School	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	No	Standard	1	2	1	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
138	Whithill Street Playing Fields	Ashton	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		1	No	Standard	2.5	2	-0.5	Pitch is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions.
138	Whithill Street Playing Fields	Ashton	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Standard	1	4	3	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
138	Whithill Street Playing Fields	Ashton	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Standard	1	2	1	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
139	Wigan Rovers	Wigan Town	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		1	No	Standard	1	2	1	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
142	Wigan St Cuthberts ARLFC	Wigan Town	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		1	No	Standard	1	2	1	Potential spare capacity at peak time.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use availability	Management	Security of tenure ¹⁷	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Over marked	Agreed quality rating	Current play (MES)	Site capacity ¹⁸ (MES)	Capacity balance ¹⁹	Comments
144	William Fosters Playing Field	Wigan Town	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		2	No	Standard	2.5	4	1.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
145	Winstanley College Sports Centre	Wigan Town	Yes	School	Unsecure	Adult		2	No	Standard	1.5	4	-	Pitches receive both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.
149	Woodhouse Playing Field	Wigan Town	Yes-unused	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Standard	1	2	1	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
151	Low Bank Road	Ashton	Yes-unused	Council	Secure	Adult		1	Yes	Standard	-	2	2	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
159	Wigan Athletic FC Training Ground	Wigan Town	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		5	Yes	Good	15	15	-	Private training facility used by Wigan FC. Considered to be played to capacity.
159	Wigan Athletic FC Training Ground	Wigan Town	Yes	Club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	3	Yes	Good	18	18	-	Private training facility used by Wigan FC. Considered to be played to capacity.
161	Bankes Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes	Club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Standard	2	4	2	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
161	Bankes Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes	Club	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Yes	Standard	2	2	-	Pitch is played to capacity.
161	Bankes Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes	Club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Yes	Standard	1.5	2	0.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
163	Leigh Sports Village (Stadium Pitch)	Leigh	Yes	Council / LSV Trust	Secure	Adult		1	Yes	Good	-	3	-	Dual use pitch with rugby league therefore capacity has been capped.
164	Bee Fold Lane Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes-unused	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	4	No	Standard	0	8	8	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
166	Atherton Collieries FC	Leigh	Yes	Club	Secure	Adult		1	No	Good	0.5	3	2.5	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
167	HMP Hindley	Ashton	Yes	Private	Unsecure	Adult		2	No	Standard	4	0.5	-	Capacity has been capped as the site is not available for further community use.
168	Hindsford Brook	Leigh	Yes-unused	Club	Secure	Adult		1	No	Standard	-	2	2	Potential spare capacity at peak time.
170	Britannia Bridge Primary School	Ashton	Yes	School	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Standard	2.5	2	-0.5	Pitch is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 2.19: Football pitches unavailable for community use

Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Community use availability	Management	Security of tenure ²²	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Agreed quality rating	Potential capacity ²³ (MES per week)
7	Aspull Church Primary School	Wigan Town	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	4
10	Atherton Community School	Leigh	No	School	Unsecure	Adult		1	Standard	2
22	Castle Hill St Philips C of E Primary School	Ashton	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	4
35	Garrett Hall Primary School	Leigh	No	School	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	2
36	Gilded Hollins Community School	Leigh	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	4
46	Highfield St. Matthews Primary School	Wigan Town	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	4
47	Hindley All Saints C of E Primary School	Ashton	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	2	Standard	8
48	Hindley High School	Ashton	No	School	Unsecure	Adult		2	Standard	4
56	Ince C of E Primary School	Wigan Town	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Standard	4
70	Lowton St. Marys C of E School	Leigh	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	2
73	Marus Bridge Primary School	Wigan Town	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	4
74	Meadowbank Primary School and Nursery Education Centre	Leigh	No	School	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	2
76	Millbrook Primary School	Wigan Town	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	4
79	Newton Westpark Primary School	Leigh	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	4
80	Nicol Mere Primary School	Ashton	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	2	Standard	8
80	Nicol Mere Primary School	Ashton	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	4
95	Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School	Ashton	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	4
97	Shevington Community Primary School	Wigan Town	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	4
107	St David Haigh And Aspull C of E Primary School	Wigan Town	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Standard	4
117	St John's C of E Primary School (Abram)	Ashton	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Standard	4
123	St. Ambrose Barlow Catholic Primary School	Leigh	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Standard	4
125	Standish Community High School	Wigan Town	No	School	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Standard	2
137	Westleigh St Paul's C of E Primary School	Leigh	No	School	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	2
141	Wigan St Andrew's C of E Junior and Infant School	Wigan Town	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Standard	4
148	Wood Fold Primary School	Wigan Town	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	4
165	Worsley Mesnes Primary School	Wigan Town	No	School	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	4

²² Unless local information suggests otherwise it can be assumed that the availability of all pitches in Council, town and parish Council and sports club ownership will be secure.

²³ Based on pitch quality The FA recommends a maximum number of match equivalent sessions to be accommodate per pitch type. Please refer to Section 2.4 for the full breakdown.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Spare capacity

The next step is to ascertain whether or not any identified 'potential capacity' can be deemed '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.

Over marked pitches which are used and exhibit potential spare capacity have not been considered available to accommodate further play in order to protect pitch quality, given the nature of repeated and sustained use over a short period of time.

Where there is potential spare capacity exhibited at school sites beyond current community use, this has not been included due to the significant additional use during the week by schools for curricular, extracurricular and competitive sport.

Additionally, potential spare capacity at sites which are known to be participating in the BBDFL summer league has been retained to protect pitch quality.

Match equivalent sessions

Pitches have a limit of how much play they can accommodate over a certain period of time before their quality, and in turn their use, is adversely affected. As the main usage of pitches is likely to be for matches, it is appropriate for the comparable unit to be match equivalent sessions but may for example include training sessions and informal use.

At this stage, match equivalent sessions do not equate to the number of pitches which are required/surplus. For example, an Analysis Area might show three match equivalent sessions of spare capacity but you would need to cross reference back to individual sites to determine where the spare capacity originates from. If it is spread across a number of sites then there is minimal spare capacity within the site which may be required to accommodate strategic reserve. If the spare capacity is on one pitch then it might indicate a need to create a different type of pitch to address a deficiency. This will be fully determined and recommendations will be made accordingly within the Strategy and Action Plan.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 2.20: Actual spare capacity

Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Community use availability	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Over marked	Agreed quality rating	Current play (MES)	Site capacity ²⁴ (MES)	Capacity balance ²⁵	Match equivalent sessions available in peak period	Comments
2	AFC Hindley Juniors Football Club	Ashton	Yes	Adult		1	No	Good	2.5	3	0.5	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period.
2	AFC Hindley Juniors Football Club	Ashton	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	3	No	Good	8.5	18	9.5	1	Spare capacity retained due to summer football.
3	Alexandra Park Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes- unused	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Standard	0	4	4	1	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
4	Ashfield Park	Wigan Town	Yes	Adult		2	No	Standard	1	4	3	1	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
4	Ashfield Park	Wigan Town	Yes- unused	Youth	(11v11)	2	No	Standard	0	4	4	2	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
8	Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes	Adult		2	No	Standard	3	4	1	0.5	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
8	Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Standard	1	4	3	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period.
12	Bedford Hall Methodist Primary School	Leigh	Yes - unused	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Standard	1	4	3	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period due to unsecure tenure.
13	Bedford High School	Leigh	Yes – unused	Adult		1	No	Standard	1	2	1	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period due to unsecure tenure.
13	Bedford High School	Leigh	Yes – unused	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Standard	1	4	3	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period due to unsecure tenure.
13	Bedford High School	Leigh	Yes - unused	Youth	(11v11)	1	No	Standard	1	2	1	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period due to unsecure tenure.
14	Brunswick Park	Leigh	Yes	Youth	(11v11)	2	No	Standard	0.5	4	3.5	2	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
17	Butler Park	Leigh	Yes	Adult		1	No	Good	1.5	3	1.5	1	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
17	Butler Park	Leigh	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Good	1.5	6	4.5	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period.
18	Cale Lane Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Standard	1.5	2	0.5	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period.
19	Canon Sharples School	Wigan Town	Yes - unused	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Standard	1	4	3	-	No actual spare capacity at peak time due to unsecure tenure.
23	Central Park Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes- unused	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Standard	0	4	4	-	Capacity discounted due to summer season use.
24	City Road Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes	Adult		1	No	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	1	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
27	Crilly Park	Leigh	Yes	Adult		1	No	Standard	1	2	1	1	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
28	Devonshire Road Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes	Adult		1	No	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	1	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
28	Devonshire Road Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes- unused	Youth	(11v11)	1	No	Standard	0	2	2	1	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
30	Douglas Park	Leigh	Yes	Adult		2	No	Standard	0.5	4	3.5	2	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
32	Ellesmere Street Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes- unused	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Standard	0	2	2	-	Capacity discounted due to summer season use.

²⁴ Based on pitch quality The FA recommends a maximum number of match equivalent sessions to be accommodate per pitch type. Please refer to Section 2.4 for the full breakdown.

²⁵ Red indicates overplay, green indicates potential spare capacity and amber indicates at capacity.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Community use availability	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Over marked	Agreed quality rating	Current play (MES)	Site capacity ²⁴ (MES)	Capacity balance ²⁵	Match equivalent sessions available in peak period	Comments
37	Gin Pit Village Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes-unused	Mini	(5v5)	1	No	Standard	0	4	4	0.5	Spare capacity retained to ensure pitch quality.
39	Golborne Parkside Sport & Community Club	Leigh	Yes	Adult		1	No	Poor	0.5	1	0.5	1	Actual spare capacity discounted to protect pitch quality.
40	Golborne Sports and Social Club	Leigh	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	1	Yes	Standard	2.5	4	1.5	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period.
41	Hawkhurst Park	Leigh	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Poor	0.5	2	1.5	1	Actual spare capacity discounted to protect pitch quality and unsecure tenure.
42	Hawkley Hall High School	Wigan Town	Yes-unused	Youth	(11v11)	1	Yes	Standard	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to over marking of the pitch and unsecure tenure.
43	Hesketh Meadow Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes	Adult		2	No	Standard	1	4	3	2	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
43	Hesketh Meadow Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	2	No	Standard	6	8	2	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period.
54	Howe Bridge Leisure Centre	Leigh	Yes	Adult		1	No	Good	1	3	2	1	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
55	Howe Bridge New Pitches	Leigh	Yes	Adult		4	No	Good	6	12	6	3.5	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
55	Howe Bridge New Pitches	Leigh	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	4	No	Good	2.5	16	13.5	1.5	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
58	King George V Playing Fields	Ashton	Yes-unused	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Standard	0	2	2	1	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
59	Kingsdown Road Playing Field	Ashton	Yes	Adult		1	No	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	1	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
61	Lekh Street Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes	Adult		2	No	Standard	0.5	4	3.5	1.5	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
66	Leyland Park	Ashton	Yes	Adult		2	No	Standard	1	4	3	1.5	Actual spare capacity discounted due to possible loss of pitches.
66	Leyland Park	Ashton	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Standard	1	2	1	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period.
67	Little Lane Playing Field	Wigan Town	Yes	Adult		3	No	Good	8	9	1	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period.
67	Little Lane Playing Field	Wigan Town	Yes	Mini	(5v5)	1	No	Good	2	6	4	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period.
67	Little Lane Playing Field	Wigan Town	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Good	3	4	1	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period.
69	Lowton Church of England High School	Leigh	Yes	Adult		3	No	Good	6	9	3	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period.
69	Lowton Church of England High School	Leigh	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Good	3.5	4	0.5	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period.
72	Marsh Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes	Adult		2	No	Standard	1	4	3	1	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
77	Miners Welfare Playing Fields	Ashton	Yes-unused	Adult		1	No	Standard	0	2	2	1	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
85	Orrell Newfold Community Primary School	Wigan Town	Yes-unused	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Standard	1	2	1	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period due to unsecure tenure.
88	Parsons Meadow Playing Field	Wigan Town	Yes	Adult		3	No	Standard	1	6	5	2.5	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
89	Pennington Football Club	Leigh	Yes	Adult		2	No	Standard	2.5	4	1.5	2	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
89	Pennington Football Club	Leigh	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Standard	3.5	4	0.5	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Community use availability	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Over marked	Agreed quality rating	Current play (MES)	Site capacity ²⁴ (MES)	Capacity balance ²⁵	Match equivalent sessions available in peak period	Comments
89	Pennington Football Club	Leigh	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	0.5	Minimal spare capacity to retain pitch quality.
90	Queensway Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Standard	1	4	3	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period.
90	Queensway Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Standard	1	2	1	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period.
96	Scot Lane Playing Field	Wigan Town	Yes	Adult		4	No	Standard	4.5	8	3.5	1.5	Spare capacity retained to protect pitch quality.
99	Shevington Recreational Ground	Wigan Town	Yes - unused	Adult		1	No	Poor	0	1	1	1	Actual spare capacity discounted to protect pitch quality.
100	Siddow Park	Leigh	Yes	Adult		1	No	Standard	1.5	2	0.5	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period.
101	Southlands Avenue Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes - unused	Adult		1	No	Poor	0	1	1	1	Actual spare capacity discounted to protect pitch quality.
103	Spring View Community Sports Association	Ashton	Yes	Youth	(11v11)	1	No	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	1	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
103	Spring View Community Sports Association	Ashton	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	1	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
105	St Aidan's RC School	Wigan Town	Yes - unused	Mini	(7v7)	2	No	Standard	2	8	6	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period due to unsecure tenure.
106	St Catherine's Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes	Adult		2	No	Standard	1	4	3	2	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
109	St Gabriel's Catholic Primary School	Leigh	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Standard	1	4	3	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period due to unsecure tenure.
111	St Georges Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes	Adult		2	No	Good	0.5	6	5.5	1	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
118	St Luke's C of E Primary School	Leigh	Yes - unused	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Poor	1	2	1	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period due to unsecure tenure.
119	St Mary's Catholic High School	Leigh	Yes - unused	Adult		1	No	Standard	1	2	1	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period due to unsecure tenure.
119	St Mary's Catholic High School	Leigh	Yes - unused	Youth	(11v11)	1	No	Standard	1	2	1	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period due to unsecure tenure.
120	St Peter's C of E Primary School	Ashton	Yes - unused	Mini	(5v5)	1	No	Standard	1	4	3	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period due to unsecure tenure.
121	St Peters Catholic High School	Wigan Town	Yes - unused	Youth	(11v11)	1	No	Standard	1	2	1	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period due to unsecure tenure.
128	The Convent Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Poor	1	2	1	1	Actual spare capacity discounted to protect pitch quality.
130	The Ley Recreation Ground	Leigh	Yes - unused	Youth	(9v9)	2	No	Standard	0	4	4	2	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
132	Watsons Field	Leigh	Yes	Adult		1	No	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	1	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
135	Westleigh High School Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes - unused	Youth	(11v11)	1	No	Standard	1	2	1	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period due to unsecure tenure.
138	Whithill Street Playing Fields	Ashton	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Standard	1	4	3	0.5	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
138	Whithill Street Playing Fields	Ashton	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Standard	1	2	1	1	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
139	Wigan Rovers	Wigan Town	Yes	Adult		1	No	Standard	1	2	1	1	Actual spare capacity at peak period.

**WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY
ASSESSMENT REPORT**

Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Community use availability	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Over marked	Agreed quality rating	Current play (MES)	Site capacity ²⁴ (MES)	Capacity balance ²⁵	Match equivalent sessions available in peak period	Comments
142	Wigan St Cuthbert's ARLFC	Wigan Town	Yes	Adult		1	No	Standard	1	2	1	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period.
144	William Fosters Playing Field	Wigan Town	Yes	Adult		2	No	Standard	2.5	4	1.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
149	Woodhouse Playing Field	Wigan Town	Yes - unused	Youth	(9v9)	1	No	Standard	1	2	1	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period as site is also accessed for curriculum activities.
151	Low Bank Road	Ashton	Yes- unused	Adult		1	Yes	Standard	0	2	2	1	Spare capacity discounted due to over marking of the pitch.
161	Bankes Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes	Mini	(7v7)	1	No	Standard	2	4	2	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period.
161	Bankes Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes	Youth	(9v9)	1	Yes	Standard	1.5	2	0.5	-	No actual spare capacity at peak period.
164	Bee Fold Lane Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes- unused	Youth	(11v11)	4	No	Standard	0	8	8	4	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
166	Atherton Collieries FC	Leigh	Yes	Adult		1	No	Good	0.5	3	2.5	1	Actual spare capacity at peak period.
168	Hindsford Brook	Leigh	Yes- unused	Adult		1	No	Standard	0	2	2	1	Actual spare capacity at peak period.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

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

Table 2.21: Actual Spare capacity summary

Analysis Area	Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions per week)				
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5
Ashton	2	1	3	0.5	-
Wigan Town	7.5	2	-	1	-
Leigh	21	7	3.5	-	-
Total	30.5	10	6.5	1.5	-

There are 48.5 match equivalent sessions of actual spare capacity located across 35 sites on 59 pitches. Any actual spare capacity at unsecured sites has been discounted from any totals as the long-term existence of those pitches cannot be relied upon in the future.

Overplay

Overplay occurs when there is more play accommodated on a site than it is able to sustain (which can often be due to the low carrying capacity of the pitches). Only sites which are overplayed and have current community use have been included in the overplay summary, therefore school sites which do not currently have any community use but may be overplayed due to curriculum use and school fixtures have not been included.

Overplay on football pitches in Wigan Borough amounts to 39 match equivalent sessions over 31 pitches (across 15 sites), the majority of which are on adult pitches. In several cases this is likely due to the extensive use of adult pitches for both adult and youth 11v11 football, Overplay can also be as a result of training sessions which take place on the pitches during the week, which can also cause damage to the pitch and reduce spare capacity.

Table 2.22: Overplay on football pitches

Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Match equivalent sessions per week
5	Ashton Athletic FC	Wigan Town	Adult		2	-5
			Youth	(9v9)	1	-0.5
18	Cale Lane Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Youth	(11v11)	1	-0.5
37	Gin Pit Village Playing Fields	Leigh	Adult		2	-3.5
37	Gin Pit Village Playing Fields	Leigh	Youth	(9v9)	1	-3
38	Golborne High School	Leigh	Youth	(11v11)	1	-1
38	Golborne High School	Leigh	Youth	(9v9)	2	-1
43	Hesketh Meadow Playing Fields	Leigh	Youth	(11v11)	1	-1.5
50	Hindley Town FC	Ashton	Adult		1	-1.5
51	Hindsford AFC	Leigh	Adult		1	-0.5

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Match equivalent sessions per week	
60	Laithwaite Park	Wigan Town	Adult		3	-1.5	
60	Laithwaite Park	Wigan Town	Mini	(5v5)	1	-1	
60	Laithwaite Park	Wigan Town	Mini	(7v7)	1	-1.5	
60	Laithwaite Park	Wigan Town	Youth	(11v11)	2	-6.5	
60	Laithwaite Park	Wigan Town	Youth	(9v9)	3	-3	
82	Oldhams Fold	Wigan Town	Adult		1	-1.5	
98	Shevington High School	Wigan Town	Adult		1	-0.5	
98	Shevington High School	Wigan Town	Youth	(9v9)	1	-1	
114	St John Rigby College	Wigan Town	Adult		1	-0.5	
116	Hindley Green CP School	Ashton	Youth	(9v9)	1	-2.5	
124	St. Oswald's Catholic Primary School	Ashton	Mini	(7v7)	1	-0.5	
138	Whithill Street Playing Fields	Ashton	Adult		1	-0.5	
170	Britania Bridge Primary School	Ashton	Youth	(9v9)	1	-0.5	
					Total	31	-39

Table 2.23: Overlay summary

Analysis Area	Overlay (match equivalent sessions per week)				
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5
Ashton	-2		-3	-0.5	
Wigan Town	-9	-7	-4.5	-1.5	-1
Leigh	-4	-2.5	-4		
Total	-15	-9.5	-11.5	-2	-1

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Football – grass pitch summary

- ◀ **Current supply of football pitch provision is insufficient with shortfalls evident at youth 9v9, mini 7v7 and mini 5v5 pitch types, though capacity exists on adult and youth 11v11 pitches.**
- ◀ **When considering future demand, there will be shortfalls for all pitch types except adult pitches. However, given the nature of mini and junior leagues in the area, some of this future demand may be able to be accommodated on certified 3G pitches.**
- ◀ There are 212 pitches across 93 sites reported to be available for community use on some level, whilst 39 pitches across 28 sites are unavailable for community use.
- ◀ There are six FA or FIFA certified 3G pitches, of differing dimensions, on which competitive football matches can be played.
- ◀ Most available pitches in Wigan (44%) are adult sized which is, in part, due to youth 11v11 teams playing on adult pitches.
- ◀ The majority (62%) of pitches available for community use are rated as standard quality, with 24% rated as poor and only 30 pitches as good, equating to just 14%.
- ◀ Changing facilities are a key issue at several football sites, with many ancillary facilities requiring modernisation.
- ◀ The majority of teams in Wigan Borough play on Council managed pitches and are therefore considered to have secured tenure.
- ◀ A total of 584 teams are identified as playing matches on football pitches within Wigan Borough. Of these, 485 teams are recorded as consistently playing home matches on grass pitches during 2016/17 season.
- ◀ Team generation rates based on population indicate the likely creation of 13 youth teams. A number of teams also highlight clear plans to increase the number of teams for next season, totalling a requirement for a further 26.5 match equivalent sessions across different pitch types.
- ◀ In total, latent demand amounts to 2.5 match equivalent sessions on adult pitches, two on youth 11v11 pitches, 0.5 on youth 9v9 pitches, two on mini 7v7 and one on mini 5v5 pitches.
- ◀ Many teams highlight a lack of accessible and affordable floodlit training facilities as a key issue. Some utilise 3G pitches whilst others make use of a number of sites, some with small sized AGPs.
- ◀ Actual spare capacity in Wigan amounts to 48.5 match equivalent sessions across all pitches types, some of which exists on pitches which are available but currently unused by clubs.
- ◀ There are 31 pitches overplayed across Wigan Borough, totalling 39 match equivalent sessions.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

PART 3: CRICKET

3.1: Introduction

Lancashire Cricket Board (LCB) serves as the governing and representative body for cricket within Wigan Borough. Its aim is to promote the game at all levels through partnerships with professional and recreational cricketing clubs, and other appropriate agencies.

Senior cricket is typically played on Saturdays, however; there is some play both on Sundays and midweek when teams typically play in short format competitions. There are also a number of cricket leagues which service teams in Wigan Borough. Some of the main senior leagues include:

- ◀ Greater Manchester Cricket League (GMCL)
- ◀ Liverpool & District Cricket League (LDCL)
- ◀ Southport & District Amateur Cricket League (SADACL)
- ◀ West Lancashire Cricket League (WLCL)
- ◀ Wigan & District Junior Cricket League (WDJCL)

The youth league structure in Wigan Borough tends to be club based matches which are played midweek or on Sunday mornings dependant on age group. There is usually no conflict with access to squares and any midweek matches are usually played on different nights, whilst Sunday morning matches are played before senior matches in the afternoon. The main league for junior cricket is the WDJCL.

Consultation

Face to face consultation was carried out with five of the 15 affiliated cricket clubs playing in Wigan Borough. Based on the contact information supplied by the LCB, consultation either face to face, through completion of an online survey or by telephone currently represents an 93% club response rate. Only Highfield CC did not provide a response. The following clubs were met with face to face:

- ◀ Astley & Tyldesley CC
- ◀ Golborne CC
- ◀ Goose Green CC
- ◀ Leigh CC
- ◀ Wigan CC

3.2: Supply

In total, there are 15 natural turf cricket squares in Wigan Borough located across 15 sites, all of which are available for community use.

Table 3.1: Summary of natural turf cricket squares available for community use

Analysis area	Number available for community use
Ashton	2
Leigh	6
Wigan Town	7
Total	15

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

The natural turf cricket squares that are available for community use are located mainly in the Wigan Town and Leigh analysis areas which host seven (47%) and six (40%) squares, respectively. The Ashton Analysis Area has the least amount of cricket provision within Wigan Borough with two (13%).

Non-turf pitches (NTPs)

The ECB highlights that NTPs which follow its TS6 guidance on performance standards are suitable for high level, senior play and are considered able to take 60 matches per season although this may include training sessions where on occasions mobile nets may be used as a practice facility.

The ECB Get the Game On campaign²⁶ is focused on increasing participation and reducing the number of matches cancelled in order to keep people interested and playing. During the campaign's inaugural year in 2015 there were 6% more games played nationally with 5% less matches cancelled. Use of NTPs for league cricket may present a way forward to fulfilling more fixtures and use of NTPs for league cricket may increase in future.

Table 3.2: Summary of NTPs in Wigan Borough

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	No. of NTPs	Position
13	Bedford High School	Leigh	1	Standalone
33	Fred Longworth High School	Leigh	1	Standalone
86	Orrell Red Triangle Cricket Club	Wigan Town	1	Square
119	St Mary's Catholic High School	Leigh	1	Standalone
126	Standish Cricket Club	Wigan Town	1	Square
133	Westleigh Cricket Club	Leigh	1	Square
147	Winstanley Park Cricket Club	Wigan Town	1	Square
150	Atherton Cricket Club	Leigh	1	Square
167	HMP Hindley	Ashton	1	Standalone

The NTPs at Bedford High School, Fred Longworth High School and St Mary's Catholic High School are not available for community use and are used solely for curriculum and extra curriculum activity. The NTP at HMP Hindley is also unavailable for community use.

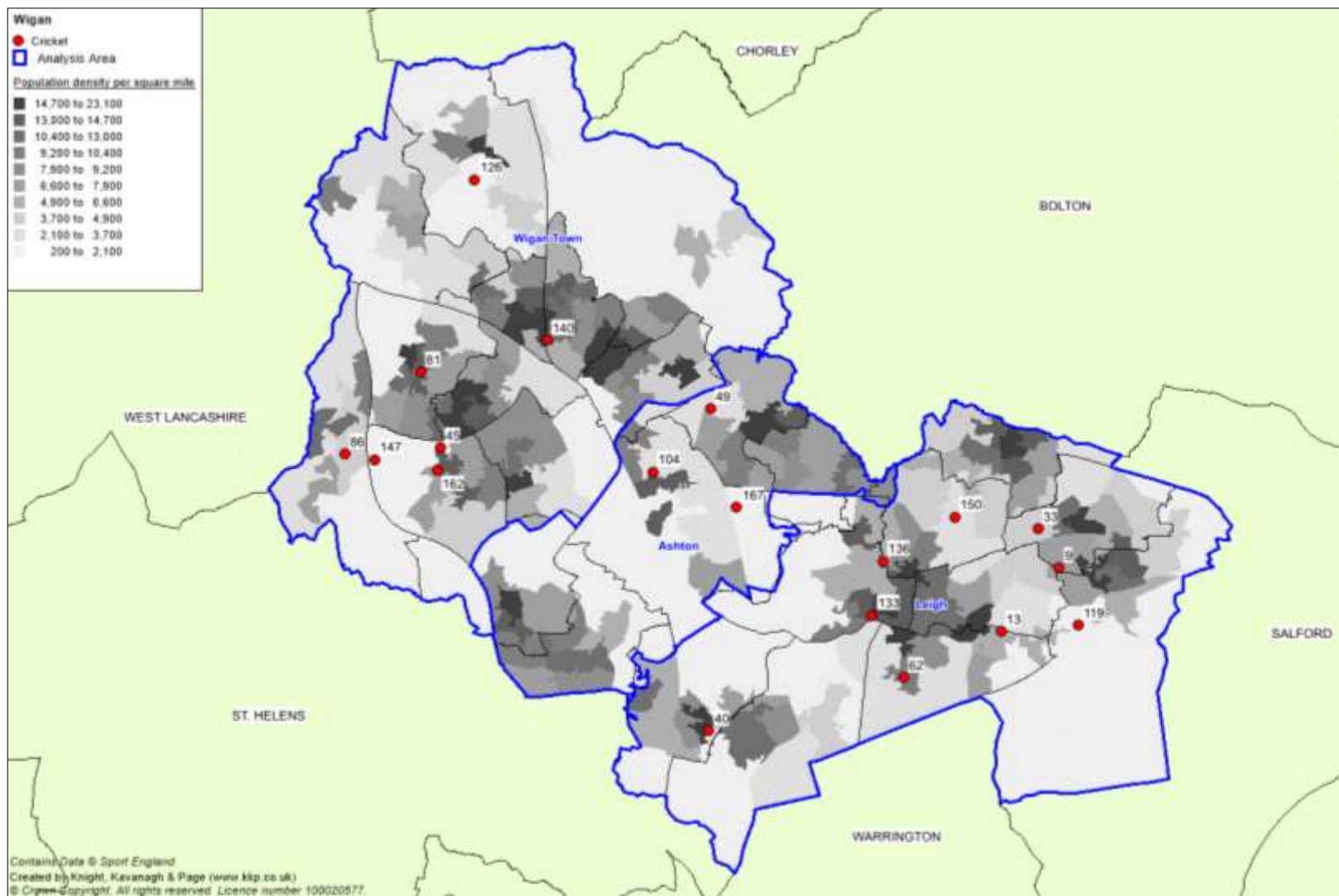
The Wigan Junior Cricket League allows the use of NTPs at U9 and U11 age groups as per league rules, with natural turf wickets required from U13s onwards. LCB reports that no senior leagues servicing Wigan Borough presently permit the use of NTPs for match play.

The map overleaf identifies the location of all cricket squares (grass and non-turf) currently servicing Wigan Borough.

²⁶ <http://getthegameon.co.uk/>

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Figure 3.1: Map of cricket pitch provision within Wigan Borough



WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 3.3: Summary of cricket provision in Wigan Borough

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Number of squares	Community use	Number of wickets	
					Grass	Non-turf
9	Astley & Tyldesley Miner's Welfare Institute	Leigh	1	Yes	10	-
13	Bedford High School	Leigh	1	No	-	1
33	Fred Longworth High School	Leigh	1	No	-	1
40	Golborne Sports and Social Club	Leigh	1	Yes	16	-
45	Highfield Cricket Club	Wigan Town	1	Yes	10	-
49	Hindley St Peters Cricket Club	Ashton	1	Yes	16	-
62	Leigh Cricket Club	Leigh	1	Yes	15	-
81	Norley Hall Cricket Club	Wigan Town	1	Yes	13	-
86	Orrell Red Triangle Cricket Club	Wigan Town	1	Yes	17	1
104	Spring View Cricket Club	Ashton	1	Yes	13	-
119	St Mary's Catholic High School	Wigan Town	1	No	-	1
126	Standish Cricket Club	Wigan Town	1	Yes	9	1
133	Westleigh Cricket Club	Leigh	1	Yes	9	1
136	Westleigh Methodist Cricket Club	Leigh	1	No	14	-
140	Wigan Sports Club	Wigan Town	1	Yes	14	-
147	Winstanley Park Cricket Club	Wigan Town	1	Yes	8	1
150	Atherton Cricket Club	Leigh	1	Yes	16	1
162	Goose Green Cricket Club	Wigan Town	1	Yes	7	-
167	HMP Hindley	Ashton	1	No	-	1

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Surface quality

Pitch quality ratings determined by non-technical quality assessments and user feedback found four natural turf cricket squares (27%) to be of good quality and nine (60%) to be of standard quality. There are two poor quality squares (13%) located at Westleigh Methodist Cricket Club and Wigan Sports Club.

Westleigh Methodist CC reports it is unable to field a regular team for the 2017 season due to the poor quality of the natural turf cricket square at Westleigh Methodist Cricket Club. It states unauthorised access from neighbouring horses caused significant amounts of damage to the square leaving it unplayable. The Club has since tried unsuccessfully to obtain redress from the owners of the horses and therefore has to rebuild the square its self which has been costly and time consuming.

Wigan CC reports issues with the quality of the outfield at Wigan Sports Club. The Club states the square is good quality as it was relaid approximately eight years ago assisted by funding obtained through the ECB, however, the outfield drains poorly which led to a number of matches throughout the 2016 season being postponed. The main problem is due to the outfield largely being covered in moss which retains water and makes the surface unsafe. The Club has recently applied to a waste management company for a £50,000 grant to improve ground drainage for the outfield. If this bid is unsuccessful it will still actively try to obtain funding to improve the quality of the outfield.

Both Westleigh and Goose Green cricket clubs report the quality of their grounds has improved over the last three years. Westleigh CC states the quality of the outfield has become much better at Westleigh Cricket Club following a Sport England grant to improve drainage. Goose Green CC reports the quality of the playing facilities at Goose Green Cricket Club improved due to hard work from club volunteers and groundsman accompanied by financial assistance from the Council. This considered, the Club still reports a need for better maintenance equipment to ensure quality does not decline.

Maintaining a high quality playing surface is the most important aspect of cricket. If the wicket is poor, it can affect the quality of the game and can, in some instances, become dangerous. To obtain a full technical assessment of wickets and pitches, the ECB recommends a Performance Quality Standard (PQS) assessment to determine whether a cricket square meets the Performance Quality Standards which are benchmarked by the Institute of Groundsmanship. There are three categories of measurement that relate to the overall quality of the square: structural quality, presentational quality and playing quality. Once a square has been assessed it is given a quality rating as shown in the table below.

Table 3.4: Performance Quality Standard Ratings

Quality Rating	Details
Premier (High)	Where the surface is intended for Premier League play, with those within the top quartile capable of holding minor county and 1st class one day matches. May include some of the better schools and university pitches
Club (Standard)	A Club pitch suitable for league, school and junior cricket
Basic	An acceptable level suitable for recreational cricket and where the surface is designed and maintained within tight financial limitations such as Local Authorities
Unsuitable	This is where the surface is deemed unfit or unsafe for play

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Wigan Borough clubs can contact the LCB to arrange for a pitch advisor to complete three different reports varying in costs. A fully comprehensive report includes soil testing and guidance on machinery and corrective procedures. A mini written report includes guidance on machinery and corrective procedures with the verbal report being a spoken version of a mini report.

Future supply

Winstanley Park CC and Orrell RUFC have together recently negotiated a 99 year lease and had planning permission approved for the development of a community sports centre, to be based adjacent to Winstanley College on a 13 acre agricultural site.

Winstanley Park CC currently use Winstanley Park Cricket Club as its home venue. The Club previously had a long term lease of the site which came to an end in 2003. Since this time, it has renewed the lease from the private land owner on an annual basis. In 2015 the private landowner asked the Club to consider moving site due to wanting to reallocate the cricket square for a different purpose.

The proposed community sports club to be built on a 13 acre agricultural site is to host two rugby union pitches and an exclusive cricket square, accompanied by ancillary facilities. The development has support from both the RFU and ECB.

Ancillary facilities

Quality and access to required match day ancillary facilities varies between clubs in Wigan Borough. The extent of ancillary facilities required also differs between times of play; for example, senior teams playing at weekends typically need to access clubhouse and kitchen facilities to provide teas, whereas for junior and senior matches played midweek this is often not required and more emphasis is on access to suitable changing facilities.

Golborne CC, as part of Golborne Sports and Social Club accesses ancillary facilities at the site of the same name. General condition of the ancillary facilities is good; however, the changing rooms are deemed poor quality as they are not of suitable size or quality for the number of teams accessing them. The facilities are accessed by Golborne Sports Junior FC, Golborne Sports Senior FC and Golborne Hockey Club; the football and hockey sections of Golborne Sports and Social Club. When multiple teams are at home the four changing rooms become difficult to access due to sharing and congestion.

As part of its written development plan, Wigan CC has aspirations to extend its clubhouse facilities and improve the quality of changing provision at Wigan Sports Club. It plans to extend the social/function room in order to encourage members and the local community to use the facilities for extended periods of time.

Orrell Red Triangle CC is trying to raise funds for the expansion and improvement of ancillary facilities. It states this is required to promote the future sustainability of the Club. It regularly hosts community events to generate additional income.

Hindley St. Peters CC uses ancillary facilities at Hindley St. Peters Cricket Club. The Club reports that in the last year the site has been vandalised with equipment stolen from storage containers. It also states it has issues with car parking when the rugby league pitches at Cardinal Newman Playing Fields, located adjacent to Hindley St. Peters Cricket Club, are in use.

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Ancillary facilities at Standish Cricket Club have recently been improved by Standish CC with the Club self-funding new gates and improvements to the boundary. In September 2016 the Club reports applying for planning permission from the Council to make further improvements with the building of a new storage block, however, it states it is still waiting for approval to begin. The new storage block is to be self-funded by the Club at an estimated cost of £20,000.

Training facilities

Access to cricket nets is important, particularly for pre-season/winter training. The following squares in Wigan Borough are accompanied by fixed bay practice nets:

- ◀ Astley & Tyldesley Miner's Welfare Institute
- ◀ Atherton Cricket Club
- ◀ Westleigh Cricket Club
- ◀ Norley Hall Cricket Club
- ◀ Orrell Red Triangle Cricket Club
- ◀ Spring View Cricket Club
- ◀ Golborne Cricket Club
- ◀ Leigh Cricket Club
- ◀ Standish Cricket Club
- ◀ Wigan Sports Club

Wigan CC currently accesses poor quality practice nets at Wigan Sports Club; however, the Club is in the process of trying to obtain funding to refurbish them. It states having to irregularly use the natural turf wickets for practice as the nets are of such poor quality. The Deanery C of E High School located next to the sports club also accesses the nets for curriculum and extra curriculum activity.

Similarly, Spring View CC reports that the non-turf practice nets it uses at Spring View Cricket Club are need of renovating as they have deteriorated in quality.

Goose Green CC is in the process of having a single fixed practice bay installed. It states it previously tried to put in the practice bay in 2016, however, due to poor weather and potential damage to the outfield that building the bay may incur it waited until 2017. It is hopeful that it will be installed this season.

Security of tenure

The majority of cricket clubs in Wigan Borough are considered to have secured use through either ownership or long-term leasehold of the site. Winstanley Park CC is the only cricket club in Wigan Borough which is deemed to have unsecure tenure. As previously stated the Club currently has a rolling annual lease for the use of Winstanley Park Cricket Club from a private landowner, who wants the Club to relocate in order to repurpose the cricket square. As a result, Winstanley Park CC as part of a joint venture with Orrell RUFC has negotiated a 99 year lease and had planning permission approved for the development of a community sports centre including the creation of new rugby union and cricket provision. Until it can move to the new site the Club will continue to have unsecure tenure at Winstanley Park Cricket Club.

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3.3: Demand

Demand at cricket clubs in Wigan Borough is strong with the majority of clubs (87%) fielding at least two senior and two junior teams. It should be stated that the audit only includes demand recorded from the 15 clubs which are affiliated to LCB.

Table 3.5: Summary of affiliated team demand in Wigan Borough

Club name	Analysis area	Number of competitive teams			
		Senior men	Senior women	Junior boys	Junior girls
Astley & Tyldesley CC	Leigh	5	-	5	-
Atherton CC	Leigh	4	-	5	-
Golborne CC	Leigh	3	-	3	-
Goose Green CC	Wigan Town	3	-	-	-
Highfield CC	Wigan Town	5	-	5	-
Hindley St. Peters CC	Ashton	3	-	2	-
Leigh CC	Leigh	6	1	7	1
Norley Hall CC	Wigan Town	3	-	3	-
Orrell Red Triangle CC	Wigan Town	5	-	9	1
Spring View CC	Ashton	4	-	4	-
Standish CC	Wigan Town	4	-	4	-
Westleigh CC	Leigh	3	-	3	-
Westleigh Methodists CC	Leigh	-	-	-	-
Wigan CC	Wigan Town	5	-	5	-
Winstanley Park CC	Wigan Town	2	-	5	-
Total		55	1	60	2

There are 56 senior cricket teams and 62 junior teams playing competitive matches in Wigan Borough as shown above, totalling 118 affiliated cricket teams playing within the Borough.

As mentioned previously, Westleigh Methodists CC is unable to field a regular team in the 2017 season due to the poor quality of its square; however, it states it may play a number of friendly matches away from home if possible. If the square improves in quality and becomes useable it hopes to again formally enter a team in the Greater Manchester Cricket League in 2018.

Women's and girls' cricket is a national priority and there is a target to establish two girls' and one women's team in every local authority over the next five years. 8-10% of the Whole Sport Plan funding is focused around women and girls and talent ID. Leigh CC is the sole provider of women's cricket in Wigan Borough with the only women's team, whilst Orrell Red Triangle CC and Leigh CC each have one girls' team. These clubs act as a focus for women's and girls' cricket development in the area and the LCB and other local clubs signpost female players to them.

Several cricket club sites (Golborne, Standish, Atherton, Hindley and Astley & Tyldesley cricket clubs) are used by the Wigan and Leigh Community Rounders Programme (Wigan Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles). Anecdotal evidence suggests this has had an impact on participation at clubs especially amongst girls, with some girls subsequently also playing cricket.

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Short format cricket

Last man stands (LMS)

Last Man Stands (LMS) is a short format of cricket operated on a franchise basis but affiliated to the ECB, where matches are typically played midweek on NTPs.

There is no LMS league operating within Wigan Borough; however, there is a dedicated T20 competition operating which involves affiliated clubs. This competition is led by the Wigan Cricket Development Group and is played on natural turf provision rather than NTPs.

Wigan Cricket Development Group - Wigan CDG T20

The Wigan Cricket Development Group (WCDG) is a group of representatives from 13 Wigan Borough cricket clubs which work alongside local schools, the LCB and ECB to improve all levels of cricket throughout the Borough. The WCDG also fields three junior boys and two junior girls' representative teams, however, these teams have not been included in the audit as matches are often infrequent and few and are based across varying venues. The clubs involved in the group are listed below:

- ◀ Astley & Tyldesley CC
- ◀ Golborne CC
- ◀ Hindley St. Peters CC
- ◀ Norley Hall CC
- ◀ Spring View CC
- ◀ Westleigh CC
- ◀ Winstanley Park CC
- ◀ Atherton CC
- ◀ Highfield CC
- ◀ Leigh CC
- ◀ Orrell Red Triangle CC
- ◀ Standish CC
- ◀ Wigan CC

The WCDG also operates the annual Wigan CDG T20 competition which is presently in its ninth year. All the member clubs apart from Atherton CC, Hindley St. Peters CC and Winstanley Park CC entered the competition in 2017. Matches are played midweek with teams having to include a minimum of four under 19 players.

Future demand

Team generation rates (TGRs) are used below as the basis for calculating the number of teams likely to be generated in the future based on population growth.

Table 3.6: Team generation rates (applied Borough wide)

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams	Team generation rate	Future population within age group (2026) ²⁷	Predicted future number of teams	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population
Senior Men's (18-55)	80,615	55	1:1,466	74,986	51.2	0
Senior Women's (18-55)	80,503	1	1:80,503	75,859	0.9	0
Junior Boys (7-18)	22,747	60	1:379	23,707	62.5	2
Junior Girls (7-18)	21,416	2	1:10,708	22,697	2.1	0

²⁷ TGRs are based on population forecasts to 2026 which is in line with Wigan Borough's Local Plan timeframe.

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Table 3.7: Team generation rates (applied by analysis area)

Age group	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population (by analysis area)			
	Ashton	Leigh	Wigan Town	Total
Senior Men's (18-55)	0	0	0	0
Senior Women's (18-55)	0	0	0	0
Junior Boys (7-18)	0	1	1	2
Junior Girls (7-18)	0	0	0	0

Team generation rates based on future population applied by analysis area forecast the likely creation of at least two new junior boys' teams, one each in the Leigh and Wigan Town analysis areas.

TGRs predict an increase of two junior boys' teams with no other age group predicted to see participation increase sufficient to create whole new teams, though some increases in participation may join existing squads. However, clubs in the Borough have other aspirations relating to participation numbers.

Westleigh CC (Leigh analysis area) Spring View CC (Ashton analysis area) Goose Green CC and Standish CC (Wigan Town analysis area) all want to increase their number of junior boys' teams by one, whereas Norley Hall CC (Wigan Town analysis area) wants to increase its junior boys and senior men's teams by an additional team each.

Senior men's teams in Wigan Borough competing at peak time (Saturday) currently play an average of ten home matches each season, so assuming that new teams participate at peak time this increase equates to a requirement for approximately 10 additional adult match sessions per season (0.5 additional match sessions per week Borough wide each week at peak time) to accommodate a new team.

Junior boys' teams play an average of six home matches per season representing a further requirement for approximately 30 junior boys' match sessions per season to accommodate proposed new teams junior cricket takes place midweek and can therefore take place over a number of evenings.

It is important to note that TGRs are based on population figures and cannot account for specific targeted development work within certain areas or focused towards certain groups, such as NGB initiatives or coaching within schools.

Table 3.8: Summary of future demand (TGRs and club aspirations combined)

Age group	Future demand				
	Senior men	Senior women	Junior boys	Junior girls	Total
Ashton	-	-	1	-	1
Leigh	-	-	2	-	2
Wigan Town	1	-	4	-	5
Total	1	-	7	-	8

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Table 3.8 shows a summary of quantified club aspirations for future demand; however, clubs in Wigan Borough may be more ambitious than this initially suggests with Astley & Tyldesley, Wigan, Leigh and Golborne cricket clubs all expressing aspirations to grow team numbers but not quantifying by how much. All clubs have written development plans in place which state they want to attract new players and retain current members, especially regarding junior and female participation.

The subsequent PPS Strategy & Action Plan Report will contain a housing growth scenario which will estimate the additional demand for cricket arising from anticipated housing development across the Borough.

All Stars Cricket

In partnership with the ECB and Chance to Shine, over 130 cricket clubs in Lancashire have registered to become an ECB All Stars Cricket Centre in 2017. 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

In Wigan Borough four clubs operate as All Star Centres; they are Wigan CC, Winstanley Park CC, Orrell Red Triangle CC and Hindley St Peters CC. The majority (75%) are located in the Wigan Town analysis area with Hindley St Peters CC located in the Ashton analysis area.

Chance to Shine Schools Programme

Chance to Shine is a national charity which aims to educate young people and teach them vital life skills through cricket. Since 2005 the Charity's school programme has helped combat the decline of participation in cricket, especially in state schools. In Wigan Borough it works in partnership with the LCB and local clubs to engage both girls and boys to play and learn through engagement. This is achieved through but not limited by teacher training, club/school partnership and curricular/extracurricular coaching. Table 3.9 shows the schools in Wigan Borough which are involved in the Chance to Shine Schools Programme.

Table 3.9: Chance to Shine School Engagement in Wigan Borough

Name of School	Analysis Area	Type of school
Beech Hill Community School	Wigan Town	Primary
Our Lady's RC Primary School	Wigan Town	Primary
St James' Catholic Primary School	Wigan Town	Primary
St John's C of E Primary School	Wigan Town	Primary
St Wilfred's Primary Academy	Wigan Town	Primary
Woodfield Primary School	Wigan Town	Primary
St Catherine's C of E Primary School	Wigan Town	Primary

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Name of School	Analysis Area	Type of school
Newton Westpark Primary School	Leigh	Primary
Lowton Junior and Infant School	Leigh	Primary
Gilded Hollins Primary School	Leigh	Primary
Abraham Guest Academy	Wigan Town	Secondary
St Peters Catholic High School	Wigan Town	Secondary
The Deanery C of E High School	Wigan Town	Secondary
Lowton Church of England High School	Leigh	Secondary
Hawkley Hall High School	Wigan Town	Secondary

Displaced demand

Displaced or exported demand refers to Wigan Borough based teams that are currently accessing pitches outside of the local authority for their home fixtures, normally because their pitch requirements cannot be met, which is usually because of pitch supply, in some cases quality issues or stipulated league requirements for access to certain facilities. In the same manner, it also refers to demand imported from other local authorities into the Borough based on the same reasoning. There is no recorded displaced cricket demand either exported out of or imported into Wigan Borough.

Unmet demand

Unmet demand is existing demand that is not able to access sufficient 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. There is no recorded unmet demand for cricket in Wigan Borough.

South Asian Communities

The ECB considers the development of cricket within South Asian communities to be a key focus and identifies five focus cities (London, Birmingham, Leicester, Leeds and Bradford) with a high target demographic for investment to develop participation, interest and ability within these populations.

Though Wigan Borough is not one of the five focus areas or a priority area for South Asian community cricket initiatives, LCB received ECB funding in 2015 towards the delivery of coaching and increasing opportunities for participants of South Asian background. Over recent seasons LCB has run successful Talent Search competitions to identify talented cricketers from South Asian backgrounds. The LCB has engaged with these communities over a number of years now through the creation of the Minority Ethnic Communities Cricket Forum set up in 2002 which focuses on the progression and development of cricket within Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities.

Peak time demand

An analysis of match play identifies peak time demand for senior cricket as Saturdays, with 28 senior teams (48%) playing on this day. There is, however, a level of demand for Sunday cricket, with 13 teams (24%) playing on this day.

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For junior cricket, peak time demand is considered to be midweek, although one team does play on a Sunday. It should therefore be noted that midweek cricket has the potential to be spread across numerous days Monday to Friday (though some time will be required for square preparation/repair and training) and as a result squares have greater capacity to carry junior demand providing the pitches are not overplayed.

3.4: Supply and demand analysis

Table 3.10 below explores total available spare capacity over the season, considered against total overplay and future demand identified and quantified through consultation and TGRs.

Match equivalent sessions per season for future demand has been calculated using the average number of matches played per season by the respective team type (10 matches for senior men). 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 and should be judged on a site by site basis where clubs have particular aspirations to increase the number of junior teams.

Table 3.10: Capacity of natural turf cricket squares

Analysis area	Total spare capacity (match sessions)	Demand (match sessions per season)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand (senior)	Total
Ashton	43	-	43	-	43
Leigh	44	-63	-19	-	-19
Wigan Town	35	-26	9	10	-1
Total	122	-89	33	10	23

Analysis suggests there is sufficient capacity at present to cater for current demand in the Wigan Town and Ashton analysis areas, though there is a need for additional capacity in the Leigh analysis area. When accounting for future demand the Leigh analysis area remains over played and the Wigan Town analysis area becoming minimally overplayed. However, further exploration of capacity balance at various popular times for cricket forms a more accurate and detailed picture.

Though capacity exists in two of the three Analysis Areas to accommodate additional play over the season, this is may not necessarily be available at peak times when required, therefore it is similarly important to consider the availability and usefulness of spare capacity. In order to be able to accommodate additional use, sufficient capacity must be available both over the season and each week at the time required, allowing this capacity to be used.

Saturday (senior peak time)

Though capacity exists in two of the three Areas to accommodate additional play over the season, the availability of this capacity at peak time is an evident issue (detailed further in the section). There is no peak time availability of cricket pitches in the Borough to accommodate additional senior cricket at peak time (Saturday afternoon). Only Westleigh Methodist Cricket Club has availability as the club has only one senior men's team, therefore current supply could presently accommodate growth of one team to share use of the site, as Leigh CC previously did on occasion. However, this peak time capacity has

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been discounted as the square is unusable due to poor quality, whilst all remaining squares with potential capacity already hosting two senior Saturday teams. Therefore, future demand expressed by Norley Hall CC for an additional senior team cannot be accommodated on existing natural turf squares at peak time in the Wigan Town area due to a lack of availability. Should this team be created, most practical options would include either travelling from the Wigan Town area to the Leigh area to possibly access restored capacity at Westleigh Methodist CC or play at alternative times such as Sundays when Norley Hall Cricket Club has capacity. Other options could be use of a non-turf pitch (though all standalone NTPs are at unsecured sites), or creation of a new natural turf cricket square elsewhere.

Sunday

There is spare capacity available on Sundays which can accommodate current and future demand for Sunday play, however, this is not peak time for senior cricket in Wigan Borough and it is unlikely that clubs will want to develop teams in this time period unless directly influenced by the lack of availability on Saturdays.

Table 3.11: Actual square capacity on natural turf cricket squares on Sundays

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Capacity rating (sessions per season)	Match equivalent sessions per week available Sunday
40	Golborne Sports and Social Club	Leigh	28	1
49	Hindley St Peters Cricket Club	Ashton	23	0.5
81	Norley Hall Cricket Club	Wigan Town	27	1
104	Spring View Cricket Club	Ashton	10	0.5
133	Westleigh Cricket Club	Leigh	5	1
140	Wigan Sports Club	Wigan Town	7	0.5
150	Atherton Cricket Club	Leigh	11	0.5
162	Goose Green Cricket Club	Wigan Town	1	0.5
				5.5

Midweek

Presently there is sufficient supply of cricket pitches overall, both natural turf and NTPs, to cater for current and future midweek demand as it can be spread across a variety of days. This considered, there is evidence to suggest that access to additional capacity to address overplay at specific sites (Astley & Tyldesley Miner's Welfare Institute, Highfield Cricket Club, Leigh Cricket Club and Standish CC) would further help satisfy junior demand, some of which could be transferred to NTPs to help alleviate the level of overplay on natural turf squares.

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Summary

Supply and demand analysis of natural turf cricket squares in Wigan Borough at peak times suggests there is no capacity available at senior peak time (Saturday), meaning any future demand can presently only be accommodated either on a Sunday when capacity is available for use, or on capacity potentially available from the 2018 season (though in a different analysis area). Midweek demand both current and future can be sufficiently accommodated though there is a need to address overplay at specific sites which may be best achieved through a transfer of some junior play to capacity elsewhere. This could include NTPs on or offsite, or midweek capacity available at other club grounds which have no or less junior teams.

3.5: Capacity analysis

Capacity analysis for cricket is measured on a seasonal rather than weekly basis. This is due to playability (i.e. only one match is generally played per square per day at weekends or weekday evening). Wickets are rotated throughout the season to reduce wear and allow repair. Therefore, it is more accurate to assess capacity seasonally rather than weekly. The capacity of a square to accommodate matches is driven by the number and quality of wickets. This section presents the current square stock available for cricket and illustrates the number of competitive matches per season per square.

To help calculate square capacity, the ECB suggests that a good quality natural turf wicket should be able to take five matches per season per natural turf wicket (adults). This information 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

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 3.12: Natural turf cricket square capacity (sites with recorded community)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Security of tenure	Community use availability	Teams/groups accommodated	Quality rating ²⁸	Number of pitches	Number of natural turf wickets	Actual play (match equivalent sessions per season)	Capacity (match equivalent sessions per season)	Capacity rating (sessions per season)
9	Astley & Tyldesley Miners Welfare Institute	Leigh	Secure	Yes	Astley & Tyldesley CC	Good	1	10	80	50	-30
40	Golborne Sports and Social Club	Leigh	Secure	Yes	Golborne CC	Standard	1	16	56	80	28
45	Highfield Cricket Club	Wigan Town	Secure	Yes	Highfield CC	Standard	1	10	74	50	-24
49	Hindley St Peters Cricket Club	Ashton	Secure	Yes	Hindley St Peters CC	Good	1	16	47	80	33
62	Leigh Cricket Club	Leigh	Secure	Yes	Leigh CC	Good	1	15	108	75	-33
81	Norley Hall Cricket Club	Wigan Town	Secure	Yes	Norley Hall CC	Standard	1	13	38	65	27
86	Orrell Red Triangle Cricket Club	Wigan Town	Secure	Yes	Orrell Red Triangle CC	Standard	1	17	85	85	-
104	Spring View Cricket Club	Ashton	Secure	Yes	Spring View CC	Standard	1	13	55	65	10
126	Standish Cricket Club	Wigan Town	Secure ²⁹	Yes	Standish CC	Standard	1	9	47	45	-2
133	Westleigh Cricket Club	Leigh	Secure	Yes	Westleigh CC	Standard	1	9	40	45	5
136	Westleigh Methodist Cricket Club	Leigh	Secure	No	-	Poor	1	14	-	70	70
140	Wigan Sports Club	Wigan Town	Secure	Yes	Wigan CC	Poor	1	14	63	70	7
147	Winstanley Park Cricket Club	Wigan Town	Unsecure	Yes	Winstanley Park CC	Standard	1	8	45	45	-
150	Atherton Cricket Club	Leigh	Secure	Yes	Atherton CC	Good	1	16	69	80	11
162	Goose Green Cricket Club	Wigan Town	Secure	Yes	Goose Green CC	Standard	1	7	34	35	1

²⁸ As derived from the non-technical site assessments

²⁹ Nominated Asset of Community Value (ACV)

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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 (28 teams), though there is also demand for Sunday cricket (13 teams), with midweek play minimal for senior teams (seven teams).

Those sites which display potential capacity of less than 10 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 club team, based on an average of 10 home matches per team each season.

Of those sites with existing community use, there are six sites which show potential spare capacity on senior natural turf squares in Wigan Borough, totalling 179 match sessions per season.

Table 3.13: 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
40	Golborne Sports and Social Club	Leigh	28	-	No capacity available at senior peak time.
49	Hindley St Peters Cricket Club	Ashton	33	-	No capacity available at senior peak time.
81	Norley Hall Cricket Club	Wigan Town	27	-	No capacity available at senior peak time.
104	Spring View Cricket Club	Ashton	10	-	No capacity available at senior peak time.
136	Westleigh Methodist Cricket Club	Leigh	70	1	Actual spare capacity retained due poor pitch quality.
150	Atherton Cricket Club	Leigh	11	-	No capacity available at senior peak time.
				-	Total

In practice, although six sites display potential spare capacity, there is no available capacity at senior peak time (Saturday). Though there is potential spare capacity and availability at Westleigh Methodist Cricket Club, this is not the case at present because the pitch is in unusable condition and capacity should be retained until pitch quality can be improved in order to host competitive matches.

There are six sites with capacity and availability to accommodate more competitive senior teams on Sunday, they are:

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

- ◀ Golborne Sports and Social Club
- ◀ Hindley St Peters Cricket Club
- ◀ Norley Hall Cricket Club
- ◀ Spring View Cricket Club
- ◀ Wigan Sports Club
- ◀ Atherton Cricket Club

Overplay

There are four sites in Wigan Borough considered to be overplayed by a total of 89 match equivalent sessions per season.

Table 3.14: Summary of overplay

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Number of squares	Overplay (matches per season)
9	Astley & Tyldesley Miners Welfare Institute	Leigh	1	-30
45	Highfield Cricket Club	Wigan Town	1	-24
62	Leigh Cricket Club	Leigh	1	-33
126	Standish Cricket Club	Wigan Town	1	-2
Total			4	-89

Overplay on natural turf cricket squares in Wigan Borough derives mainly from the Leigh analysis area which has total overplay of 63 match sessions per season and the Wigan Town analysis area which has of total of 26 match sessions per season.

As a large percentage of usage from clubs comes from junior cricket, installation of an NTP in situ on the square would allow junior matches to be transferred from the natural turf wickets, thus alleviating overplay. Both Astley & Tyldesley CC and Leigh CC report not wanting to install a NTP accompanying their natural turf squares.

Given this preference for use of natural turf provision as opposed to NTPs, alternative solutions to alleviate overplay include use of a secondary site with spare capacity to alleviate overplay at the main home site, or increasing natural turf capacity at the main home site through creation of additional natural turf wickets if the site is feasibly able to accommodate expansion of the square.

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Cricket summary

- ◀ **There is presently sufficient supply of cricket provision to accommodate peak time demand both for senior and junior cricket, notwithstanding overplay at some individual sites.**
- ◀ **However, there is no actual spare capacity at senior peak time (Saturday) to accommodate future growth. Forecasted aspirational club senior growth is minimal and amounts to only one team. This team could potentially be accommodated at Westleigh Methodists CC albeit in another analysis area, or could be accommodated on Sundays.**
- ◀ **There is sufficient supply of provision to accommodate junior cricket both now and in the future, though there is a need to access additional capacity (either natural turf or non-turf) for junior play at some individual overplayed sites to alleviate overplay.**
- ◀ In total, there are 15 natural turf cricket squares identified in Wigan Borough all of which are available for community use.
- ◀ The natural turf cricket squares that are available for community use are located mainly in the Wigan Town and Leigh analysis areas which host seven (47%) and six (40%) squares, respectively. The Ashton Analysis Area has the least amount of cricket provision within Wigan Borough with two (13%).
- ◀ In total, there are nine non-turf pitches (NTPs) in Wigan Borough. Of which, four are unavailable for community use with the remaining five located at community based clubs.
- ◀ Pitch quality ratings determined by non-technical quality assessments and user feedback found four natural turf cricket squares (27%) to be of good quality and nine (60%) to be of standard quality. There are two poor quality squares (13%) at Westleigh Methodist Cricket Club and Wigan Sports Club.
- ◀ Winstanley Park CC is the only cricket club in Wigan Borough which is deemed to have unsecure tenure, however, this is deemed not an issue as the Club has detailed plans to relocate.
- ◀ Golborne CC, Wigan CC and Orrell Red Triangle CC all report plans to improve quality or increase the size of ancillary provision.
- ◀ Four clubs operate as All Star Cricket Centres; these are Wigan CC, Winstanley Park CC, Orrell Red Triangle CC and Hindley St Peters CC. The majority of these (75%) are located in the Wigan Town analysis area with Hindley St Peters CC being located in the Ashton analysis area.
- ◀ The Wigan Cricket Development Group (WCDG) operates the annual WCDG T20 competition which is presently in its ninth year and has ten affiliated Wigan Borough clubs participating in it.
- ◀ There are 55 senior cricket teams and 62 junior teams playing competitive matches in Wigan Borough, totalling 118 affiliated cricket teams playing within the Borough.
- ◀ Team generation rates based on future population applied by analysis area forecast the likely creation of at least two new junior boys' teams, one in both the Leigh and Wigan Town analysis areas.
- ◀ Westleigh CC (Leigh analysis area) Spring View CC (Ashton analysis area) Goose Green CC and Standish CC (Wigan Town analysis area) both want to increase the total number of junior boys' team by one, whereas Norley Hall CC (Wigan Town analysis area) wants to increase the number of junior boys and senior men's teams by an additional team each.
- ◀ There are four sites in Wigan Borough considered to be overplayed by a total of 89 match sessions per season.

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PART 4: RUGBY LEAGUE

4.1: Introduction

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 structure in the UK. The RFL also administers the amateur and junior game across the country in association with the British Amateur Rugby League Association (BARLA).

All club rugby league in Wigan Borough is now played throughout the summer season (from February to October). Senior play takes place in the North West Men's League (NWML) and National Conference League (NCL), whilst all junior and primary level rugby takes place as part of the North West Counties (NWC) junior and youth leagues. However, rugby league is considered as a winter season sport within schools, colleges and universities and therefore pitch provision for matches and training is required throughout the winter months.

There are two professional clubs in the Borough; Wigan Warriors RLFC, and Leigh Centurions RLFC, both of which compete in the RFL Super League.

Consultation

In addition to consultation with the RFL, feedback from the 16 clubs playing in Wigan Borough was sought through face to face consultation or via online survey. A club response rate of 81% was achieved. All clubs but Aspull New Spring Lions ARLFC, Golborne Parkside ARLFC and Wigan Spring View ARLFC provided a survey submission whilst the following clubs were met with face to face:

- ◀ Leigh East ARLFC
- ◀ Leigh Miners Rangers ARLFC
- ◀ Shevington Sharks ARLFC
- ◀ Wigan St Judes ARLFC
- ◀ Wigan St Patricks ARLFC
- ◀ Wigan Warriors RLFC

4.2: Supply

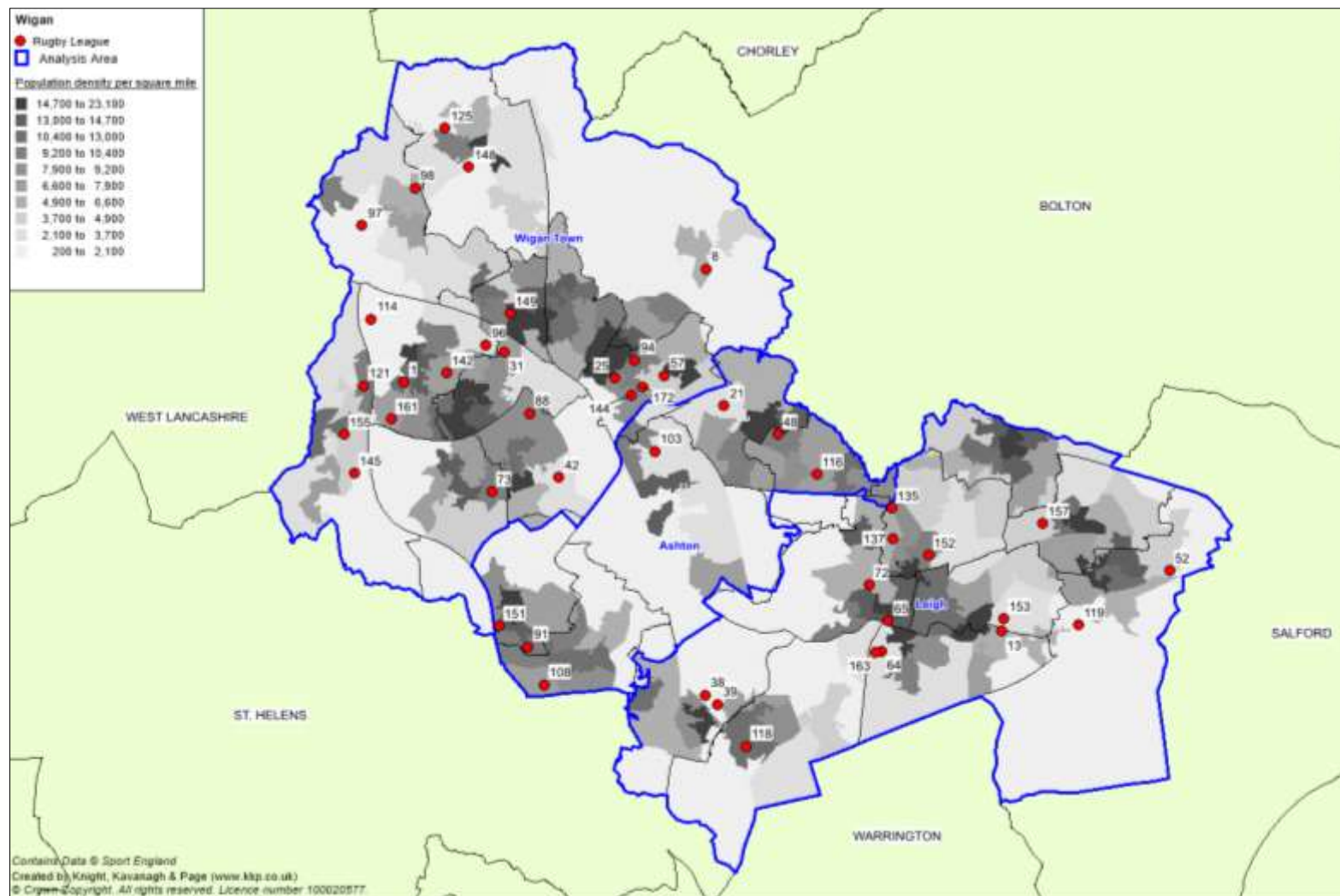
The audit identifies a total of 88 grass rugby league pitches (53 senior, 16 junior and 19 primary) across 45 sites in Wigan Borough. However, 80 pitches across 39 sites are identified as being available for community use on some level³⁰, whilst eight pitches across six sites are unavailable for community use.

Of those pitches available for community use, 22 are identified as being available but have no regular competitive club use. However, in some cases these pitches may serve a wider benefit in terms of informal play and training.

³⁰ During the 2016/17 season

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Figure 4.1 Map of rugby league pitch provision within Wigan Borough



WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 4.1: Summary of grass rugby league pitches

Analysis area	No. of available pitches	No. of unavailable pitches
Ashton	15	2
Leigh	30	1
Wigan Town	35	5
Total	80	8

Team definitions

- ◀ Senior teams (19 – 45yrs)
- ◀ Youth and junior teams (12 – 18yrs)
- ◀ Primary teams (7 – 11yrs)

As a guide, all rugby league pitches are classified as being senior sized, with cones used to mark pitches for primary teams. However, there may be instances (particularly on school sites and large club sites) where designated junior or primary pitches are provided.

Disused/lapsed provision

The Rose Bridge High School Sports Field site (Wigan Town area) is considered to be lapsed, having ceased to be used or maintained regularly since circa 2012. The playing field previously had three rugby league pitches marked, two with goalposts installed, however offers no accompanying onsite changing provision to serve the playing fields which are located away from the main school building. Rose Bridge High School has recently signed a 125-year lease on the site with the Council.

There is also a disused pitch which is no longer formally marked at Coronation Park (Wigan Town area), though the site continues to serve as publicly accessible open space. Previously an adult football pitch circa 2005, it now has rugby posts 70 metres apart, equivalent to a junior pitch but not formally marked. There is no onsite changing provision, located adjacent to St Anne's C of E Junior & Infant School which reports that it does not use the playing field. Though not identified through club consultation, anecdotal evidence suggests that Coronation Park is used on an ad hoc basis for team training despite not being hired or sanctioned through the Council's pitch booking process.

Wigan St Judes ARLFC previously used the playing field at St Judes Catholic Primary School. The field had rugby posts approximately 55 metres apart (equivalent to primary pitch size) however these were condemned and subsequently removed. The site also has floodlighting on the two grass playing field areas, reported to be broken and not usable for training purposes. The primary school reports that the site is available for community use but that the Club does not use the playing field now, believed to be due to the development of 3G training provision at its main Parsons Meadow Playing Field site.

Future supply

Shevington Sports and Horticultural Club has recently negotiated a 30-year lease from Shevington Parish Council for a piece of land known as Vicarage Lane, with financial assistance by Sport England and Wigan Borough Council for the creation of pitches. The piece of land is to be developed to include a dedicated senior rugby league pitch, two dedicated adult football pitches and allotments in order to serve the three branches; Shevington Sharks ARLFC, Shevington FC and Shevington Horticultural and Allotments Society. Work has started on the pitches and will take approximately two years to complete.

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The site does not currently host any ancillary facilities and as such the Club is exploring potential funding streams to develop them as part of the scheme.

Wigan Council reports creating a primary rugby league pitch for exclusive use by Ince Rose Bridge ARLFC, as it requires additional pitch space. The site being developed is in Ince (Hemsfield Road) and is playing field land retained after the closure of the former Belle Green Primary School, which was demolished and developed for housing. The Club is to have an exclusive annual licence for use of the site from the Council once maintenance work has been carried out making the pitch usable. Until recently, the Club had been accessing a senior rugby pitch at William Fosters Playing Field; however, since this site was leased to Wigan Cosmos FC the Club reports an increase in rental fees and have subsequently chosen to seek more affordable pitch provision elsewhere.

Ownership/management

Site ownership is varied between clubs with ownership/leasehold of a sport club site and clubs which rent pitches from the Council. There are also a number of pitches at education sites, however, most are unavailable for community use or currently unused.

Table 4.2: Summary of security of tenure

Site ID	Site Name	Analysis Area	Club	Tenure	Comments
8	Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Aspull New Spring Lions ARLFC	Unsecure	Club rents use of pitch from Aspull RFC.
21	Cardinal Newman Playing Fields	Ashton	Hindley ARLFC	Secure	99-year lease from WBC.
25	Clarrington Grove Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Wigan St Pats ARLFC	Secure	25-year lease from WBC.
39	Golborne Parkside Sports & Community Club	Leigh	Golborne Parkside ARLFC	Secure	Lease from WBC.
57	Ince Rose Bridge Sports and Community Club	Wigan Town	Ince Rose Bridge ARLFC	Secure	Lease from WBC.
65	Leigh Miners Rangers ARLFC	Leigh	Leigh Miners Rangers ARLFC (Senior)	Unsecure	Rental from Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation (CISWO).
88	Parsons Meadow Playing Field	Wigan Town	Wigan St Judes ARFLC	Secure	12 month rolling licence from WBC.
96	Scot Lane Playing Field	Wigan Town	Wigan Bulldogs ARLFC	Secure	Rented from WBC.
103	Spring View Community Sports Association	Ashton	Wigan Spring View ARLFC	Secure	25-year lease from WBC. Signed in 2005.
114	St John Rigby College	Wigan Town	Shevington Sharks ARLFC	Unsecure	Rental on seasonal basis from College.
142	Wigan St Cuthberts ARLFC	Wigan Town	Wigan St Cuthberts ARLFC	Secure	21-year lease from WBC. Ending in 2027.
151	Low Bank Road	Ashton	Ashton Bears ARLFC	Secure	25-year lease from WBC.

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Site ID	Site Name	Analysis Area	Club	Tenure	Comments
152	Leigh Road Playing Fields	Leigh	Atherton Dragons ARLFC	Secure	25-year lease from WBC.
153	Sutton Park	Leigh	Leigh Miners Rangers ARLFC (Juniors)	Secure	25-year lease from WBC.
161	Bankes Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Orrell St James ARLFC	Secure	Lease from WBC. 30-year lease signed in 2014.
163	Leigh Sports Village	Leigh	Leigh East ARLFC	Secure	20-year licence from WBC. Signed in 2016.

St John Rigby College and Aspull Civic Centre Playing Field are deemed to offer unsecure tenure as the clubs accessing the sites (Shevington Sharks ARLFC and Aspull New Spring Lions ARLFC respectively) rent use of the pitches. There are no known community use agreements in place at either site and in principle the clubs could be removed at any time. As stated earlier, Shevington Sharks ARLFC is in the process of securing tenure with the development of its own site at Vicarage Road.

Aspull New Spring Lions ARLFC rents use of pitch space from Aspull RFC, which is the leaseholder for rugby pitches at Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields. The pitch the Club uses is primarily a rugby union pitch and is of poor quality as it has little time for rest and remediation between the rugby league and rugby union competitive seasons which overlap for a period. The Club is actively looking for an alternative venue in order to access a dedicated rugby league pitch and have approached the Council for assistance in finding a suitable location. Additionally, anecdotal evidence identifies issues with rental costs charged by the rugby union club, perceived by Aspull New Spring Lions ARLFC to be unaffordable and unsustainable with regards to the future administration of the Club.

Leigh Miners Rangers ARLFC rents the site of the same name from the Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation (CISWO) which previously provided sports and social facilities for those who worked in mining. Tenure is considered to be unsecure as the Club could be removed at any time, however, in practice the Club reports a good relationship with CISWO and that it feels there is no foreseen threat to use of the site in the future.

The remaining clubs in Wigan Borough have long term lease agreements in place or play on Council managed pitches and are therefore are considered to have secured tenure as part of the Council's maintained sports and leisure provision offering. Wigan Borough Council reports it has frozen the cost of pitch hire since 2014 to at least the end of the 2017 season.

Wigan Bulldogs ARLFC rent rugby league pitches at Scot Lane, however, the Club has approached the Council regarding a potential asset transfer of Woodhouse Playing Field. It believes that moving to Woodhouse Playing Field would assist in its future growth and long-term development. Woodhouse Playing Fields is accessed by neighbouring St John Fisher Catholic High School for sporting provision and any potential asset transfer should seek to incorporate continued curricular and extracurricular use for the school.

Similarly, Orrell St James ARLFC has long term aspirations to develop Bankes Playing Fields. It currently has a 30 year lease of the site, which was signed in 2014, but it ideally would like a 99 year lease or potential asset transfer to secure the site for use in the long-term.

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There are 12 education sites which have rugby league pitches, most of which are unused by community clubs. Schools report facilities to be available but there is a lack of demand to let in the area, this may be due to the fact 63% of all unused school pitches are poor quality.

Pitch quality

Non-technical site assessments were carried out for all rugby league pitches in Wigan Borough and assessed as one of three categories, 'good', 'standard' or 'poor'. 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 Table below summarises pitch quality following the site visits to all pitches (including those not available for community use).

Table 4.3: Summary of pitch quality

Analysis area	Quality of pitches		
	Good	Standard	Poor
Ashton	2	8	6
Leigh	11	8	12
Wigan Town	5	16	19
Total	18	32	37

In Wigan Borough 43% of all pitches are of poor quality, 38% are standard quality with the remaining 19% rated as good. The following sites have good quality rugby league pitches:

- ◀ Leigh Harriers Athletics Stadium
- ◀ Leigh Miners Rangers ARLFC
- ◀ Low Bank Road
- ◀ Sutton Park
- ◀ Bankes Playing Fields
- ◀ Leigh Sports Village

Bankes Playing Fields and Low Bank Road have both recently received investments to improve pitch quality. Orrell St James ARLFC (Bankes Playing Fields) reports it received lottery and RFL grant funding to install drainage systems and improve quality of two of its three senior pitches. Ashton Bears ARLFC (Low Bank Road) states pitches have improved in quality after RFL grant funding received to improve drainage, however, pitches still suffer from dog fouling and littering with the Club wanting to fence off its open age pitch to solve this issue.

Sutton Park, which is exclusively leased to Leigh Miners Rangers ARLFC (junior section), has good quality rugby league provision due to an enhanced maintenance regime from the Club and investment from the RFL to install sand slit drainage in 2012. It has recently spent £3000 on maintenance equipment; however, due to the amount of pitches the site has the Club cannot afford to carry out regular sustained upkeep of the drainage system or verti-draining as desired.

Wigan St Judes ARLFC reports pitches at Parsons Meadow Playing Field are of poor quality mainly due to public access and dog fouling since the site is open to public entry. The Club has aspirations to fence the pitches off to stop this from occurring.

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Ancillary facilities

Most clubs in Wigan Borough have access to changing room provision for home games; however, the quality of these varies throughout the Borough.

Orrell St James ARLFC reports changing provision at Bankes Playing Fields is not of an adequate quality or quantity for the number of teams accessing the pitches. The Club, which has self-funded a large majority of clubhouse refurbishment already, states that the four changing rooms are not sufficient and is considering applying for planning permission for expansion. It is actively searching for potential funding streams.

Wigan St Patricks ARLFC states changing facilities at Clarington Grove Playing Fields are good quality; however, it ideally wants separate changing rooms for male and female teams.

Wigan St Judes ARLFC owns its main clubhouse provision, which is of good quality, but accesses Council owned changing rooms on the same site. These are reported to be of good quality as they have had recent Section 106 investment from the Council, however, due to multiple sports teams using the site access to them can sometimes be problematic and congested.

Leigh Miners Rangers ARLFC (junior section) highlights changing facilities at Sutton Park were extended 18 months ago with assisted by grant funding received from Sports England. The Club reports it has two new changing rooms, an additional social room and a disability lift. It has further aspirations to extend clubhouse facilities to create additional changing rooms.

Of the responding clubs, three (Wigan Bulldogs ARLFC, Atherton Dragons ARLFC and Ashton Bears ARLFC) state the opinion that with access to better ancillary facilities, specifically better quality and accessibility to changing rooms, they would be able to field additional teams. In particular, Atherton Dragons ARLFC does not have any access to ancillary facilities at Leigh Road Playing Fields.

As previously mentioned, Aspull New Spring Lions ARLFC rents the use of its pitch from Aspull RFC and the Club also accesses ancillary facilities owned by the rugby union club. These are basic with two of the six changing rooms unusable due to their poor condition. The entire changing block suffers from leaking due to the flat roof, whilst the boiler and piping for the facilities is dated with it occasionally losing supply of hot water.

4.3: Demand

Demand for rugby league pitches in Wigan Borough tends to fall within the categories of organised competitive play and organised training.

Competitive play

There is a total of 158 competitive rugby league teams playing in Wigan Borough. Of the senior teams, there are two women's teams, one at each Wigan St Pats ARLFC and Leigh Miners Rangers ARLFC. Girls are able to play primary rugby in mixed teams up to the age of 12, after which they play in specific girls' teams at junior level up to the age of 18. There are four dedicated junior girls' teams, two of which are at Wigan St Judes ARLFC and one team at Orrell St James ARLFC. There are also two girls' teams (U14s and U16s) at Leigh Miners Rangers ARLFC (juniors) which run in conjunction with Thatto Heath Crusaders ARLFC (St Helens) in order to have sufficient players to form a full team, with home matches played alternating between the two club sites.

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Summary of demand in the table below includes professional teams from Wigan Warriors ARLFC and Leigh Centurions ARLFC and educational teams from Wigan and Leigh College, Winstanley College, Wigan Warriors Education Academy and St John Rigby College.

Table 4.4: Summary of demand by analysis area

Analysis area	No. of competitive rugby league teams			Total
	Senior	Junior	Primary	
Ashton	5	8	11	24
Leigh	10	12	25	47
Wigan Town	20	28	39	86
Total	35	48	75	157

The majority of demand is based around the Wigan Town analysis area where there are 86 teams (55%), whilst the Ashton analysis area has the fewest number of teams with 24 (15%). The remaining 47 teams (30%) are based in the Leigh analysis area.

Clubs that responded to consultation were asked whether there had been a change in the number of teams over the previous three years. The response rates for those that answered this question can be seen in the table below.

Table 4.5: Change in the number of teams over the previous three years

Team type	Clubs response		
	Increased	Decreased	Stayed the same
Senior	37%	26%	37%
Junior	28%	9%	63%
Primary	55%	0%	45%

The highest increase in teams is seen at primary level, with just over half (55%) of clubs reporting an increase over the last three years, whereas 28% of clubs report an increase in junior teams. No Clubs state that there has been a decrease in primary teams. Trends for participation at senior level indicate demand has remained reasonably static with reported increases somewhat balanced by reported decreases.

Leigh East ARLFC has three senior, ten primary and four junior teams. The Club is a key partner at Leigh Sports Village (LSV) and has access to the two full sized RFL compliant 3G pitches onsite. The Club states it has experienced marked increases in participation numbers and competitive teams since the site has been developed.

Training

Winter rugby league training is accommodated across a combination of AGPs, indoor sports halls and gyms. Little training takes place on competitive pitches in the winter as few clubs have floodlit facilities. However, since the transition to summer season clubs tend to train on match pitches as extended daylight hours allow, eliminating the need for access to floodlighting. Many clubs attempt to train on grass areas around the perimeter of pitches to reduce impact on surface quality, but in practice a significant proportion of training takes place on the competitive pitches.

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Table 4.6: Summary of training demand

Club	Site ID	Site name	Training provision	Usage	
				Hours	MES ³¹
Ashton Bears ARLFC	151	Low Bank Road	Grass rugby league pitch	2	2
Aspull New Spring Lions	8	Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields	Grass rugby league pitch	1	1
Atherton Dragons ARLFC	152	Leigh Road Playing Fields	Elsewhere at home venue	1	1
Golborne Parkside ARLFC	38	Golborne High School	Small sized sand AGP	3	2
Hindley ARLFC	21	Cardinal Newman Playing Fields	Grass rugby league training pitch	5	3
Ince Rose Bridge ARLFC	57	Ince Rose Bridge Sports and Community Club	Grass mini rugby league	5	3
			Grass senior rugby league	6	4
Leigh East ARLFC	163	Leigh Sports Village	Floodlit RFL compliant 3G pitches	6	4
Leigh Miners Rangers ARLFC	119	St Mays Catholic High School	Small sized sand AGP	1	1
	163	Leigh Sports Village	Floodlit RFL compliant 3G pitches	2	2
	152	Leigh Road Playing Fields	Grass rugby league pitches	1	1
	153	Sutton Park	Mini pitches	2	2
			Junior pitches	5	3
Senior pitches	5	3			
Orrell St James ARLFC	161	Bankes Playing Fields	Two floodlit grass senior rugby league pitches	11	16
			Grass senior rugby league pitch	8	12
Shevington Sharks ARLFC	114	St John Rigby College	Grass rugby league pitch	1	1
	97	Shevington Primary School	Grass rugby league pitch	1	1
Wigan Bulldogs ARLFC	96	Scot Lane Playing Field	Elsewhere at home venue	3	2
Wigan Spring View ARLFC	103	Spring View Community Sports Association	Grass rugby league pitch	1	1
Wigan St Cuthberts ARLFC	142	Wigan St Cuthberts ARLFC	Grass rugby league pitches	5	3
Wigan St Judes ARLFC	88	Parsons Meadow Playing Fields	Pitch 2	2	1.5
			Pitch 3	2	2
			Pitch 4	7	4.5
			Pitch 5	2	2
			Grass area behind dug out	1	1
Wigan St Patricks ARLFC	25	Clarington Grove Playing Fields	Pitch 1	8	5
			Pitch 2	9	5.5

³¹ Match equivalent sessions (MES)

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There are two RFL Community Standard 3G pitches in Wigan Borough at Leigh Sports Village. These pitches are accessed by Leigh East ARLFC for matches and training. More information regarding 3G provision is detailed later in Part 7.

It should be stated that the large amount of training at Orrell St James ARLFC includes demand from the Clubs rugby league, rugby union and touch rugby teams.

Wigan St Judes ARLFC does not train on one of its senior pitches as part of an agreement with the Council. The Club also has a small sized floodlit 3G which it uses to accommodate some training demand; however, there is still a substantial amount of training on its remaining pitches at Parsons Meadow Playing Fields.

Consultation with clubs in the Borough suggests that there is demand for additional full sized, floodlit grass pitches to accommodate both rugby league and union demand, especially for training. This is due to the excessive training that takes place on pitches. A number of teams report making use of small sized AGPs for training outside of the summer months due to a lack of other floodlit grass facilities.

Clubs in Wigan Borough are generally of the mind-set that training on match pitches is a cost effective option and is easily accessible because of the increased daylight hours in summer. In reality, this increased usage impacts on pitch quality when pitches become dry and hard in some cases. Any remedial work carried out during the winter may not be effective in repairing the damage as weather is often poor, limiting the amount of maintenance work that can be properly carried out.

Winter Training

Although community and professional rugby league is a summer sport, clubs still require access to training facilities throughout the winter period as many continue to train well before the summer season begins. Of the clubs which responded to consultation, 46% reference a need for more floodlit full sized 3G pitches, stating perception that hire costs and accessibility of current provision to be prohibitive.

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, with five central festivals to be held in 2017 across the country as well as various club held invitational events. Wigan St Judes ARLFC, Hindley ARLFC, Leigh Miners Ranger ARLFC, Leigh East ARLFC and Orrell St James ARLFC all have masters teams which play at festivals and occasional friendly matches. However, each trains regularly and training demand has been accounted for within the capacity analysis.

Casual use

A proportion of rugby league is played on Council owned pitches these sites tend to be public open spaces and are used for recreational play and dog walking etc. This additional wear and damage is an issue for clubs as it decreases the quality of the pitches and in turn the carrying capacity for matches and training. This is a noted problem at the following sites for one or more of their pitches:

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- ◀ Clarington Grove Playing Fields
- ◀ Parsons Meadow Playing Fields
- ◀ Golborne Parkside Sport and Social Club
- ◀ Woodhouse Playing Field
- ◀ Leigh Road Playing Field

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 the growth of the League. No clubs report of unmet demand in Wigan Borough.

Displaced/exported demand

Displaced or exported demand refers to Wigan Borough based teams that are currently accessing pitches outside of the local authority for their home fixtures, normally because their pitch requirements cannot be met, which is usually because of pitch supply, in some cases quality issues or stipulated league requirements for access to certain facilities.

Shevington Sharks ARLFC has nine teams which play outside of Wigan Borough. The Club uses two sites located in West Lancashire, Newburgh Cricket Club for U7s to U12s and Alder Lane Playing Fields (Parbold) for U13s to U16s. It uses these two sites as it is unable to access suitable provision within Shevington, having been somewhat nomadic over recent years. However, this is set to change as the Club is currently in the process of developing a site within Shevington (Vicarage Lane) in order to accommodate all senior and partial junior demand, though given plans include the creation of only one rugby league pitch it is likely that the Club will continue to utilise sites in West Lancashire to some degree given that Parbold is accessible within approximately 13 minutes' drive of Vicarage Lane.

Garswood Stags ARLFC is a rugby league club with just one senior men's team playing in the NWML. The Club plays and trains at Birch Grove Playing Fields in neighbouring St Helens, off Garswood Road where the pub from which the Club was established and still returns to after matches is located. Training takes place on the match pitch on Thursday evenings. Garswood Stags ARLFC is considered to be a St Helens based club and is included within the St Helens PPS, however, anecdotal evidence suggests that playing members reside across both St Helens and Wigan given the proximity of Garswood on the border between the two local authorities.

Future demand

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

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Table 4.7: Team generation rates (Borough wide)

Age group	Current population within age group	Current number of teams	Team Generation Rate	Future population within age group (2026) ³²	Predicted future number of teams	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population
Senior Men's (19-45)	23,435	18	1:1,302	22,597	17.4	0
Senior Women (19-45)	23,544	1	1:23,544	23,039	1	0
Junior Boys (12-18)	5,590	25	1:224	6,059	27.1	2
Junior Girls (12-18)	5,241	3	1:1,747	5,842	3.3	0
Primary rugby mixed (7-11)	8,107	39	1:208	8,001	38.5	0

Table 4.8: Team generation rates (applied by analysis area)

Age group	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population (by Analysis Area)			
	Ashton	Leigh	Wigan Town	Total
Senior Men's (19-45)	0	0	0	0
Senior Women (19-45)	0	0	0	0
Junior Boys (12-18)	0	0	2	2
Junior Girls (12-18)	0	0	0	0
Primary rugby mixed (7-11)	0	0	0	0

Team generation rates based on future population applied by analysis area forecast the likely creation of at least two new junior boys' teams, both in the Wigan Town analysis area. Increase in junior girls' participation is not sufficient to culminate in the creation of a whole new team and it is likely that these participants will be assimilated into existing squads. Forecasts anticipate no increases at the senior age groups.

Eight clubs intend to increase the number of teams for next season. This is summarised in Table 4.9. Where a club expressing aspirations to create new primary teams currently has use of a primary pitch, it is assumed that new primary teams will play on this primary pitch and as such demand equates to 0.5 primary match equivalent sessions per week. However, where clubs do not presently have access to primary pitch provision it is considered that primary teams will play on senior or junior pitches currently accessed and as such will require only half of a senior/junior pitch, equating to 0.25 match equivalent sessions per week.

³² TGRs are based on population forecasts to 2026 which is in line with Wigan Borough's Local Plan timeframe.

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Table 4.9: Summary of future demand reported by clubs

Club	Future demand	Pitch type	Analysis area	Match equivalent sessions per week
Ashton Bears ARLFC	One men's senior	Senior	Ashton	0.5
	One primary	Junior		0.25
Hindley ARLFC	One women's senior	Senior	Ashton	0.5
	One junior Boys	Junior		0.5
	One primary	Primary		0.5
Ince Rose Bridge ARLFC	One junior Boys	Junior	Wigan Town	0.5
Shevington Sharks ARLFC	One junior Boys	Senior	Wigan Town	0.5
	Two primary		Wigan Town	0.5
Wigan Bulldogs ARLFC	One women's senior	Senior	Wigan Town	0.5
	Four junior boys	Junior		2
	Two junior girls	Junior		1
	Two primary	Senior		0.5
Wigan Spring View ARLFC	One men's senior	Senior	Ashton	0.5
Wigan St Cuthberts ARLFC	One men's senior	Senior	Wigan Town	0.5
	One women's senior	Senior		0.5
	Two junior boys	Junior		1
	Two junior girls	Junior		1
	Two primary	Senior		0.5
Wigan St Patricks ARLFC	One primary	Senior	Wigan Town	0.25

It is important to note that TGRs are based on population figures and cannot account for specific targeted development work within certain areas or focused towards certain groups, such as NGB initiatives or coaching within schools. This includes delivery of the Sky Try programme, community initiative delivered by the Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles Trust and engagement with local clubs and groups by both the Wigan Warriors and Leigh Centurions community foundations.

Wigan Warriors Community Foundation

Wigan Warriors RLFC official charity Wigan Warriors Community Foundation uses the power of sport and rugby league to help improve the quality of people's lives in Wigan Borough. 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. Two key programmes the Charity runs are called Sky Try and Embed the Pathway.

Sky Try Programme

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:

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- ◀ 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.

Embed the Pathway

Embed the Pathway is a coaching programme which aims to increase the number of junior rugby league players through specialised education and coaching. Wigan Warriors Community Foundation hosts free Embed the Pathway coach sessions on a monthly basis at Central Park where the foundation is based. The foundation also assists the Embed the Pathway secondary schools programme which is designed to support and develop rugby league participation. All schools which engage in the programme are accredited with the England Rugby League Player Development Partner School certificate. Below is a list of schools in Wigan Borough which have received this certificate:

- ◀ The Byrchall High School
- ◀ The Deanery C of E High School
- ◀ Hawley Hall High School
- ◀ Lowton C of E High School
- ◀ St Edmund Arrowsmith Catholic High School
- ◀ Cansfield High School
- ◀ Fred Longworth High School
- ◀ Hindley High School
- ◀ Rose Bridge High School
- ◀ St Peters Catholic High School

The peak period

In order to fully establish actual spare capacity, the peak period needs to be established. For senior rugby league matches the peak period is considered to be Saturday afternoon as 69% of all senior teams play at this time. However, demand for senior rugby league pitches is actually highest on Sunday mornings, due to the large number of junior (U13-U18) and mini teams playing on senior pitches at this time.

School pitches are used regularly to accommodate curricular use and school training sessions and matches. In order to reflect this, an additional one match equivalent session per week of play has been added per pitch at school sites where applicable (shown in bold).

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4.4: Supply and demand analysis

Having considered supply and demand, the tables below identify the overall spare capacity in each of the analysis areas for the different pitch types, based on match equivalent sessions per week.

Table 4.10: Supply/demand balance of senior pitches at senior peak time

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Demand (Match Equivalent Sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total demand
Ashton	1.5	-1	0.5	1.5	-1
Leigh	4	-	4	-	4
Wigan Town	1.75	-34	-32.25	2.25	-35
Total	7.25	-35	-27.75	3.75	-32

The table above shows that currently there is a significant level of overplay on senior rugby league pitches in the Wigan Town Analysis Area with minimal spare capacity in the Ashton Analysis Area. However, when accounting for future demand, spare capacity in the Leigh Analysis Area remains with minimal overplay in the Ashton Analysis Area and overplay in the Wigan Analysis Area is exacerbated.

It should be noted the table does not include overplay at Wigan Warriors Co-operative Community Stadium which is a private site with no wider community usage beyond occasional school finals. The pitch receives daily training by Wigan Warriors first grade team and academy matches and overplay cannot be addressed through qualitative improvements.

Table 4.11: Supply/demand balance of junior pitches at junior peak time

Analysis area	Actual Spare Capacity	Demand (Match Equivalent Sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total demand
Ashton	-	-1	-1	0.5	-1.5
Leigh	1	-1	-	-	-
Wigan Town	-	-12.5	-12.5	7	-19.5
Total	1	-14.5	-13.5	7.5	-21

The current picture for junior pitches across Wigan Borough indicates both the Ashton and Wigan Town analysis areas are overplayed with capacity in the Leigh Analysis Area balanced. When accounting for future demand, the Borough wide shortfall increases from 13.5 match equivalent sessions per week to 21 match equivalent sessions per week.

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Table 4.12: Supply/demand balance of primary pitches at primary peak time

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Demand (Match Equivalent Sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total demand
Ashton	-	-1.5	-1.5	0.75	-2.25
Leigh	1.5	-	1.5	-	1.5
Wigan Town	-	-2	-2	0.5	-2.5
Total	1.5	-3.5	-2	1.25	-3.25

The table above shows that overall in Wigan Borough there is currently an overall deficit of two match equivalent sessions per week. This is also true of the Wigan Town Analysis Area and there is overplay of 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week in the Ashton Analysis Area on primary pitches, whereas the Leigh Analysis Area currently has spare capacity of 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week. This spare capacity remains after factoring in future demand with overplay exacerbated in the Ashton and Wigan Town analysis areas.

It is important to note that some of overplay derives from junior/mini teams playing on senior pitches in areas where there are large clubs with many junior and primary teams. A large proportion of overplay is attributed to training sessions taking place on match pitches. Furthermore, most are rated as poor quality which reduces the carrying capacity and ability to accommodate use.

4.5: Capacity analysis

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 the pitch to cater for all or certain types of play during peak and off-peak times.

As a guide, The RFL 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 was concluded in Wigan Borough:

Pitch quality	Match equivalent sessions (MES) per week
Good	3
Standard	2
Poor	1

Table 4.13 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

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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 take place but are difficult to quantify on a weekly basis.

For senior and youth teams, the current level of play per week is set at 0.5 match equivalent sessions (MES) per week for each match played based on all teams operating on a traditional home and away basis (assumes half of matches will be played away). For mini teams, play per week is set at 0.25 MES per week for each match played across half of one senior pitch, based on all teams operating on a traditional home and away basis.

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Table 4.13: Rugby league pitch provision and level of current use within Wigan Borough

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Security of tenure	Community use	Pitch type (Dual use)	Floodlit	Quality rating	Number of pitches	Current play (MES per week)	Site capacity (MES per week)	Capacity rating (MES per week)	Comments
1	Abraham Guest Academy	Wigan Town	Unsecure	Yes – Unused	Senior	No	Poor	1	1	1	-	Pitch is played to capacity through curriculum and extra curriculum activity.
8	Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Unsecure	Yes	Senior (rugby union)	No	Poor	1	3	1	-2	Poor quality senior pitch overplayed by one match equivalent session per week. Dual use pitch with Aspull RFC
13	Bedford High School	Leigh	Unsecure	Yes – Unused	Senior	No	Poor	1	1	1	-	Pitch is played to capacity through curriculum and extra curriculum activity.
					Senior	No	Poor	1	1	1	-	Pitch is played to capacity through curriculum and extra curriculum activity.
21	Cardinal Newman Playing Fields	Ashton	Secure	Yes	Senior	Yes	Standard	1	2	2	-	Floodlit senior pitch played to capacity.
					Senior	No	Poor	1	2	1	-1	Poor quality senior pitch overplayed by one match equivalent session per week.
					Junior	No	Standard	1	3	2	-1	Standard quality junior pitch overplayed by three match equivalent sessions per week.
					Primary	No	Poor	1	2.5	1	-1.5	Poor quality primary pitch overplayed by 1.5 match equivalent session per week.
25	Clarington Grove Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Secure	Yes	Senior	Yes	Standard	1	6	2	-4	Standard quality floodlit senior pitch overplayed by four match equivalent sessions per week.
					Senior	No	Standard	1	8.75	2	-6.75	Standard quality senior pitch overplayed by 6.75 match equivalent sessions per week.
					Primary	No	Standard	1	2	2	-	Pitch is played to capacity.
31	DW Stadium	Wigan Town	Secure	No	Senior (football)	Yes	Good	1	1	3	2	Dual use stadia pitch also used for football. Capacity to be retained to protect quality for elite level performance.
38	Golborne High School	Leigh	Unsecure	Yes – Unused	Senior (football)	No	Poor	1	1	1	-	Pitch is played to capacity through curriculum and extra curriculum activity.
39	Golborne Parkside Sport & Community Club	Leigh	Secure	Yes	Senior	No	Standard	1	0.5	2	1.5	Standard quality senior pitch with potential spare capacity.
					Senior	No	Poor	1	1	1	-	Poor quality senior pitch which is played to capacity.
					Junior	No	Poor	1	1.5	1	-0.5	Poor quality junior pitch overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week.
42	Hawkley Hall High School	Wigan Town	Unsecure	Yes – Unused	Junior	No	Poor	1	1	1	-	Pitch is played to capacity through curriculum and extra curriculum activity.
52	Holy Family Catholic Primary School	Leigh	Unsecure	Yes – Unused	Primary	No	Standard	1	1	2	1	Standard quality primary pitch with potential spare capacity.
57	Ince Rose Bridge Sports & Community Club	Wigan Town	Secure	Yes	Senior	Yes	Standard	1	7	2	-5	Standard quality floodlit senior pitch overplayed by five match equivalent sessions per week.
					Primary	Yes	Standard	1	4	2	-2	Standard quality mini pitch overplayed by two match equivalent sessions per week.
64	Leigh Harriers Athletics Stadium (at Leigh Sports Village)	Leigh	Secure	Yes	Senior (football)	No	Good	1	3	3	-	Dual use pitch also used for football, located within the athletics track. Pitch is played to capacity.
					Senior (football)	No	Good	1	3	3	-	Dual use pitch also used for football. Some use by Leigh Centurions RLC for training. Pitch is played to capacity.
65	Leigh Miners Rangers ARLFC	Leigh	Unsecure	Yes	Senior	Yes	Good	1	2.5	3	0.5	Good quality senior pitch with potential spare capacity.

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Security of tenure	Community use	Pitch type (Dual use)	Floodlit	Quality rating	Number of pitches	Current play (MES per week)	Site capacity (MES per week)	Capacity rating (MES per week)	Comments
72	Marsh Playing Fields	Leigh	Secure	Yes – Unused	Senior	No	Poor	1	-	1	1	Poor quality senior pitch with potential spare capacity.
88	Parsons Meadow Playing Field	Wigan Town	Secure	Yes	Senior	No	Poor	1	1	1	-	Pitch is played to capacity.
					Senior	No	Poor	1	3	1	-2	Poor quality senior pitch overplayed by two match equivalent sessions per week.
					Junior	No	Poor	1	4	1	-3	Poor quality junior pitch overplayed by three match equivalent sessions per week.
					Junior	No	Poor	1	6.5	1	-5.5	Poor quality junior pitch overplayed by 5.5 match equivalent sessions per week.
					Junior	No	Poor	1	5	1	-4	Poor quality junior pitch overplayed by four match equivalent sessions per week.
91	R L Hughes Primary School	Ashton	Unsecure	Yes – Unused	Primary (football)	No	Standard	1	1	2	1	Standard quality primary pitch with potential spare capacity.
94	Rose Bridge Sports & Community Centre	Wigan Town	Unsecure	Yes – Unused	Senior	No	Poor	1	1	1	-	Pitch is played to capacity through curriculum and extra curriculum activity.
96	Scot Lane Playing Field	Wigan Town	Secure	Yes	Senior	No	Poor	1	0.5	1	0.5	Poor quality senior pitch with potential spare capacity.
					Junior	No	Poor	1	1	1	-	Poor quality junior pitch with played to capacity.
98	Shevington High School	Wigan Town	Unsecure	Yes – Unused	Senior	No	Poor	1	1	1	-	Pitch is played to capacity through curriculum and extra curriculum activity.
103	Spring View Community Sports Association	Ashton	Secure	Yes	Senior	No	Standard	2	2	2	-	Pitches are played to capacity.
108	St Edmund Arrowsmith Catholic High School	Ashton	Unsecure	Yes – Unused	Senior	No	Poor	2	2	2	-	Pitches are played to capacity.
114	St John Rigby College	Wigan Town	Unsecure	Yes	Senior (football)	No	Poor	1	1.5	1	-0.5	Poor quality senior pitch overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week.
116	Hindley Green CP School	Ashton	Unsecure	Yes – Unused	Primary (football)	No	Standard	3	3	6	-	Three standard quality primary pitches, considered played to capacity by school use.
118	St Luke's C of E Primary School	Leigh	Unsecure	Yes – Unused	Primary	No	Standard	1	1	2	1	Standard quality primary pitch with potential spare capacity.
119	St Mary's Catholic High School	Leigh	Unsecure	Yes – Unused	Senior	No	Poor	2	2	2	-	Pitch is played to capacity through curriculum and extra curriculum activity.
135	Westleigh High School Playing Fields	Leigh	Unsecure	Yes – Unused	Senior	No	Poor	1	1	1	-	Pitch is played to capacity through curriculum and extra curriculum activity.
142	Wigan St Cuthberts ARLFC	Wigan Town	Secure	Yes	Senior	No	Standard	3	4.75	6	1.25	Three standard quality senior pitches with potential spare capacity.
					Junior	No	Standard	2	3.5	4	0.5	Two standard quality junior pitches with potential spare capacity.
144	William Fosters Playing Field	Wigan Town	Secure	Yes – Unused	Senior	No	Poor	1	1	1	-	Pitch is played to capacity through training demand.
149	Woodhouse Playing Field	Wigan Town	Secure	Yes – Unused	Senior	No	Poor	2	1	2	-	Two poor quality senior pitches. Capacity has been capped as pitches are used for curriculum and extra curriculum activity by St John Fisher Catholic High School.

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Security of tenure	Community use	Pitch type (Dual use)	Floodlit	Quality rating	Number of pitches	Current play (MES per week)	Site capacity (MES per week)	Capacity rating (MES per week)	Comments
151	Low Bank Road	Ashton	Secure	Yes	Senior	No	Good	2	4	6	2	Two good quality senior pitches with potential spare capacity.
				Yes	Junior	No	Good	1	2.5	3	0.5	Good quality junior pitch with potential spare capacity.
152	Leigh Road Playing Field	Leigh	Secure	Yes	Junior	No	Poor	1	1.5	1	-0.5	Poor quality junior pitch overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week.
				Yes	Senior	No	Poor	1	1	1	-	Pitch is played to capacity through training demand.
153	Sutton Park	Leigh	Secure	Yes	Primary	No	Standard	4	4.5	8	3.5	Four standard quality primary pitches with potential spare capacity.
				Yes	Junior	No	Good	3	5.5	9	3.5	Three good quality junior pitches with potential spare capacity.
				Yes	Senior	Yes	Good	1	1	3	2	Good quality floodlit pitch with potential spare capacity.
				Yes	Senior	No	Good	2	3.5	6	2.5	Two standard quality senior pitches with potential spare capacity.
155	Wigan Warriors Co-operative Community Stadium	Wigan Town	Secure	No	Senior	Yes	Good	1	6.5	3	-3.5	Private training site used by Wigan Warriors. Considered to be played to capacity.
157	Hope Park (Printshop Lane Playing Field)	Leigh	Unsecure	Yes – Unused	Junior	No	Poor	1	1	1	-	Pitch is played to capacity through curricular and extracurricular use by Fred Longworth High School.
161	Bankses Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Secure	Yes	Primary	No	Good	1	3	3	-	Good quality mini pitch which is played to capacity.
				Yes	Senior	Yes	Good	1	6.5	3	-3.5	Good quality senior pitch overplayed by 3.5 match equivalent sessions a week.
				Yes	Senior	Yes	Good	1	7.5	3	-4.5	Good quality senior pitch overplayed by 4.5 match equivalent sessions a week.
				Yes	Senior (rugby union)	No	Standard	1	8.75	2	-6.75	Standard quality senior pitch overplayed by 6.75 match equivalent sessions a week. Dual use pitch with rugby union.
163	Leigh Sports Village	Leigh	Secure	Yes	Senior (football)	Yes	Good	1	1	3	2	Dual use stadia pitch also used for football. Capacity to be retained to protect quality for elite level performance.
163	Leigh Sports Village	Leigh	Secure	Yes	Senior	No	Good	1	3	3	-	Training pitch used by Leigh Centurions. Considered to be played to capacity.
172	St Williams R C Primary School	Wigan Town	Unsecure	Yes	Primary	No	Standard	1	2	2	-	Standard quality mini pitch. No spare capacity due to school and club use (Ince Rose Bridge ARLFC :1 MES)

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4.6: Supply and demand analysis

Spare capacity

A number of sites are shown to have potential spare capacity but not all is actual spare capacity, whereby pitch capacity is present and pitches are available at peak time. Actual spare capacity has been combined by area and is summarised in the table overleaf.

Spare capacity is analysed at senior peak period (Saturday PM) and a junior/primary peak period (Sunday AM) on all pitch types. It should be stated, that when a team is playing matches on the correct pitch size for their age (senior/junior/primary), one team equates to 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week (based on playing home and away fixtures); however, in cases where junior or primary teams are playing matches on senior pitches, this equates to 0.25 match equivalent sessions per week per team as the entire pitch is not used.

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Table 4.14: Actual spare capacity summary

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch Type	Number of pitches	Capacity balance	Match equivalent sessions available in senior peak period (Saturday PM)	Match equivalent sessions available in junior/primary peak period (Sunday AM)	Comments
39	Golborne Parkside Sport & Community Club	Leigh	Senior	1	1.5	0.5	-	Spare capacity of 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week at senior peak time. No actual spare capacity at junior/primary peak time.
52	Holy Family Catholic Primary School	Leigh	Primary	1	1	-	-	Spare capacity not considered to be available due to unsecure tenure.
65	Leigh Miners Rangers ARLFC	Leigh	Senior	1	0.5	-	-	No actual spare capacity at senior peak time or junior/primary peak time.
72	Marsh Playing Fields	Leigh	Senior	1	1	1	0.5	Spare capacity of one match equivalent session per week at senior peak time with spare capacity of 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week at junior/primary peak period.
91	R L Hughes Primary School	Ashton	Primary	1	1	-	-	Spare capacity not considered to be available due to unsecure tenure.
96	Scot Lane Playing Field	Wigan Town	Senior	1	0.5	0.5	-	Spare capacity of 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week at senior peak time. No actual spare capacity at junior/primary peak time.
118	St Luke's C of E Primary School	Leigh	Primary	1	1	-	-	Spare capacity not considered to be available due to unsecure tenure.
142	Wigan St Cuthberts ARLFC	Wigan Town	Senior	3	1.25	1.25	0.5	Spare capacity of 1.25 match equivalent sessions per week available at senior peak time, though only 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week are available at junior peak time.
142	Wigan St Cuthberts ARLFC	Wigan Town	Junior	2	0.5	-	-	No actual spare capacity at senior peak time or junior/primary peak time.
151	Low Bank Road	Ashton	Senior	2	2	1.5	0.25	Spare capacity of 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week at senior peak time. Spare capacity of 0.25 match equivalent sessions per week at junior/primary peak time.
			Junior	1	0.5	-	-	No actual spare capacity at senior peak time or junior/primary peak time.
153	Sutton Park	Leigh	Senior	1	2	0.5	0.25	Spare capacity of 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week at senior peak time. Spare capacity of 0.25 match equivalent sessions per week at junior/primary peak time.
			Senior	2	2.5	2	0.5	Spare capacity of two match equivalent sessions per week exists at senior peak time. Spare capacity of 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week exists at junior/primary peak time.
			Primary	4	3.5	-	1.5	Spare capacity of 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week exists at junior/primary peak time.
			Junior	3	3.5	-	1	Spare capacity of one match equivalent session per week exists at junior/primary peak time.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Although, 11 sites display potential spare capacity only nine have actual spare capacity available at senior or junior/primary peak time. There is a potential total of 7.25 match equivalent sessions per week available at senior peak time (Saturday PM) and a potential total of 4.5 match equivalent sessions per week available at junior / primary peak time (Sunday AM).

The majority of the actual spare capacity at senior peak time is located in the Leigh Analysis Area which has four match equivalent sessions per week with Wigan Town Analysis Area having 1.75 and the least amount being in the Ashton Analysis Area which has 1.5 match equivalent sessions. Similarly, the majority of actual spare capacity at junior/ primary peak time is situated in the Leigh Analysis Area which has 3.75 match equivalent sessions. Both Wigan Town and Ashton analysis areas have minimal amounts of actual spare capacity with 0.5 and 0.25 match equivalent sessions per week, respectively.

Overplay

Ten sites are overplayed by a total of 56.5 match equivalent sessions per week. This is predominantly a result of training and competitive demand taking place on pitches, several of which have limited capacity for use anyway due to poor quality.

Table 4.15: Overplay summary

Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Pitch Type	Overplay (match equivalent sessions per week)
8	Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Senior	-1
21	Cardinal Newman Playing Fields	Ashton	Senior	-1
			Junior	-1
			Primary	-1.5
25	Clarington Grove Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Senior	-4
			Senior	-6.75
39	Golborne Parkside Sport & Community Club	Leigh	Junior	-0.5
57	Ince Rose Bridge Sports and Community Club	Wigan Town	Primary	-2
			Senior	-5
88	Parsons Meadow Playing Field	Wigan Town	Junior	-3
			Junior	-5.5
			Junior	-4
			Senior	-2
114	St John Rigby College	Wigan Town	Senior	-0.5
152	Leigh Road Playing Field	Leigh	Junior	-0.5
155	Wigan Warriors Co-operative Community Stadium	Wigan Town	Senior	-3.5
161	Bankes Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Senior	-3.5
			Senior	-4.5
			Senior	-6.75
Total				-56.5

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Clarington Grove Playing Fields, Cardinal Newman Playing Fields, Ince Rose Bridge Sports and Community Club and Bankes Playing Fields accessed by Wigan St Pats ARLFC, Hindley ARLFC, Ince Rose Bridge ARLFC and Orrell St James ARLFC, respectively, all have substantial amounts overplay. This is due to substantial training demand and competitive fixture taking place on a limited amount of pitch stock.

Whereas overplay at Parson Meadow Playing Fields and Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields accessed by Wigan St Judes ARLFC and Aspull New Lions is due to the poor quality of the pitches.

School sites are generally used heavily throughout the course of the school week for curriculum and after school fixtures. Further community use of poor quality school pitches which often receive limited maintenance results in overplay or exacerbate existing levels of overuse.

Overplay can only be alleviated by improving pitch quality or providing more pitches or areas to be used for training; there is not enough spare capacity expressed in the areas of overplay to meet this level of demand.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Rugby league summary

- ◀ **Current supply of senior, junior and primary grass rugby league pitches is not sufficient to cater for the level of demand expressed in Wigan Borough at present. This is further exacerbated when considering anticipated future demand.**
- ◀ **Causal factors of overplay include significant levels of demand for midweek training and weekend match play, limited maintenance regimes and limited carrying capacity as a result of poor quality pitches, in some cases combining factors leading to overplay of pitches.**
- ◀ There are 88 dedicated rugby league pitches in Wigan Borough (53 senior, 16 junior and 19 primary) across 45 sites. Eight pitches are unavailable for community use.
- ◀ There are two RFL Community Standard 3G pitches in Wigan Borough at Leigh Sports Village. These pitches are accessed by Leigh East ARLFC for matches and training.
- ◀ The majority (43%) of all pitches are rated as poor quality, whilst 38% are rated as standard and 19% rated as good.
- ◀ There are plans for the creation of two new rugby league pitches. One primary pitch at the former Belle Green Primary School site for use by Ince Rose Bridge ARLFC and one senior pitch to be developed by Shevington Sports and Horticultural Club for use by Shevington Sharks ARLFC at Vicarage Lane.
- ◀ Aspull New Spring Lions ARLFC highlights issues with unsecure tenure and cost of rental at Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields and is actively seeking an alternative venue from which to be based.
- ◀ Wigan Bulldogs ARLFC has aspirations for self-management of pitch provision and previously approached the Council to discuss the potential for asset transfer.
- ◀ Both Bankes Playing Fields (Orrell St James ARLFC) and Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields (Aspull New Spring Lions ARLFC) are reported to offer poor quality ancillary provision in need of improvement.
- ◀ There is a total of 158 competitive rugby league teams playing in Wigan Borough. Of the senior teams, there are two ladies' teams, whilst there are also four dedicated junior girls' teams.
- ◀ The majority of match play demand is based around the Wigan Town analysis area where there are 86 teams (55%), whilst the Ashton analysis area has the fewest teams with 24 (15%). The remaining 47 teams (30%) are based in the Leigh analysis area.
- ◀ Training throughout the season for most clubs takes place on match pitches and surrounding areas, with some use of RFL certified and non-certified 3G pitches for floodlit training throughout the winter.
- ◀ Ten sites are overplayed by a total of 56.5 match equivalent sessions per week. This is predominantly a result of high levels of training and competitive demand on match pitches, often in combination with limited capacity available due to poor quality.
- ◀ There are Borough wide shortfalls for all rugby league pitch types, both present and by 2026. Notably, the Wigan Town area presently exhibits significant levels of overplay on both senior pitches (27.75 match equivalent sessions per week) and junior (13.5 match equivalent sessions per week) pitches, further exacerbated by increases in future demand.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

PART 5: RUGBY UNION

5.1: Introduction

The Rugby Football Union (RFU) is split into six areas across the country with a workforce team that covers development, coaching, governance and competitions. Wigan falls within Area Five, with a Rugby Development Officer (RDO) and a team of Community Rugby Coaches (CRC) that deliver core programmes in schools and clubs.

Its variety of programmes, which include 15 aside, 10 aside, 7 aside, Tag and the O2 Touch programme, all aim to increase and retain participation within the game. In order to sustain and increase participation in the game facilities need to be appropriate, affordable and accessible.

Club consultation

All clubs were met with either face to face or through telephone consultation, with initial contact details provided by the RFU. Consultation equates to a club response rate of 100%. The results are used to inform key issues within this section of the report together with additional information provided by the RFU's Development Officer for the area. The following clubs were met with face to face:

- ◀ Aspull RFC
- ◀ Leigh RUFC
- ◀ Orrell RUFC
- ◀ Tyldesley RUFC
- ◀ Wigan RUFC

5.2: Supply

In total, there are 20 rugby union pitches in Wigan across eight sites, of which, 14 are senior sized. There are two junior and three mini sized pitches located at Leigh RUFC and Thames Avenue, respectively, and one mini pitch located at Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields.

All pitches, apart from the single senior rugby union pitch at Abraham Guest Academy, are available and used by community clubs in some capacity. There are two senior rugby union pitches located at Aspull Civic Centre, one of which, is also used for rugby league. The pitch located at Abraham Guest Academy is available for community use but is currently unused.

Additionally, there is a senior rugby league pitch located at Bankes Playing Fields, which is dual used for rugby union. This totals to 21 rugby union pitches within Wigan Borough.

The audit only identifies dedicated, line marked pitches. For rugby union pitch dimension sizes please refer to Table 5.1 below.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 5.1: Summary of RFU recommended pitch sizes by age group

Age	Pitch type	Maximum Pitch Dimensions (Metres)
U7	Mini	20x12
U8	Mini	45x22
U9	Mini	60x30
U10	Mini	60x35
U11	Mini	60x43
U12	Mini	60x43
U13	Junior	90x60 (Girls 60x43)
U14-U18	Senior	100x70 <i>Recommended run off area 5m.</i>
Senior	Senior	<i>Minimum in-goal length 6m.</i>

Table 5.2: Supply of rugby union pitches in Wigan

Analysis area	Availability			Total
	Yes	Yes - unused	No	
Ashton	-	-	-	-
Leigh	11	-	-	11
Wigan Town	9	1	-	10
Total	20	1	-	21

Most (52%) natural turf rugby union provision is located in the Leigh Analysis Area where there are 11 pitches, all available for community use. The remaining provision is in the Wigan Town Analysis Area which has nine pitches, all available for community use. There is no natural turf rugby union provision located in the Ashton Analysis Area.

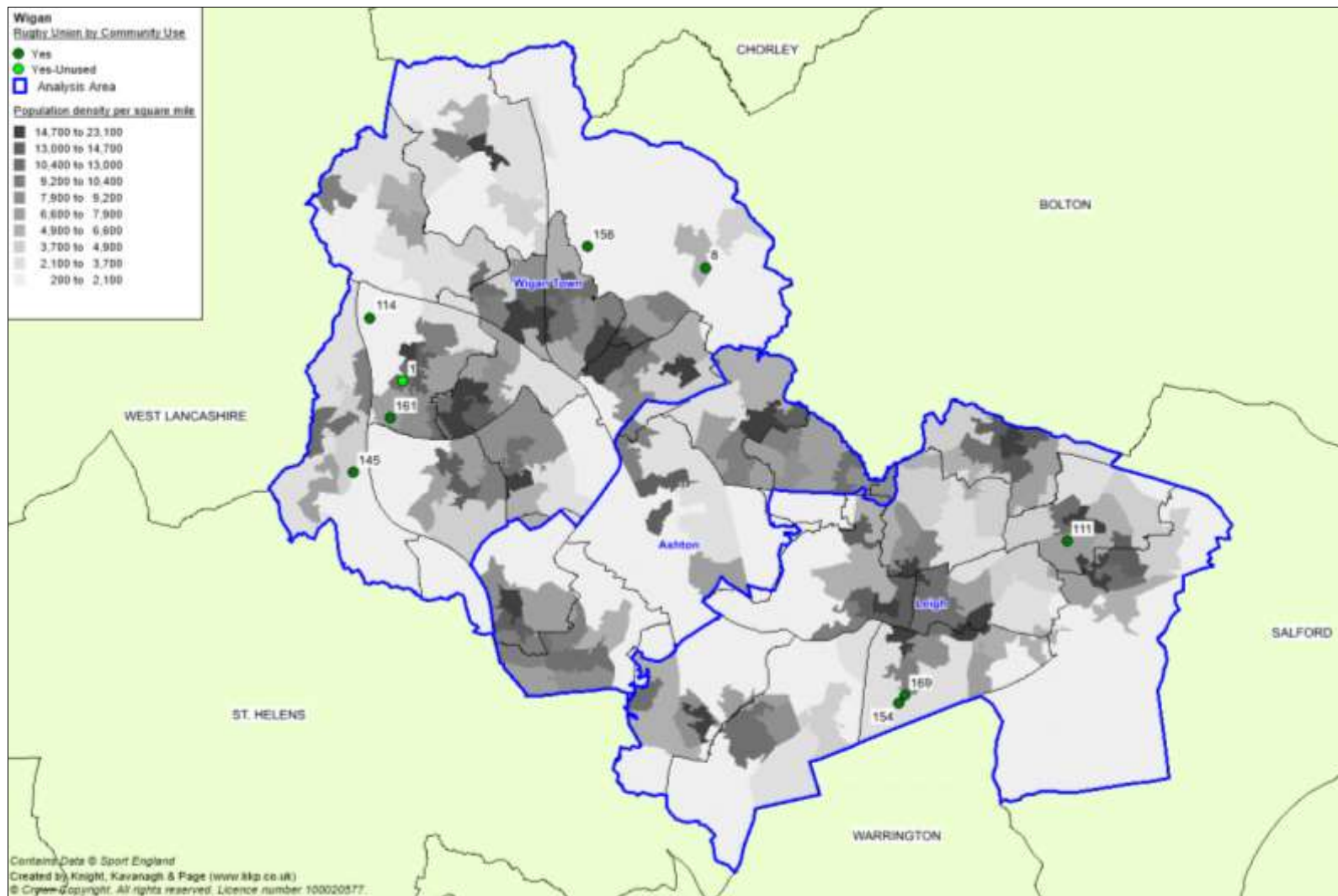
At present, there are two World Rugby (WR) compliant 3G pitches in Wigan Borough, both of which are located at Leigh Sports Village. There had been a third World Rugby Compliant 3G pitch at Robin Park Arena Sports and Tennis Centre, however, the certification period expired in December 2016 and a retest to renew certification is required³³. The Council acknowledges that retesting is required and plans for this to be undertaken in the short term.

All 3G pitches are covered in greater detail in Part 7: Third Generation Artificial Pitches, as well as later in this section.

³³<http://www.englandrugby.com/governance/club-support/facilities-kit-and-equipment/artificial-surfaces/artificial-grass-pitches>

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Figure 5.1: Map of rugby union pitch provision within Wigan Borough



WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Disused pitches

There were previously two junior rugby union pitches at Central Park Playing Fields and a single senior rugby union pitch located at St John Street. The two sites are currently unused for rugby union with no current pitches marked out.

Future supply

Orrell RUFC and Winstanley Park CC, as a joint venture, have recently negotiated a 99 year lease and had planning permission approved by Wigan Borough Council for the development of a community sports centre, to be based adjacent to Winstanley College on a 13 acre agricultural site.

Orrell RUFC is a nomadic club currently using several sites across the Wigan Borough and states it needs access to a central club site with clubhouse facilities in order to facilitate continued growth.

The proposed community sports club is to host two rugby union pitches and a cricket square accompanied by ancillary amenities. One of the rugby union pitches is to host two matches a week with the second pitch to be used for colts, juniors and mini rugby once a week, plus training. It is currently unknown if the site will have floodlighting, however, the RFU would strongly recommend the installation of floodlighting in order to aid development and allow for midweek evening training and match play. The development has support from both the RFU and ECB.

Leigh RUFC currently has a senior pitch and three mini pitches located at Thames Avenue. Thames Avenue, which is located away from the Clubs main pitches, has a pending planning application on it for 58 dwellings. It states it has recently obtained planning permission to develop a new site (Carr Lane) if the Thames Avenue application is confirmed. The new site would host either one senior pitch or three smaller pitches that meet RFU standard with associated levelling and drainage.

Ownership/management

Security of tenure in Wigan Borough is contrasting on a club by club basis. Both Wigan RUFC and Tyldesley RUFC are considered as secure as they each own their own site, whereas, Orrell RUFC is a nomadic club and rents its pitches on an annual basis with no formal community use agreements in place. The Club's current use of pitches is therefore considered insecure.

Aspull RFC has secure tenure of Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields as it owns its mini pitch, training area and ancillary facilities and has a long-term lease on the two senior pitches on site. It should be stated that the lease on the two senior pitches expires in 2021 and once it falls below three years remaining, it will be deemed as insecure.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 5.3: Summary of security of tenure

Club name	Site ID	Site name	Nature of tenure	Type of Security
Aspull RFC	8	Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields	Leasehold ending in 2021	Secure
			Owned	Secure
Leigh RUFC	154	Leigh RUFC	Leasehold from developer	Unsecure
			Freehold	Secure
	169	Thames Avenue	Mixed Ownership (Leigh RUFC, Council, Private)	Unsecure
Orrell RUFC	114	St John Rigby College	Rented	Unsecure
	145	Winstanley College Sports Centre	Rented	Unsecure
	161	Bankes Playing Fields	Rented	Secure
Orrell St James (RUFC)	161	Bankes Playing Fields	Leasehold	Secure
Tyldesley RUFC	111	St Georges Playing Fields	Freehold	Secure
Wigan RUFC	158	Wigan RUFC	Freehold	Secure

Leigh RUFC has secure tenure of the two freehold junior pitches and unsecure tenure of two senior pitches it leases from a developer located at Leigh RUFC. This is considered unsecure as the Club states there is a clause in the lease stating that it may be removed from the site if the land is secured for potential housing. The Club also has unsecure tenure for a further senior pitch and three mini pitches located at Thames Avenue. This aforementioned site has a planning application for residential development and may be lost as sporting provision in the near future.

Pitch quality

The criteria 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 5.4: 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 5.5: 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

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 5.6: 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 majority of pitches available for community use are rated as poor quality (14 pitches or 67%). Of the remaining pitches four are of standard quality and three are of good quality.

Table 5.7: Summary of rugby union pitch quality in Wigan Borough

Analysis area	Pitch quality		
	Good	Standard	Poor
Ashton	-	-	
Leigh	-	2	9
Wigan Town	3	2	5
Total	3	4	14

The table overleaf shows quality ratings for each of the sites in the Borough based on non-technical site assessment scores and club feedback.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 5.8: Rugby union pitch quality ratings

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Ownership/management	Community use	Pitch type	Non-technical assessment rating	Quality rating	Number of pitches	Comments
1	Abraham Guest Academy	Wigan Town	School	Yes (Unused)	Senior	M0/D0	Poor	1	School senior rugby union pitch which receives basic levels of maintenance. Pitch has combination goalposts and is also subsequently also used for football.
8	Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Club	Yes	Senior	M0/D0	Poor	1	Two senior rugby union pitches which are leased to Aspull RFC. Club states it does not currently have the correct equipment to carry out effective maintenance. Pitches drain poorly and are uneven. Issues with dog fouling and unauthorised usage. One of the pitches is dually used by a rugby league club with Aspull RFC stating it occasionally struggles maintaining this pitch due to its seasonal use.
				Yes	Senior	M0/D0	Poor	1	
				Yes	Mini	M0/D0	Poor	1	A poor quality mini pitch (60x30 metres) which drains poorly and receives some maintenance.
111	St Georges Playing Fields	Leigh	Club	Yes	Senior	M1/D1	Standard	1	Three senior pitches all of standard quality, one of which is fully floodlit and used for training. Pipe and slit drainage system installed in 2001, is still effective; but is over ten years old. Used by Tyldesley RUFC.
				Yes	Senior	M1/D1	Standard	1	
				Yes	Senior	M1/D1	Standard	1	
114	St John Rigby College	Wigan Town	School	Yes	Senior	M0/D0	Poor	1	School senior rugby union pitch which receives basic levels of maintenance and drains poorly. Used by Orrell RUFC.
145	Winstanley College Sports Centre	Wigan Town	School	Yes	Senior	M0/D2	Standard	1	School based senior rugby union pitch which receives basic levels of maintenance but has recently installed drainage system (2014). Used by Orrell RUFC. Dual use with rugby league.
154	Leigh RUFC	Leigh	Club	Yes	Senior	M1/D0	Poor	1	Two poor quality senior and two poor quality junior rugby union pitches. Pitches receive maintenance by Leigh RUFC; however, pitches drain poorly due to the soil having high clay context. Site has issues with dog fouling and unauthorised access.
				Yes	Senior	M1/D0	Poor	1	
				Yes	Junior	M1/D0	Poor	1	
				Yes	Junior	M1/D0	Poor	1	
158	Wigan RUFC	Wigan Town	Club	Yes	Senior	M2/D1	Good	1	Three good quality senior pitches, of which one and a half are floodlit and used for training. The pipe and slit drainage system which is over ten years old is still effective; however, Wigan RUFC reports standing surface water when it rains heavily. Each pitch receives a good level of dedicated maintenance. Used by Wigan RUFC.
				Yes	Senior	M2/D1	Good	1	
				Yes	Senior	M2/D1	Good	1	
161	Bankes Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Club	Yes	Senior	M1/D1	Standard	1	A standard quality senior rugby union pitch which is also dually used for rugby league. Used by Orrell RUFC and Orrell St James (RUFC).
169	Thames Avenue	Leigh	Club Council Private	Yes	Senior	M1/D0	Poor	1	One poor quality senior pitch and three poor quality mini pitches located on Thames Avenue. Pitches are detached from Leigh RUFC's main site and a planning application has been submitted for residential development.
				Yes	Mini	M1/D0	Poor	1	
				Yes	Mini	M1/D0	Poor	1	
				Yes	Mini	M1/D0	Poor	1	

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Ancillary facilities

Rugby union in Wigan is largely club driven at club owned or managed sites, all of which have access to changing facilities, apart from aforementioned Orrell RUFC which is a nomadic club. This considered, the Club does access good quality changing rooms at both schools it uses, St John Rigby College and Winstanley College Sports Centre

Although all remaining clubs have access to ancillary facilities, quality varies on a club by club basis. Facilities at Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields are basic with two out of the six changing rooms unusable due to their poor condition; the remaining four rooms do not meet RFU specifications. The entire changing block suffers from leaks due to the flat roof, furthermore the boiler and piping for the facilities is dated with Aspull RFC stating it occasionally does not have access to hot water after matches.

Similarly, changing facilities at Wigan RUFC are basic and do not meet current RFU specifications. The Club states this is having a direct impact on levels of female and disability participation as current quality and configuration of changing rooms is unsuitable and dated. Other onsite ancillary facilities are good quality including a gym, social/function room and multiple meeting rooms, which are regularly used by the community and RFU to run training seminars.

Leigh RUFC reports onsite ancillary facilities to be of adequate quality, however, states the changing rooms are too small and are unsuitable for the number of teams accessing them at the weekends. Facilities used by Tyldesley RUFC at St Georges Playing Fields are good quality. The Club has use of six fully RFU compliant changing rooms in a clubhouse which was built in 2001.

Orrell St James (RUFC) accesses ancillary facilities located at Bankes Playing Fields. This site is leased to Orrell St James ARLFC and is discussed in greater detail in Part Four Rugby League.

5.3: Demand

Competitive play

There are six community rugby union clubs based in Wigan Borough, providing a total of 50 teams. There are 14 senior teams, of which, there are a single women's team which plays at Leigh RUFC. There are 15 junior boys' teams and 20 mixed sex mini squads which typically field several small sided teams playing a number of matches depending on availability and numbers on match days. There is one junior girls' team, an U15s fielded by Tyldesley RUFC. Remaining female participation is generally playing within mixed teams at mini age groups.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 5.9: Summary of club demand

Club	Analysis area	No. of rugby union teams			
		Senior (19+)	Colts (18-19)	Junior (13-17)	Mini (6-12)
Aspull RFC	Wigan Town	2	-	2	2
Leigh RUFC	Leigh	4	2	3	6
Orrell RUFC	Wigan Town	2	-	3	³⁴
Orrell St James (RUFC)	Wigan Town	1	-	-	-
Tyldesley RUFC	Leigh	2	-	1	6
Wigan RUFC	Wigan Town	3	2	3	6
Total		14	4	12	20

Table 5.10: Summary of overall demand

Team play	No. of rugby union teams		
	Senior	Junior	Mini
Club leagues	13	2	
Club friendlies/infrequent	1	14	20
University leagues	-	-	-
Total	14	16	20

Training

Of the six clubs in Wigan Borough, three train on match pitches with the remaining three clubs using 3G pitches, as seen in the table below.

Table 5.11: Summary of club training provision (floodlit)³⁵

Club	Site ID	Site name	Floodlit training provision	Hours (MES)
Aspull RFC	8	Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields	Partially floodlit pitch and training area.	2 (2)
Leigh RUFC	54	Howe Bridge Leisure Centre	Floodlit full sized 3G pitch	1(1)
	163	Leigh Sports Village	Floodlit WR compliant 3G pitch.	3 (2)
Orrell RUFC	1	Abraham Guest Academy	Floodlit full sized 3G pitch	1 (1)
	114	St John Rigby College	Floodlit full sized 3G pitch	4 (3)

³⁴ Not inclusive of Orrell RUFC mini section which exports demand to play at Up Holland High School, detailed later in the section.

³⁵ Shows only midweek demand for floodlit training provision. Some mini and junior training takes place on Sunday mornings when there is no fixture and there isn't a requirement for floodlighting.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Club	Site ID	Site name	Floodlit training provision	Hours (MES)
Orrell St James (RUFC)	121	St Peters Catholic High School	Floodlit full sized 3G pitch	4 (3)
Tyldesley RUFC	111	St Georges Playing Fields	Floodlit training pitch.	3 (2)
Wigan RUFC	158	Wigan RUFC	Floodlit match pitches	4.5 (3)

Aspull RFC reports that it tries to train on its partially floodlit pitch as often as it can, however, due to its poor condition in winter it is often unusable forcing the Club to access artificial pitches. The Club owns a field next to the leased senior pitches which it uses for additional training demand. This area also becomes unusable in the winter period.

Use of artificial pitches

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. Further detail on use of 3G pitches can be found in Part 7: Third Generation Artificial Pitches.

In December 2015, the RFU announced plans to increase the supply of available World Rugby (WR) certified pitches across the country as part of its Investment Strategy. This is to be made up of 60 pitches on rugby club sites, with a further 40 pitches on other community based sites with usage agreements securing capacity for use by local rugby clubs and groups. The RFU believes increased investment into 3G pitches will allow it to sustain and grow participation in the game given increasing pressure on grass pitches, changing player expectations, competition from other sports investing in artificial pitches and changing weather conditions.

There are currently two WR compliant 3G pitches located at Leigh Sports Village, which are accessed for training by Leigh RUFC. Orrell RUFC and Orrell St James RUFC also access 3G provision for training, however, none of the three full sized floodlit 3G pitches at St John Rigby College, Abraham Guest Academy and St Peters Catholic High School are World Rugby compliant and therefore are not suitable for any form of contact rugby union activity (matches or training).

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Future demand

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 up to 2026.

Table 5.12: Team generation rates (Borough wide)

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams	Team Generation Rate	Future population within age group (2026)	Predicted future number of teams	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population
Senior Men's (19-45)	54,353	13	4181	52,410	12.5	0
Senior Women's (19-45)	54,600	1	54600	53,430	1	0
Junior Boys' (13-18)	11,154	15	744	12,110	16.3	1
Junior Girls' (13-18)	10,511	1	10511	11,715	1.1	0.1
Mini rugby mixed (7-12)	22,498	20	1125	22,573	20.1	0.1

Table 5.13: Team generation rates (by Analysis Area)

Age group	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population (by Analysis Area)			
	Ashton	Leigh	Wigan Town	Total
Senior Men's (19-45)	0	0	0	0
Senior Women's (19-45)	0	0	0	0
Junior Boys (13-18)	0	0.4	0.9	1.3
Junior Girls (13-18)	0	0.1	0	0.1
Mini rugby mixed (7-12)	0	0	0	0

When TGR's are applied by Analysis Area the forecasted growth in demand is not considered sufficient to create whole new teams at any age group, in any of the three Analysis Areas.

It is important to note that TGRs are based exclusively on population figures and do not account for specific targeted development work within certain areas or focused towards certain groups, such as CRC coaching activity within schools linking to local clubs or NGB aims as part of the Whole Sport Plan.

The RFU is focused on developing junior participation within Wigan, based on a model of coaching sessions delivered in schools and local communities. Intentions are to form junior teams from these training groups which are linked to local schools and will use pitches at school sites, in some cases also linking to existing clubs to provide a performance pathway.

This is not the sole focus of the RFU, which is actively exploring opportunities to assist with the transition between late junior years and senior rugby. This area has a strategic focus from the RFU and is being facilitated by encouraging casual play and midweek senior matches. The RFU recognises the traditional reduction in participation numbers at this time and it is hoped that by addressing the decrease and offering alternative match times then clubs may be able to retain a larger number of players.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Participation increases

Future demand reported by clubs shows aspirations for the creation of three senior teams and three junior teams, equating to a requirement for an additional three match equivalent sessions per week on senior rugby union pitches. This is spread equally in the Leigh and Wigan Town analysis areas, which each express future demand of 1.5 match equivalent sessions.

Table 5.14: Summary of future demand reported by clubs (based on senior pitches)

Club	Future demand	Analysis Area	Match equivalent sessions per week
Aspull RFC	U15s and Senior men's team	Wigan Town	1
Leigh RUFC	U16s	Leigh	0.5
Orrell RUFC	Senior men's team	Wigan Town	0.5
Orrell St James RUFC	-	Wigan Town	-
Tyldesley RUFC	U16s and Senior Women's team	Leigh	1

Future demand reported by clubs shows aspirations for additional three match equivalent sessions on senior rugby union pitches. This is spread equally in the Leigh and Wigan Town analysis areas, which each an expressed future demand of 1.5 match equivalent sessions.

It should be noted that future aspirations of Orrell RUFC are modest with the Club focusing on potential relocation. The Club states that the potential move to a dedicated home venue should assist in developing participation.

The Strategy Report will contain a Housing Growth Scenario that will estimate the additional demand for rugby union arising from housing development.

Unmet, latent and displaced demand

Unmet demand is existing demand at clubs which is not able to access sufficient supply of pitches for match play or training. It is usually expressed, for example, where a team is already training but is unable to access a match pitch or where a league or club operates a waiting list.

Latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from the current population should they have access to more or better provision. Wigan RUFC and Aspull RFC both state they would have an increase in participation if changing provision where of better quality at Wigan Rugby Union Football Club and Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields, respectively. In particular, Wigan RUFC reports that if it's changing rooms were better quality and more user friendly the Club would be able to increase the amount female and disabled membership.

Displaced demand refers to existing demand which is exported outside of the study area. There are five teams from Orrell RUFC (U7s, U8s, U9s, U10s and U11s) that export demand to Up Holland High School (West Lancashire) for Sunday morning matches. The Club states that using the School is not an issue as the site is located just outside of the Wigan Borough study area in the parish of Up Holland, which neighbours the Wigan Borough ward of Orrell.

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Displaced demand also refers to any imported demand from neighbouring districts that accesses facilities within the Wigan Borough study area due to a lack of available facilities in other local authorities where such team or club is based. There is no identified imported demand for use of rugby union provision in Wigan Borough.

Education

Rugby union is traditionally a popular sport within independent schools; however, the RFU is also active in developing rugby union in local state schools through the All Schools programme launched in September 2012 which aims to increase the number of secondary state schools playing rugby union. These schools link to a local team of RFU rugby development officers (RDOs) which deliver coaching sessions and support schools to establish rugby union as part of the curricular and extracurricular programme.

RFU priorities

The RFU actively works with all affiliated clubs to support growth and development of both participation and facilities. Within Wigan Borough, all clubs are supported by an area RDO. The RFU identifies the following priorities for future development of the respective clubs.

Table 5.15: Summary of RFU club priorities

Club	RFU priority
Aspull RFC	Establish an additional senior men's team whilst also supporting junior sections.
Leigh RUFC	Support to women and girls participation whilst also ensuring the Club keeps the four adult male teams.
Orrell RUFC	Support to the senior section and attempts to create a senior men's third team. Additionally, assist the Club as it has just started running an O2 touch centre.
Orrell St James RUFC	Support the sharing of facilities between Orrell St James RUFC and Orrell RUFC junior section.
Tyldesley RUFC	Continue to support all senior teams whilst also helping to grow the new girls' team.
Wigan RUFC	Help develop a new social team to start playing on Friday evenings whilst also assisting further reach into the local community.

In all instances where support for mini, junior and colts rugby union teams has been identified, the RFU and the respective clubs are exploring options to provide sessions and fixtures within local schools and community organisations to further aid development

Infrequent play

The RFU has plans to encourage participants which have previously played rugby union to re-engage through participation as part of a more casual sporting offer. The league will provide opportunities for teams and players which are unable to play weekly or frequently for various reasons and will operate on an occasional basis. The league will also act as an entry point for newly created clubs and provide competitive opportunities. The RFU hopes to help Wigan RUFC to develop a social team playing on Friday evenings.

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5.4: Supply and demand analysis

Having considered supply and demand, the table below identifies the overall spare capacity in each of the analysis areas for senior rugby union pitches based on match equivalent sessions per week. Future demand is based on both team generation rates (TGRs) which are driven by population increases, as well as reported club development plans.

Table 5.16: Summary of supply and demand balance on senior rugby union pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity ³⁶	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Ashton	-	-	-	-	-
Leigh	-	-1	-1	1.5	-2.5
Wigan Town	-	-4.5	-4.5	1.5	-6
Total	-	-5.5	-5.5	3	-8.5

Overall there is a requirement for 5.5 additional match equivalent sessions per week on senior rugby union pitches to meet current demand. This is further exacerbated when considering future demand from existing clubs, as well as from TGRs, creating a requirement for 8.5 extra match equivalent sessions per week to meet both current and future demand. However, there is increasing use of 3G pitches for rugby union by clubs in Wigan Borough and some of these match equivalent sessions may be able to be accommodated on World Rugby compliant 3G pitches.

The requirement for additional match equivalent sessions per week and accumulated overplay on senior pitches across rugby union sites can be attributed to a number of factors, of which, one or more may influence the current picture at most sites. Some pitches used by clubs are rated as poor quality (Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields, Leigh RUFC and St John Rigby College) with limited maintenance regimes or drain poorly, subsequently limiting capacity available. Limited capacity at several sites combined with high levels of demand, particularly from junior and mini teams, may cause pitches to become overplayed.

Pitches are in some cases overplayed at community club sites as a result of only one pitch being floodlit, and therefore in receipt of intensified use for training sessions (St Georges Playing Fields and Wigan RUFC).

Further to this, transfer of training demand from match pitches to other floodlit grass areas, either specific training areas or through increased use of compliant 3G pitches, would help to relieve some or all of the overplay at a number of sites. This could be through increased use of WR compliant 3G pitches, off-pitch floodlit areas, or through increased provision of floodlighting on other match pitches to better distribute demand; the latter potentially requiring supplemented qualitative and maintenance improvements to increase capacity to sustain increased use.

³⁶ In match equivalent sessions per week

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5.5: Capacity analysis

The capacity for pitches to regularly 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 affect the playing experience and people's enjoyment of playing rugby. 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. To enable an accurate supply and demand assessment of rugby 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.

All competitive play is on senior sized pitches (except for where mini pitches are provided).

From U13 upwards, teams play 15 v15 and use a full pitch. Where mini pitches are not provided, mini (U7-12) teams play on half of a senior pitch i.e. two teams per senior pitch.

For senior and youth 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 (assumes half of matches will be played away). For mini teams, play per week is set at 0.25 for each match played across half of one senior pitch, based on all teams operating on a traditional home and away basis.

All male adult club league rugby takes place on a Saturday afternoon. U13-18 rugby generally takes place on a Sunday morning. Training that takes place on club pitches is reflected by the addition of team equivalents. 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. Capacity is based upon a basic assessment of the drainage system and maintenance programme ascertained through a combination of the quality assessment and the club survey as follows:

Table 5.17: 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

This guide should only be used as a very general measure of potential pitch capacity and does not account for specific circumstances at time of use and assumes average rainfall and an appropriate end of season rest and renovation programme.

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 completed in the last five years.

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The peak period

In order to fully establish actual spare capacity, the peak period needs to be established. Peak time for senior rugby union matches is Saturday afternoons and is considered such within the subsequent analysis, although junior and mini teams play on senior pitches on Sunday mornings.

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Table 5.18: Rugby union provision and level of current use within Wigan Borough

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Available for community use?	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Quality rating	No. of pitches	Floodlit	Match equivalent sessions (per week)	Site capacity (sessions per week)	Capacity rating	Comments
1	Abraham Guest Academy	Wigan Town	Yes (Unused)	Unsecure	Senior	M0/D0 (Poor)	1	No	0.5	0.5	-	Poor quality senior pitch which is currently unused by community clubs. Used for curriculum and extra curriculum activities.
8	Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes	Secure	Senior	M0/D0 (Poor)	1	Yes (Partial)	2.5	0.5	-2	Poor quality senior pitch which is overplayed by two match equivalent sessions. Dual use with rugby league and used for training. Used by Aspull RFC.
				Secure	Senior	M0/D0 (Poor)	1	No	0.5	0.5	-	Poor quality senior pitch used to capacity. Used by Aspull RFC.
				Secure	Mini	M0/D0 (Poor)	1	No	1	0.5	-0.5	Poor quality mini pitch which is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week. Used by Aspull RFC. The pitch measures 60x30 metres.
111	St Georges Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes	Secure	Senior	M1/D1 (Standard)	1	No	1	2	1	Standard quality first team senior pitch with potential spare capacity. Used by Tyldesley RUFC.
							1	No	2	2	-	Standard quality senior pitch used to capacity. Used by Tyldesley RUFC.
							1	Yes	3	2	-1	Floodlit standard quality training pitch used to accommodate all Tyldesley RUFC training demand.
114	St John Rigby College	Wigan Town	Yes	Unsecure	Senior	M0/D0 (Poor)	1	No	0.5	0.5	-	Poor quality senior pitch used to capacity. Used by Orrell RUFC.
145	Winstanley College Sports Centre	Wigan Town	Yes	Unsecure	Senior	M0/D2 (Standard)	1	No	1	1.75	0.75	Standard quality senior pitch with potential spare capacity of 1.25 match equivalent sessions. Used by Orrell RUFC. Additional use of 0.5 accredited for College rugby league use.
154	Leigh RUFC	Leigh	Yes	Unsecure	Senior	M1/D0 (Poor)	1	No	1	1.5	0.5	Poor quality senior pitch which has potential spare capacity of 0.5 match equivalent sessions. Used by Leigh RUFC.
				Unsecure	Senior	M1/D0 (Poor)	1	No	1.5	1.5	-	Poor quality senior pitch played to capacity. Used by Leigh RUFC.
				Secure	Junior	M1/D0 (Poor)	1	No	1.5	1.5	-	Poor quality junior pitch played to capacity. Used by Leigh RUFC.
				Secure	Junior	M1/D0 (Poor)	1	No	1.5	1.5	-	Poor quality junior pitch played to capacity. Used by Leigh RUFC.
158	Wigan RUFC	Wigan Town	Yes	Secure	Senior	M2/D1 (Good)	1	Yes	5	3	-2	Floodlit good quality training pitch used to accommodate Wigan RUFC training demand.
							1	Yes (Partial)	3.5	3	-0.5	Floodlit good quality training pitch used to accommodate Wigan RUFC training demand.
							1	No	1	3	2	Good quality first team senior pitch with potential spare capacity. Used by Wigan RUFC
161	Bankes Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes	Secure	Senior	M1/D1 ³⁷ (Standard)	1	No	8.75	2	-6.75	Standard quality dual use rugby pitch. Used by Orrell St James ARLFC for competitive matches and training demand.

³⁷ This pitch is primarily a rugby league pitch and has been assessed using the RFL non-technical assessment where is received a standard quality rating. This equates to a M1/D1 (Standard) RFU rating.

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Available for community use?	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Quality rating	No. of pitches	Floodlit	Match equivalent sessions (per week)	Site capacity (sessions per week)	Capacity rating	Comments
169	Thames Avenue	Leigh	Yes	Unsecure	Senior	M1/D0 (Poor)	1	No	0.5	1.5	1	Poor quality senior pitch which has potential spare capacity of one match equivalent session. Used by Leigh RUFC which states it limits the use of the pitch due to on-going building works and issues regarding access.
					Mini	M1/D0 (Poor)	3	No	1	4.5	3	Poor quality mini pitches which has potential spare capacity of three match equivalent session. Used by Leigh RUFC which states it limits the use of the pitch due to on-going building works and issues regarding access.

Most junior play takes place on adult pitches and this has been added where applicable to calculate the actual play on sites. Match equivalent sessions per week for training sessions taking place on match pitches have also been added.

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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 activities that take place but are difficult to quantify on a weekly basis.

There are five sites which display potential spare capacity to accommodate additional play totalling 5.25 match equivalent sessions. However, in practice there is no spare capacity on senior pitches at peak time for senior play.

Table 5.19: Summary of actual spare capacity on senior pitches (Saturday PM)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Potential capacity	Actual spare capacity	Comments
111	St Georges Playing Fields	Leigh	1	-	No actual spare capacity at peak time.
145	Winstanley College Sports Centre	Wigan Town	0.75	-	Actual spare capacity discounted due to curriculum use and unsecure tenure.
154	Leigh RUFC	Leigh	0.5	-	Actual spare capacity discounted due to poor quality and unsecure tenure.
158	Wigan RUFC	Wigan Town	2	-	No actual spare capacity at peak time.
169	Thames Avenue	Leigh	1	-	Actual spare capacity discounted due unsecure tenure, planning application pending for residential development.
				-	Total

The programming of mini/junior rugby matches can be unclear with regards to ascertaining spare capacity, especially at peak time as it varies from week to week. Mini/junior rugby sections do not play regular matches as part of a league format, rather clubs organise for a number of their mini age groups to play those from another club at once either at home or away. Teams will generally hold training sessions instead on the weeks that mini / junior sections do not have a fixture event arranged. This means that mini / junior sections require use of all home pitches for two or three mornings a month but may play an away fixture one week meaning none of the pitches are used that particular morning.

Mini/junior pitches are consequently considered to have no actual spare capacity as they are used most weeks but it is acknowledged there are some when the pitches are not in use.

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Overplay

There are five pitches across three sites which are overplayed totalling 5.5 match equivalent sessions.

Table 5.20: Overplay summary (pitches used by community teams)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Overplay (match equivalent sessions per week)
8	Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields	Wigan Town	-2
111	St Georges Playing Fields	Leigh	-1
158	Wigan RUFC	Wigan Town	-2.5
		Total	-5.5

The largest amount of overplay in Wigan Borough is located at Wigan RUFC on the two pitches accessed for training. This is similarly the case at St Georges Playing Fields, with overplay on the floodlit training pitch in use by Tyldesley RUFC. On the contrary, overplay at Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields is a result of substantial play on poor quality pitches which have limited capacity.

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Rugby union summary

- ◆ **Current supply is not sufficient to cater for the level of demand expressed in Wigan at present, totalling a need for a further 5.5 match equivalent sessions on senior pitches. This is further exacerbated to create a future requirement for 8.5 match equivalent sessions.**
- ◆ In total, there are 20 rugby union pitches in Wigan across eight sites, of which, 14 are senior sized. There are two junior sized pitches and three mini pitches. All pitches, apart from Abraham Guest Academy, are available and used by community clubs in some capacity. Additionally, there is a senior rugby league pitch located at Bankes Playing Fields, which is dually used for rugby union. This totals to 21 pitches used for rugby union within Wigan Borough.
- ◆ At present, there are two World Rugby compliant 3G pitches in Wigan Borough, both of which are located at Leigh Sports Village. Until December 2016 there had been a third World Rugby Compliant 3G located at Robin Park Arena Sports and Tennis Centre, however, retesting is required to renew certification and as such the pitch is currently not registered.
- ◆ Most (52%) natural turf rugby union provision is located in the Leigh Analysis Area where there are 11 pitches, all available for community use. The remaining provision is in the Wigan Town Analysis Area which has ten pitches, all available for community use. There is no natural turf rugby union provision located in the Ashton Analysis Area.
- ◆ The majority of pitches available for community use are rated as poor quality (14 pitches or 67%). There remaining seven pitches are rated as standard quality.
- ◆ Leigh RUFC has secure tenure of the two junior pitches and unsecure tenure of two senior pitches it leases from a developer. These are considered unsecure as the Club states there is a clause in the lease that the Club may be removed from the site if the land is granted permission for potential housing development.
- ◆ Of the six clubs in Wigan Borough, three train on match pitches with the remaining three clubs using 3G pitches.
- ◆ Ancillary facilities across Wigan Borough vary in quality with the two poorest at Wigan RUFC and Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields.
- ◆ There are six community rugby union clubs playing in Wigan, providing a total of 50 teams. There are 14 senior teams, of which, there is a single women's team. There are 15 junior boys' teams a single girls team and 20 mini squads.
- ◆ TGRs do not forecast any future demand, when applied on an Analysis Area basis.
- ◆ There are five pitches across three sites which are overplayed totalling 5.5 match equivalent sessions.
- ◆ Leigh RUFC currently has a senior pitch and three mini pitches located at Thames Avenue. Thames Avenue, which is located away for the Clubs main pitches, has a pending planning application on it for 58 dwellings. It states it has recently obtained planning permission to develop a new site (Carr Lane) if the Thames Avenue application is confirmed. The new site would host either one senior pitch or three smaller pitches that meet RFU standard with associated levelling and drainage.
- ◆ Orrell RUFC has recently negotiated a 99 year lease and had planning application approved by Wigan Borough Council for the development of a community sports centre, to be based adjacent to Winstanley College, on a 13 acre agricultural site. The proposed community sports club is to host two rugby union pitches and a cricket square accompanied by ancillary amenities, to be developed in conjunction with Winstanley CC.

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PART 6: HOCKEY

6.1: Introduction

Hockey in England is governed by England Hockey (EH) and is administered locally by the North 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 6.1: England Hockey guidelines on artificial surface types suitable for hockey

Category	Surface	Playing Level	Playing Level
England Hockey Category 1	Water surface approved within the FIH Global/National Parameters	Essential International Hockey - Training and matches	Desirable Domestic National Premier competition Higher levels of EH Player Pathway Performance Centres and upwards England
England Hockey Category 2	Sand dressed surfaces within the FIH National Parameter	Essential Domestic National Premier competition Higher levels of player pathway: Academy Centres and Upwards	Desirable All adult and junior League Hockey Intermediate or advanced School Hockey EH competitions for clubs and schools (excluding domestic national league)
England Hockey Category 3	Sand based surfaces within the FIH National Parameter	Essential All adult and junior club training and league Hockey EH competitions for clubs and schools Intermediate or advanced schools hockey	Desirable
England Hockey Category 4	All 3G surfaces	Essential None	Desirable Lower level hockey (Introductory level) when no category 1-3 surface is available.

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For senior teams, a full sized 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 & three metres at the ends. England Hockey 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 that the pitch has floodlighting. Training is generally midweek and requires access to a pitch and floodlights.

Club consultation

There are four hockey clubs based or playing within Wigan Borough. Face to face consultation was carried out with three clubs, whilst the fourth club (Manchester HC) registered feedback via an online survey. The response rate across community clubs either through face to face consultation or online survey equates to 100%. The following clubs were met with face to face:

- ◀ Golborne HC
- ◀ Leigh HC
- ◀ Wigan HC

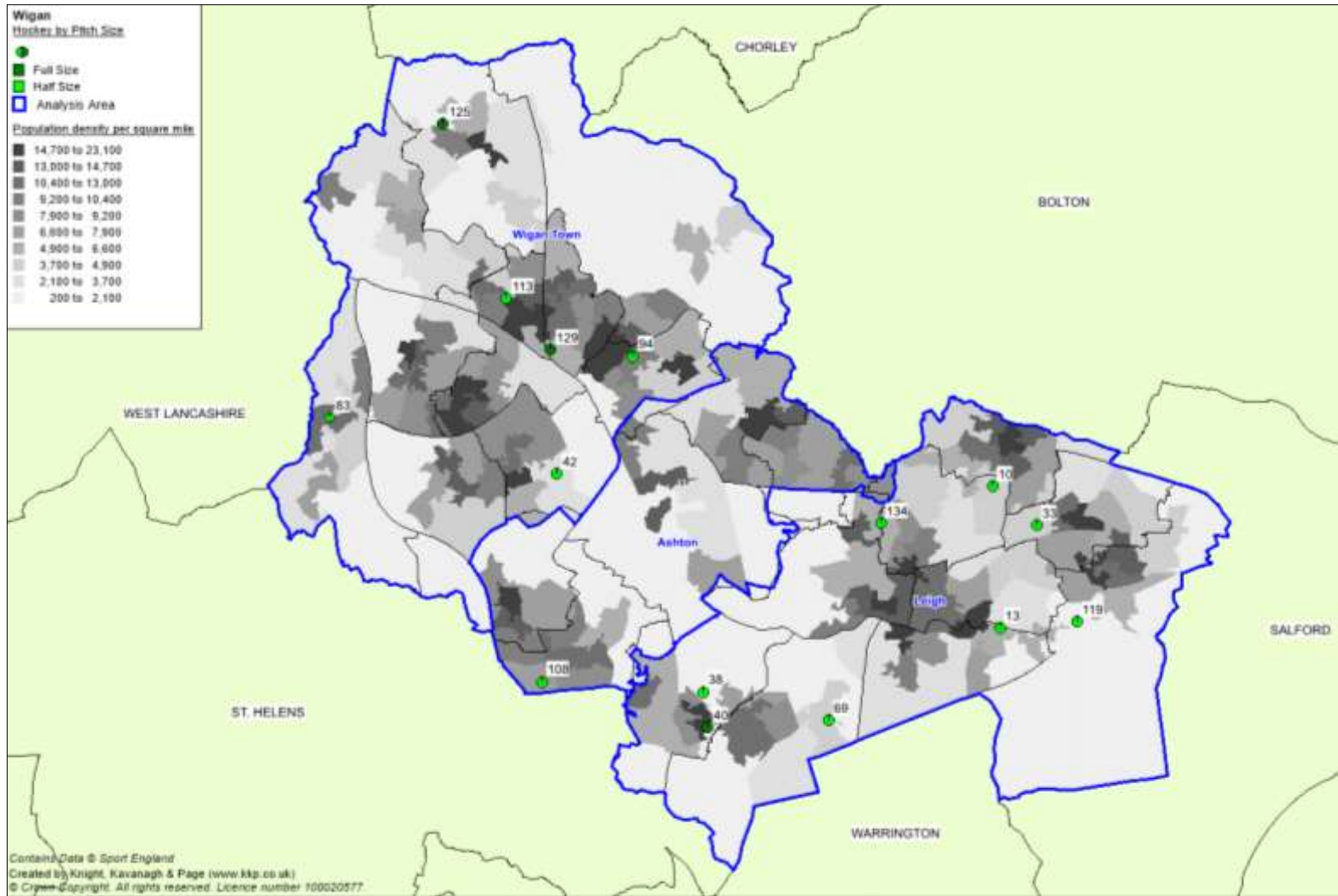
6.2: Supply

There are currently three full sized hockey suitable AGPs in Wigan Borough, all of which, are floodlit and available for community use. Two of the three are located in the Wigan Town Analysis Area with the remaining pitch located in the Leigh Analysis Area.

Additionally, there are 13 smaller sized hockey suitable AGPs. Of which, six are of significant size (approximately 80m metres long) but do not meet recommended measurements (91.4 x 55 metres) to be suitable for competitive matches. This is particularly relevant as the AGP at Westleigh High School is accessed by both Leigh HC and Manchester HC, for competitive matches despite being undersized. Though too small to host competitive matches and senior training, smaller sized AGPs may be able to accommodate some junior or school training or curriculum use. Alternatively, at some sites it may be feasible to extend the size of AGPs to meet minimum dimensions for match play, thus increasing capacity.

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Figure 6.1: Map of hockey suitable AGPs within Wigan Borough



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Table 6.2: Hockey suitable full size AGPs by location (including club users)

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Number of AGPs	Floodlit	Surface	Dimensions (metres)	Home site for
40	Golborne Sports and Social Club	Leigh	1	Yes	Sand dressed	92 x 55	Golborne HC
125	Standish Community High School	Wigan Town	1	Yes	Sand filled	92 x 55	-
129	The Deanery C of E High School	Wigan Town	1	Yes	Sand filled	92 x 58	Wigan HC

Table 6.3: Hockey suitable smaller sized AGPs by location

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Number of AGPs	Available for community use?	Floodlit	Surface	Dimensions (metres)
10	Atherton Community School	Leigh	1	Yes	Yes	Sand dressed	60 x 40
13	Bedford High School	Leigh	1	Yes	Yes	Sand filled	82 x 42
33	Fred Longworth High School	Leigh	1	Yes	Yes	Sand filled	82 x 52
38	Golborne High School	Leigh	1	Yes	Yes	Sand filled	60 x 40
42	Hawley Hall High School	Wigan Town	1	Yes	Yes	Sand filled	70 x 40
69	Lowton Church of England High School	Leigh	1	Yes	Yes	Sand filled	80 x 52
83	Orrell Holgate Primary School	Wigan Town	1	No	Yes	Sand dressed	35 x 34
93	Rose Bridge High School Sports Field	Wigan Town	2	No	Yes	Sand filled	65 x 45 25 x 12
108	St Edmund Arrowsmith Catholic High School	Ashton	1	Yes	Yes	Sand filled	80 x 52
113	St John Fisher Catholic High School	Wigan Town	1	Yes	Yes	Sand filled	56 x 35
119	St Marys Catholic High School	Leigh	1	Yes	Yes	Sand filled	82 x 52
134	Westleigh High School ³⁸	Leigh	1	Yes	Yes	Sand filled	81 x 52

³⁸ Does not meet minimum dimensions for match play yet is used for matches by both Leigh HC and Manchester HC.

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Quality

There are two full sized hockey suitable AGPs rated as poor quality with one at Golborne Sports and Social Club rated as good.

Table 6.4: Summary of full size hockey AGP quality in Wigan Borough

Site ID	Site	Number of AGPs	Surface	Quality	Year built (refurbished)
40	Golborne Sports and Social Club	1	Sand dressed	Good	1997 (2015)
125	Standish Community High School	1	Sand filled	Poor	2005
129	The Deanery C of E High School	1	Sand filled	Poor	1999

It is considered that the carpet of an AGP usually lasts for approximately 10 years (depending on levels of use), though its lifespan can be prolonged in some cases where maintenance is of particularly high quality and rigor.

As shown in table above, the AGPs at Standish Community High School and The Deanery High School have both exceeded the recommended surface lifespan. Their age, accompanied with heavy usage and limited maintenance has meant the surfaces are of poor quality.

Wigan HC is based at The Deanery High School where it reports pitch quality to be a key issue, with the North West Hockey League having inspected the pitch at the beginning of the season to ensure it was safe to use for competitive match play. It was deemed safe for the Club to use this season; however, it is likely that the surface will deteriorate to a point where it becomes unusable in the near future, which would require the Club to find alternative provision. Wigan HC invested in the initial development of the AGP in partnership with the school, though is seeking external funding to assist with financing a resurface as the sinking fund is not presently sufficient to cover the cost.

Conversely, the full sized AGP at Golborne Sports and Social Club is rated as good quality. The pitch was refurbished in 2015 and is well maintained.

There is a significant number of small sized AGPs located across the Borough, all of which, are located at school sites. All 13 pitches are in excess of the 10 year recommended lifespan having been built in either 2004 or 2005, several as part of the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) investment programme.

The majority of pitches (eight) are assessed as poor quality with the remaining five assessed as standard. The pitch at Westleigh High School used by Manchester HC and Leigh HC, is rated as standard quality.

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Table 6.5: Summary of smaller sized hockey AGP quality in Wigan Borough

Site ID	Site	Number of AGPs	Surface	Quality	Year built (refurbished)
10	Atherton Community School	1	Sand dressed	Poor	2005
13	Bedford High School	1	Sand filled	Standard	2004
33	Fred Longworth High School	1	Sand filled	Poor	2005
38	Golborne High School	1	Sand filled	Standard	2005
42	Hawley Hall High School	1	Sand filled	Poor	2005
69	Lowton Church of England High School	1	Sand filled	Standard	2005
83	Orrell Holgate Primary School	1	Sand filled	Standard	2005
93	Rose Bridge High School Sports Field	2	Sand dressed	Poor	2004
108	St Edmund Arrowsmith Catholic High School	1	Sand filled	Poor	2005
113	St John Fisher Catholic High School	1	Sand filled	Poor	2004
119	St Marys Catholic High School	1	Sand filled	Poor	2005
134	Westleigh High School	1	Sand filled	Standard	2005

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 EH 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/>

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Ownership/management

Of the three full sized hockey suitable AGPs, one (Standish Community High School) is owned by an education establishment with management of the facility through an external lettings company.

The pitch at The Deanery High School is part of a joint ownership agreement with Wigan Sports Club, which includes Wigan HC. Both the School and the Sports Club have agreed times of usage with remaining unused hours available to let through the School.

The pitch at Golborne Sports and Social Club is owned and managed by the sports club of the same name and is made up of three sporting sections which are hockey, football and cricket.

It should be noted the remaining AGP accessed for hockey provision, Westleigh High School, is owned and managed by the School.

Ancillary provision

Access to ancillary facilities at school sites can often be restricted for security reasons where changing rooms are located in the main school building or where there is a lack of staffing to open and manage access. This is generally not the case for clubs using facilities at school sites in the Wigan Borough. The two clubs accessing Westleigh High School, Leigh HC and Manchester HC, report no issues using changing rooms stating them to be good quality. A common drawback of playing at school sites as the main home venue is a lack of onsite social space or clubhouse provision despite sufficient access to changing rooms. Neither Leigh HC nor Manchester HC states this to be problematic as they are both single team clubs which do not have an unmet requirement for social space.

Wigan HC uses facilities at Wigan Sports Club which is situated adjacent to The Deanery High School. It reports facilities to be in adequate condition with some need of refurbishment; however, they currently meet its requirements.

Golborne HC uses onsite ancillary facilities at Golborne Sports and Social Club and reports general quality to be good; however, the four changing rooms do not meet EH specifications. This is believed to be affecting participation levels at the Club, particularly female, as they are not suitable. Additionally, the facilities are accessed by Golborne Sports Junior FC, Golborne Sports Senior FC and Golborne CC, the football and cricket sections of Golborne Sports and Social Club. When multiple teams are at home the four changing rooms become difficult to access due to sharing and congestion.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

6.3: Demand

There are 13 hockey teams (provided across four community clubs) using three AGPs in Wigan Borough.

Table 6.6: Summary of teams playing in Wigan Borough

Name of club	Men's	Women's	Mixed	Juniors	Members
Golborne HC	3	3	-		89
Leigh HC	1		-		15
Manchester HC	1		-		37
Wigan HC	2	2	-	1	171
Totals	7	5	-	1	312

There are two relatively smaller clubs in Wigan Borough; Leigh HC and Manchester HC, which both field one single men's team each. Manchester HC has decreased in size over the past three years, previously having two senior teams, stating a lack of available volunteers to run a second team. Leigh HC has consistently had one senior team with no plans to increase this further, stating it is content with current levels of participation.

Golborne HC reports a strong increase in both senior and junior participation in the last three years and believes pitch refurbishment to be one of the key influencing factors. The Club also states that it runs the EH initiative Back to Hockey which has influenced increases in participation.

Similarly, Wigan HC states a rise in participation, especially at junior level and due to the Club running Back to Hockey sessions. Although the Club has seen increase participation within the last three years it is concerned that the current poor quality of the AGP will begin to have a detrimental impact on engagement and the quality of player experience.

EH Player Pathway

The Player Pathway (PP) is the junior talent development pathway. It encompasses the whole of the hockey landscape which includes club and school activity as well as the PP Development Centres (DCs). The purpose of the PP is to provide development opportunities for young people, which is fair, equitable and consistent. It is to ensure that a suitable level of coaching and competition is offered for people at the appropriate stage of their development and to maximise the chance they have of fulfilling their potential whether that potential is as a club or International player, coach or official. The PP can be accessed by playing at school, a local club or attending one of the local centres. There is one entry point into the PP centres which is at DC level. The first time a player accesses the player pathway they must enter at DC level.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Development Centres (DCs) and Academy Centres (ACs)

DCs and ACs are local training centres for the U13 to U17 age groups. DCs are open to any hockey player who has been nominated by their club, school or coach, with ACs open to any player who has been nominated by a DC coach. After attending a DC, a AC is the next step on the player pathway. Included in the DCs/ACs are Goalkeeper (GK) Academies, which provide specific coaching sessions for goalkeepers. The nearest to Wigan Borough is the Greater Manchester DC, AC and GK Academy will be based at the Armitage Centre (Manchester) for girls and Bowdon Cricket Hockey and Squash Club (Trafford) for boys.

Performance Centre (PC)

A PC is a training centre for the U15 and U17 age groups. The PC is one of only 14 in England and is now based at Brooklands Hockey Club (Trafford).

Displaced demand

Displaced or exported demand refers to Wigan Borough registered teams that are currently accessing pitches outside of the local authority for home fixtures, normally because their pitch requirements cannot be met. This is usually because of pitch supply, in some cases quality issues or stipulated league requirements for access to certain facilities. In the same manner, imported demand refers to that displaced from other local authorities into Wigan Borough based on the same reasoning.

Manchester HC accesses Westleigh High School for competitive fixtures. The single team club decided to move to the site from Manchester where it was previously based when Belle Vue Sports Village AGPs were removed. These pitches were re-provided at the Armitage Centre in Manchester where the Club was offered the opportunity for secured access as part of the hockey user group, however, it chose to move to play in Leigh where it reports pitch hire costs to be lower. It is likely that the Club will continue to play within the Wigan Borough for the foreseeable future.

Latent demand

Latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from the current population should they have access to more or better provision. No clubs explicitly identified any latent demand in the Wigan Borough.

Future demand

Growing participation is the number one aim within EH's strategic plan and key drivers include working with clubs, universities and schools, regional and local leagues, developing opportunities for over 40s and delivering a quality programme of competition. Growth in participation will not only come from the traditional 11 aside game but from the informal, recreational ways to play hockey such as small sided hockey, which can be played at any time during the week or at weekends.

EH applies a growth rate to current affiliated membership numbers to determine anticipated increases in future demand. The predicted growth rate for Wigan Borough is 10% and the table overleaf shows anticipated future growth at each club.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 6.7: Predicted future club based membership growth (2016/17 affiliation data)

Club	Current adult membership	Future adult members	Current junior membership	Future junior members	Total future membership
Golborne HC	64	70	25	28	98
Leigh HC	15	17	-	-	17
Manchester HC	35	39	2	2	41
Wigan HC	51	56	120	132	188
Total	165	182	147	162	344

Across the four clubs competing in Wigan Borough, there are a total of 165 adults playing hockey. With the anticipated growth rate applied, there is a likely increase of 17 adults in the future. Further to this, there are a total of 147 juniors playing hockey which when the growth rate is applied will likely increase by 15 juniors. The predicted growth for Wigan Borough amounts to a total 32 new members Borough wide. EH's aim over the next ten years is to double participation nationally.

Nationally, since 2012, hockey has seen a 65% increase in juniors taking up the sport within the club environment. This increase is expected to continue across all age groups in the future, especially given the success of Great Britain's women's team in the 2016 Rio Olympics and the anticipated legacy impact.

Though there remains a desire from EH to increase participation within the club/league based game, not all future demand may be realised entirely as new formalised teams playing at peak time. Some clubs may decide to offer pay and play opportunities to participants or offer small sided formats such in a bid to increase participation and club memberships by providing a different hockey offer.

Increased demand from new participants will lead to a requirement for increased capacity on available AGPs at peak time, but also midweek and on Sundays to deliver other formats of hockey activity. At present, it is not necessarily clear as to what format this may take or when it is likely to take place, however, it is clear that there will be a requirement for access to increased capacity on AGPs across the Borough. This should be considered when assessing demand for AGPs in the future, as not only will they be needed for peak match play times and midweek training to accommodate increased participation within the formalised hockey environment, but also throughout the week and at non-peak times to offer wider opportunities for play.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Availability and usage

Sport England's Facilities Planning Model (FPM) applies an overall peak period for AGPs of 34 hours per week (Monday to Thursday 17:00-21:00; Friday 17:00-19:00; Saturday and Sunday 09:00-17:00). Using this calculation, of the full sized AGPs in Wigan Borough two have full availability within the peak period, with only Standish Community High School (31 hours) not available for the full number of hours within the peak period.

The table below shows all available sites with full sized hockey suitable AGP provision and a summary of use at each. Westleigh High School does not meet minimum dimension criteria but is used by both Leigh HC and Manchester HC for competitive matches. Standish Community High School has no present community hockey use.

Table 6.8: Usage of hockey suitable AGPs (available for community use)

Site ID	Site	Number of AGPs	Floodlit	Analysis area	Community use hours in the peak period (per AGP)	Clubs/groups using the pitch (teams)	Midweek/training capacity	Match capacity	Comments
40	Golborne Sports and Social Club	1	Yes	Leigh	Weekdays: 18 hours Weekend: 16 hours Total: 34 hours	Golborne HC (7)	Used for training for two hours on Tuesday evening from 7-9pm. Used by Winstanley College alternate Wednesday afternoons for training and fixtures. Also used by Golborne Sports Junior FC and various football clubs for training.	There is no spare capacity for additional match play on Saturdays due to use by junior football teams for training on Saturday mornings. There is however spare capacity available for additional match play on Sunday afternoons but this is minimal and the pitch is often used by local football teams.	Mainly used by Golborne HC and the other sport sections of Golborne Sports and Social Club. Any spare capacity is often accessed by Golborne Sports FC adult and junior teams.
125	Standish Community High School	1	Yes	Wigan Town	Weekdays: 15 hours Weekend: 16 hours Total: 31 hours	No recorded community hockey use	No recorded midweek use for community hockey, only for football team training.	Not currently used by hockey clubs for competitive matches.	The pitch is considered to have spare capacity to accommodate demand for midweek hockey use amongst existing football bookings throughout the week (9-10pm) - however this time slot is not ideal for hockey training, especially junior training and all day Saturday and Sunday.
129	The Deanery C of E High School	1	Yes	Wigan Town	Weekdays: 18 hours Weekend: 16 hours Total: 34 hours	Wigan HC (4)	Used for training Wednesday 6-7pm by Wigan HC junior section and 7-8pm by senior teams. Likely to be used by other sports clubs but may have some spare capacity.	On Saturday afternoons used by Wigan HC amounting to two match equivalent sessions per week. Considered to have capacity to accommodate an additional two match equivalent sessions per week.	Quality of the pitch is poor and in need of refurbishment. Wigan HC states that it has had discussions with the North West Hockey League and both have concerns that the surface may be unfit to use next season for competitive matches.
134	Westleigh High School	1	Yes	Leigh	Weekdays: 18 hours Weekend: 16 hours Total: 34 hours	Leigh HC (1) Manchester HC (1)	No recorded midweek use for community hockey, Pitch is used for 12 hours of football training a week.	On Saturdays used by Leigh HC and Manchester HC, totalling one match equivalent session per week. Considered to have no additional capacity for match play as the pitch size does not meet minimum criteria.	Current match play should not be taking place on a pitch of these dimensions.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Peak time demand

Most men's and women's hockey teams currently play matches on a Saturday therefore this is considered to be the peak time for use of AGPs for competitive play. The only teams that do not play at peak time are both from Golborne HC which has a junior team and a women's third team both playing regular friendly matches on Sunday mornings.

6.4: Supply and demand analysis

Of the three AGPs suitable for hockey in Wigan Borough, two are considered to have capacity for additional use at weekends; Standish Community High School and The Deanery High School, however, spare capacity at the latter to accommodate additional match play at peak time has been discounted due to its poor quality. The reports from Wigan HC suggest the surface may not be fit to use next season.

Golborne Sports and Social Club is used to capacity at peak time (Saturday) by both Golborne HC and Golborne Sports Juniors FC.

Westleigh High School does not meet recommended dimensions for competitive hockey fixtures and no further use for match play should be advocated. The pitch may be able to accommodate additional hockey participation or training but current match use totalling one match equivalent session per week should be relocated to a pitch which meets required dimension criteria. There is capacity to accommodate such use at Standish Community High School but the pitch is located on the other side of the Borough nine miles away, approximately 30 minutes' drive and is likely to be considered inaccessible by the users of Westleigh High School (although further consultation with the users is required to fully determine this).

For junior hockey, there is less need for access to pitches as there are less teams and matches are played on Sundays. Present junior demand at Golborne HC is able to be accommodated on Sundays.

Conclusions

The current supply of hockey suitable AGPs is considered insufficient to accommodate the current level of hockey demand both at peak time, despite ability to meet current and future midweek (including for training) requirements.

There is a need to relocate one match equivalent session per week from the undersized AGP at Westleigh High School. However, this is currently unable to be met in the Leigh Area, as the AGP at Golborne Sports & Social Club is used to capacity on Saturdays. Standish Community High School has spare capacity for additional use, however, it is unlikely that the two teams (Manchester HC and Leigh HC) are prepared to travel a further 30 minutes to access the pitch.

This considered, the more critical need for hockey in the short term is to improve pitch quality at The Deanery High School to ensure suitability and safety for continued use, as loss of access to this pitch (even if only for the short term) would greatly impact on hockey in the Borough. Resurfacing of this pitch in the immediacy is imperative to improve quality and ensure availability and performance for use, not only to prevent impacting on participation at Wigan HC but also use for football training and by casual commercial bookings.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Hockey summary

- ◀ **The current supply of hockey suitable AGPs is considered insufficient to accommodate the current level of hockey demand both at peak time, despite ability to meet midweek (including for training) requirements and anticipated future growth in participation.**
- ◀ **There is a need to relocate one match equivalent session per week from the undersized AGP at Westleigh High School on the basis that match play at Westleigh High School ceases to be permitted by EH and the North West Hockey League. This level of demand is unable to be met in the Leigh Area at present.**
- ◀ **In conclusion, there is a need to retain all three full sized hockey AGPs in the short term. Though presently unused for hockey (albeit available for community use and used for football), Standish Community High School should be retained in the short term as the site represents the only reserve capacity to accommodate Wigan HC should the AGP at The Deanery High School be condemned as unsafe for use. Further to this, it is also an option to accommodate users from Westleigh High School (undersized AGP for hockey).**
- ◀ There are currently three full sized sand based AGPs in Wigan Borough, all of which are floodlit and available for community use. Standish Community High School is not currently used for hockey and although used for hockey, Westleigh High School is undersized for competitive play (used by Manchester HC and Leigh HC).
- ◀ Additionally, there are 13 smaller sized hockey suitable AGPs. Of which, six are of suitable size to potentially accommodate senior (and junior) hockey training but not competitive matches.
- ◀ Two full sized hockey suitable AGPs are rated as poor quality with Golborne Sports & Social Club rated as good.
- ◀ Pitches at both The Deanery High School and Standish Community High School are in excess of the recommended ten year lifespan and should be considered for surface replacement in coming years. Immediate consideration should be given to the refurbishment of The Deanery High School which is accessed by Wigan HC and may soon be deemed unsafe and unsuitable for competitive matches by the League.
- ◀ Both Leigh HC and Manchester HC have unsecure tenure as they annually rent the pitch at Westleigh High School, whereas, Golborne HC and Wigan HC are considered to have secured tenure.
- ◀ There are 13 hockey teams (across four community clubs) using three AGPs in Wigan Borough.
- ◀ England Hockey growth rates anticipate a 10% growth in participation across the Borough, equating to a likely increase of 17 adults and 15 juniors. Not all future demand may be realised entirely as new formalised teams playing at peak time but may instead play at non-peak times including midweek as EH develops alternative participation offers.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

PART 7: THIRD GENERATION ARTIFICIAL GRASS PITCHES (3G PITCHES)

7.1: 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 7.1: 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 sized 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 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 sized World Rugby compliant 3G pitches feature on the RFU register, including expiry dates of certification³⁹. Upon registration, World Rugby compliancy is valid for two years before renewal and retesting is required.

³⁹<http://www.englandrugby.com/governance/club-support/facilities-kit-and-equipment/artificial-surfaces/artificial-grass-pitches>

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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.

7.2: Supply

Within this PPS, full sized 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 seven full sized 3G pitches in Wigan Borough, all of which, have floodlighting and are available for community use. There are a further 23 small sized 3G pitches, all are available for community use except Lowton C of E School and HMP Hindley, though community use of some small sized pitches is limited as they primarily function as commercial football centres.

The spread of full sized 3G pitch provision in Wigan Borough is not evenly distributed. There are no full sized 3G pitches in the Ashton area, with existing supply located in the Leigh and Wigan Town areas. There are three pitches in the Leigh area representing 43% of provision, whilst the remaining 57% majority is found in the Wigan Town area.

Six of the seven full sized pitches are presently certified for competitive use and listed on the FA 3G Football Turf Pitch Register, representing 86% of full sized 3G pitch supply. The only full sized pitch not certified and registered is at St John Rigby College.

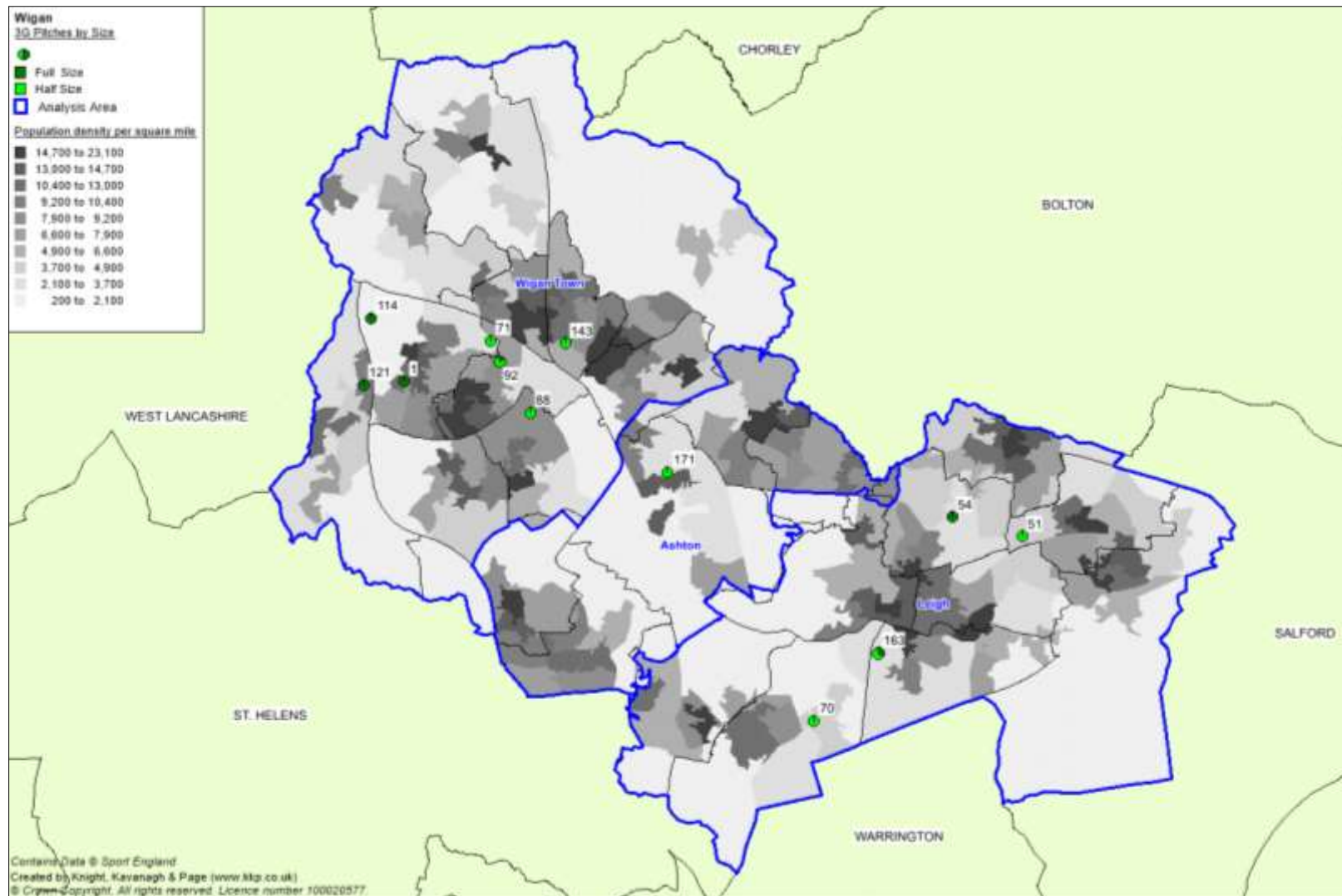
Furthermore, there is one small sized 3G pitch which features on the FA register and can thus be used for competitive matches. The pitch is certified compliant with renewal due 22/2/2020.

Two full sized 3G pitches presently feature on the RFU register⁴⁰ of World Rugby compliant 3G pitches, both at Leigh Sports Village (LSV). The pitches are due for renewal of certification in December this year (2017). The full sized 3G pitch at Robin Park Arena Sport & Tennis Centre was also previously registered as World Rugby compliant before the certification term expired in December 2016, therefore there is a need for retesting and renewal to retain certification.

⁴⁰<http://www.englandrugby.com/governance/club-support/facilities-kit-and-equipment/artificial-surfaces/artificial-grass-pitches>

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Figure 7.1: Map of 3G pitches within Wigan Borough



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Table 7.2: Full sized 3G pitches in Wigan Borough

Site ID	Site name	Ownership/management	Analysis area	Number of pitches	Floodlit?	Surface type	Dimensions ⁴¹ (metres)	Certification	Certification renewal date (where known)
1	Abraham Guest Academy	Academy	Wigan Town	1	Yes	Medium Pile 3G	101x63	FA	FA – 4/9/19
54	Howe Bridge Leisure Centre	Council/Trust	Leigh	1	Yes	Medium Pile 3G	110x60	FIFA	FIFA – 22/7/18
92	Robin Park Arena Sports & Tennis Centre	Council/Trust	Wigan Town	1	Yes	Medium Pile 3G	102x63	FIFA	FIFA – 4/12/2017 WR – 5/12/16 (expired)
114	St John Rigby College	College	Wigan Town	1	Yes	Medium Pile 3G	100x70		
121	St Peters Catholic High School	School	Wigan Town	1	Yes	Medium Pile 3G	100x60	FA	FA – 29/11/19
163	Leigh Sports Village	Trust	Leigh	2	Yes	Medium Pile 3G	110x65	FIFA RFL RFU RFL	FIFA – 22/2/18 WR – 15/12/17
							103x55		

⁴¹ Excluding run off areas. FA/FIFA Performance Standard Testing Criteria requires 3m run off areas in each direction. Some pitches of or close to minimum dimensions though compliant may not be considered to be of sufficient size to accommodate adult football matches.

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Future plans for provision

Though full sized 3G pitches are considered those which meet FA minimum pitch dimensions, it is recommended that any new 3G pitches built in future should meet FA recommended pitch dimensions so to ensure suitability for all formats of football and maximise opportunities for use.

Table 7.3: FA recommended 3G pitch sizes

Age group	Playing format	Recommended pitch dimensions (metres excluding run offs)	Recommended pitch dimensions (metres including run offs)
Mini-Soccer U7/U8	5v5	37x27	43x33
Mini-Soccer U9/U10	7v7	55x37	61x43
Youth U11/U12	9v9	73x46	79x52
Youth U13/U14	11v11	82x50	88x56
Youth U15/U16	11v11	91x55	97x61
Youth U17/U18	11v11	100x64	106x70
Over 18/Adult	11v11	100x64	106x70

Full sized pitches

Ashton Leisure Centre and Cansfield High School (the two based on the same site operating as a dual use facility) are developing a full sized 3G pitch, with construction having begun in February 2017. This is to be on the footprint of the existing old redgra pitch which was approximately 92 x 56 metres in size with floodlighting already present, though this is reported to be poor quality and may in turn require replacement.

Golborne Sports & Social Club currently has a sand based AGP onsite which is used for both hockey and football training. The sports club has aspirations for the creation of a second full sized AGP with a 3G surface on existing grass pitch provision. The sports club reports that the current AGP has little spare capacity and that a new 3G pitch would alleviate congestion for training whilst retaining ability to host competitive football.

Wigan Football Association (WFA) and Cherrybrook FC have aspirations for the creation of a full sized 3G pitch at Laithwaite Park. Wigan Football Association (including Cherrybrook FC) has recently renegotiated long-term lease of the site which was due to expire and states that having done so its priority now secure the site with fencing. Funding has been secured for the fencing and it is hoped that this will limit impact of public use affecting pitch quality. Once this has been completed, WFA and Cherrybrook FC then intend to focus on potential to develop a full sized 3G pitch.

Wigan Athletic FC requires exclusive access to full sized and indoor small sized 3G pitches in order to meet Category Two Academy requirements. The Club has planning permission for the creation of both new facilities at its Christopher Park training ground but believes the location is less preferable and is keen to explore potential for investment to secure access or create new provision to meet this requirement at other sites. This is detailed further in the section.

In addition to the aspirations and plans of the aforementioned clubs and organisations, Wigan has been successful in progressing to stage two of the FA Parklife Programme (detailed in Part 2: Football) which could see significant funding towards the creation of multiple new full sized 3G pitches across the Borough.

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Small sized pitches

There are plans to create a new 60x40 metre sized 3G pitch with floodlighting at Shevington High School. The school is seeking external funding including from the Football Foundation (FF) to help finance the build.

Lowton C of E High School is also planning to develop a new small sized 3G pitch on the footprint of the two existing fenced, artificial turf tennis courts. The pitch will be jointly funded by both the school and Leigh Genesis FC which as partner will be the anchor user. The works are currently out for tender with intention to begin removal of the existing tennis facility in July 2017.

Winstanley Warriors FC secured long term leasehold of Little Lane Playing Fields in 2017, enabling the Club to successfully obtain external funding from the FF for the creation of a youth 9v9 sized 3G pitch onsite. The pitch is currently under construction and is due for completion before May 2017. The Club also has plans for a second phase of development, to include new storage facilities and improvements to the modular changing facilities.

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 EH 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/>

There are a number of small sized sand based AGPs in the Borough which are viewed as less preferable for external partner investment in their current form because they do not meet minimum dimensions for hockey, football, or rugby (both codes). There are six sand based AGPs with floodlighting which are approximately 80 metres long and as such do not meet minimum dimensions for competition for any of the four aforementioned sports.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 7.4: Summary of sand based AGPs of 80 metres or greater in length

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Floodlit	Surface	Year built (refurbished)	Dimensions (metres)
13	Bedford High School	Leigh	Yes	Sand filled	2004	82 x 42
33	Fred Longworth High School	Leigh	Yes	Sand filled	2005	82 x 52
69	Lowton Church of England High School	Leigh	Yes	Sand filled	2005	80 x 52
108	St Edmund Arrowsmith Catholic High School	Ashton	Yes	Sand filled	2005	80 x 52
119	St Marys Catholic High School	Leigh	Yes	Sand filled	2005	82 x 52
134	Westleigh High School ⁴²	Wigan Town	Yes	Sand filled	2005	81 x 52

All six pitches are in excess of the recommended 10 year surface lifespan and are therefore considered in need of resurfacing, subject to relative rate of deterioration and quality for performance. However, these pitches could be extended where feasible to supplement resurfacing, potentially as a conversion from sand based surfaces to 3G providing there is no impact on current or future hockey requirements.

Potential impact on hockey at present would be limited as most pitches are unused for training given hockey teams prefer to train at the same venue as they play matches, with none of these six pitches deemed suitable for matches due to their size. However, there is hockey use of the AGP at Westleigh High School for matches despite it not complying with EH pitch size guidelines. Extension and conversion of the five other pitches would have no identified impact on hockey in the Borough, though all are located at schools which may wish to retain sand based surfaces which are generally considered to offer greater flexibility in being able to cater for a wider variety of curriculum activities.

Future demand

Population increases anticipated within the Borough are expected to generate additional demand for sports facilities, particularly 3G pitches which are used by a number of different sports for both matches and training. The PPS findings should be used to guide the development of any new sporting provision which may include the creation of additional pitches, new ancillary facilities or new sites to best accommodate both the newly generated demand and current requirements. Increases in population as a result of proposed housing growth and the subsequent equivalent demand generated for playing pitch provision are explored through scenario testing in the Stage D Strategy & Action Plan document.

⁴² Does not meet minimum dimensions for match play yet is used for matches by both Leigh HC and Manchester HC.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

The subsequent increased population will create a need for further infrastructure developments which may include additional or extended school provision. It is key to note that capacity a new 3G pitch creates is not considered double that of a grass pitch. This is the case for sports provision set out in BB103 Guidelines for Mainstream Schools which exclusively applies to school sites.

Future strategic planning should consider key areas in which 3G pitches can best meet demand for a number of sports where possible and appropriate and should in turn consider the optimal surface type for any potential new development in conjunction with NGBs as part of a joined up approach.

7.3: Quality

The majority of full sized 3G pitches (four of seven) are rated as good quality. The remaining three are rated as standard whilst none rated as poor.

The carpet of a 3G pitch is considered to have a surface life of approximately 10 years with assumed maintenance of the required standard, though its lifespan can be prolonged in some cases where maintenance is of particularly high quality and rigor.

Only the pitch at St John Rigby College presently exceeds the recommended surface lifespan and is now 11 years old. The surface is rated as standard quality but performance and rate of deterioration should be monitored over in the short term onwards and consideration should be given to resurfacing when required.

Table 7.5: Summary of quality (community use)

Site ID	Site name	No. of pitches	Surface type	Year built (refurbished)	Quality
1	Abraham Guest Academy	1	Medium Pile 3G	2010 (2016)	Good
54	Howe Bridge Leisure Centre	1	Medium Pile 3G	2015	Good
92	Robin Park Arena Sports & Tennis Centre	1	Medium Pile 3G	1998 (2014)	Standard
114	St John Rigby College	1	Medium Pile 3G	2006	Standard
121	St Peters Catholic High School	1	Medium Pile 3G	2002 (2010)	Standard
163	Leigh Sports Village	2	Medium Pile 3G	2007 (2014) 2014	Good

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

Pitches can also 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 performance criteria.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

The changes from FIFA One Star to FIFA Quality will have minimal impact on the current hours of use guidelines, which suggest 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 required to certify their pitches annually, however, if any pitch replacement takes place the Club will need to meet the new FIFA performance criteria of FIFA Quality or Quality Pro. To stay on the FA register, pitches below the national league pyramid require FA testing every three years.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Availability and usage

The following table summarises the availability of full size AGPs for community use in Wigan Borough. In addition, it records the availability of provision within the peak period. Sport England's Facilities 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).

Table 7.6: Summary of 3G availability and usage

Site ID	Site name	Surface type	Floodlit	Quality ⁴³	Total number of hours available for community use during peak period	Football usage	Rugby league usage	Rugby union usage	Other sports club usage	Spare capacity
1	Abraham Guest Academy	Medium Pile 3G	Yes	Good	Weekdays: 18 hours Weekends: 13 hours Total: 31 hours	61%	7%	3%	-	29%
54	Howe Bridge Leisure Centre	Medium Pile 3G	Yes	Good	Weekdays: 18 hours Weekends: 16 hours Total: 34 hours	38%	7%	1%	-	54%
92	Robin Park Arena Sports & Tennis Centre	Medium Pile 3G	Yes	Standard	Weekdays: 18 hours Weekends: 16 hours Total: 34 hours	<i>TBC</i>				56%
114	St John Rigby College	Medium Pile 3G	Yes	Standard	Weekdays: 18 hours Weekends: 13 hours Total: 31 hours	81%	-	10%	3%	6%
121	St Peters Catholic High School	Medium Pile 3G	Yes	Standard	Weekdays: 18 hours Weekends: 16 hours Total: 34 hours	35%	9%	-	-	56%

⁴³ Quality is assessed via a combination of non-technical assessments carried out by KKP but also take account of user views and opinions.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site ID	Site name	Surface type	Floodlit?	Quality ⁴⁴	Total number of hours available for community use during peak period	Football usage	Rugby league usage	Rugby union usage	Other sports club/ education usage	Spare capacity
163	Leigh Sports Village	Medium Pile 3G	Yes	Good	Weekdays: 18 hours Weekends: 16 hours Total: 34 hours	52%	8%	4%	4%	32%
					Weekdays: 18 hours Weekends: 16 hours Total: 34 hours	17%	56%	6%	1%	20%

⁴⁴ Quality is assessed via a combination of non-technical assessments carried out by KKP but also take account of user views and opinions.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Council/Trust managed pitches

Both 3G pitches managed by the Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles Trust are considered to be operating below half capacity within the Sport England peak period. Howe Bridge Leisure Centre has 54% spare capacity whilst Robin Park Arena Sports & Tennis Centre has 56% spare capacity.

However, neither has much spare capacity midweek evenings and the majority of spare capacity is expressed at weekends. There are just 2.5 hours available midweek at Robin Park Arena Sports & Tennis Centre, all within the undesirable timeslot between 5-6pm when many coaches and volunteers are finishing or commuting from work. Similarly, Howe Bridge Leisure Centre has five hours available within this timeslot and only a third of a pitch available for an hour otherwise midweek.

In practice, of the 16 available hours at weekends, only three hours are used at Howe Bridge Leisure Centre by Howe Bridge Mills FC whilst 13 hours remain unused, Sunday with no use at all. Spare capacity at weekends accounts for 38% of the total spare capacity in the peak period throughout the week.

Similarly, 46% of spare capacity at Robin Park Arena Sports & Tennis Centre derives from a lack of weekend use. Programming highlights no bookings on Sundays, whilst only Swinton Lions RLFC uses two thirds of the pitch on Saturdays for an hour.

Leigh Sports Village

The two 3G pitches have limited levels of spare capacity during the midweek peak period, with just 10 hours available across the two, 7.5 hours of which is within the 5-6pm timeslot undesirable for use by clubs. In the case of the pitch programmed mainly for rugby, this accounts for almost all of the total spare capacity. However, the pitch programmed mainly for football has spare capacity of around 6.5 hours over the weekend amongst existing football use to increase the level of use. The pitches are also used by other key partners onsite throughout the day including as Leigh Centurions RL and Leigh College, though the provider reports it would like to develop the daytime programme further.

School pitches

Community use at St John Rigby College outside of school hours is managed by a commercial health and fitness company. The only spare capacity exists between 5-6pm on both Wednesday and Friday. The pitch is mainly used by Wigan Athletic FC which signed a three year agreement with the school to secure the level of use throughout midweek and exclusively across the entire weekend. There is also some use by Orrell RUFC and Wigan Touch Warriors Touch Club.

Community use outside of school hours at St Peters Catholic High School is managed by a commercial company. Usage is reported to have increased since the school passed over responsibility for promotion and bookings from in-house, however this has led to added impact on pitch quality as a result, exacerbating existing qualitative issues. Only five hours are available midweek, all within the 5-6pm timeslot, representing spare capacity of 15%. The remaining 41% derives from spare capacity at weekends when only All Stars FC uses the pitch for a match play between 10 am and noon.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Abraham Guest Academy has spare capacity of 29% in the peak period. There are four hours available midweek, all within the 5-6pm timeslot. Subsequently there is little to no spare capacity in the week, whilst of the 13 hours available at weekend the pitch is used for football for eight hours, particularly on Saturday mornings and Sundays. Peak time availability is limited at some sites where commercial operators run small sided football leagues throughout the week on full sized pitches, reducing the number of hours available for community use by sports clubs. However, commercial football may represent a key part of a sustainable business model at some sites and its importance to balance with capacity for club training, for example small sided leagues may occupy capacity at times which are less desirable for club training such as Friday evenings. Small sided football leagues on full sized 3G pitches include those at LSV and Robin Park Arena Sports & Tennis Centre.

Local demand

Football

There are 86 teams which play competitive club football on 3G pitches in the Borough, representing 16% of teams playing matches in the Borough. Many mini teams play on 3G pitches as part of the Wigan & District Youth League where matches are played on a central venue basis on small sized pitches at Lucozade Powerleague Soccerdome.

All FA/FIFA certified pitches are used for match play in some capacity with the exception of Robin Park Arena Sports & Tennis Centre. Clubs with a number of teams playing on 3G pitches include Leigh Genesis FC (LSV), Allstars FC (St Peter's Catholic High School) and Wigan Junior Latics FC (Abraham Guest Academy).

Access to affordable floodlit training facilities is a key issue for most clubs in Wigan, particularly those with a large number of youth and mini teams. Access to affordable 3G provision is also a priority for the FA as many multi team junior clubs have various teams training across various venues in Wigan Borough and neighbouring authorities. Many pitches both full sized and small sized operate commercial small sided football leagues which limit availability for club training.

The majority of clubs responding to the online survey report demand for additional training facilities of the 30 clubs that responded to the online survey and stated a demand for additional training facilities, 25 specifically stated a need for increased use of 3G pitches. Not only is it difficult for teams to access sufficient capacity but those at some large clubs are spread across a number of venues where they can manage to find available timeslots including on small sized 3G pitches. There are 11 smaller and three full size sand based AGPs which are also available, seven of these are used by teams for training. Sand based AGPs well used by clubs for training include Golborne High School, St Mary's Catholic High School, Hawkley Hall High School, Lowton Church of England High School, Fred Longworth High School, Golborne Sports and Social Club and The Deanery C of E High School.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Professional football

Wigan Athletic FC reports demand for increased access to 3G pitches to meet requirements of its Elite Player Performance Plan (EPPP). Professional Club Academies are graded from categories one to four, one being the best, with the grading awarded every three years through a stringent audit procedure that measures investment into staff, facilities and the support procedures within an Academy coaching programme. Clubs are awarded funding dependent upon the achieved grading.

There are also mandatory facility levels required to qualify for each level. Wigan Athletic FC is currently graded as a Category Three Academy despite all elements of the programme but facilities meeting the required standard for Category Two. The facility elements presently unable to be met are for an indoor 3G pitch (which needs to be a minimum of three quarter size) and a full sized outdoor 3G pitch. The Club reports that has the required provision of grass pitches to run the required games programme for all Academy age groups.

Although the Club needs to provide evidence of exclusive use agreements to access the required facilities it believes there is still a considerable amount of time within a week that could be available for community use. It has planning permission for both required pitches at its Christopher Park training ground but feels that both the level of funding required and the site location would severely inhibit potential for community use which would make the project viable.

Rugby union

Present use of 3G pitches for rugby union mainly extends to training. Leigh RUFC uses the pitches at Howe Bridge Leisure Centre and Leigh Sports Village and Orrell RUFC uses St John Rigby College despite neither being registered as World Rugby compliant.

Rugby league

Rugby league in Wigan is mainly played on grass pitches, with 3G pitches mainly used to accommodate training demand, particularly throughout the winter pre-season period and into the early stages of the season through February, March and April until daylight hours mean a lesser need for requirement to floodlit provision. However, there is also training use of pitches not RFL Community Standard certified at Abraham Guest Academy (Orrell St James RLFC), St Peters Catholic High School (Orrell St James RLFC), Howe Bridge Leisure Centre (Leigh Miners Rangers RLFC, Westhoughton Lions RLFC – imported from Bolton) and Robin Park Arena Sports & Tennis Centre (Swinton Lions RLFC – imported from Salford).

Only Leigh East ALRLFC is identified as playing regularly on RFL Community Standard 3G pitches at Leigh Sports Village. The Club's previous site, Grasmere Street, was sold to a developer to part fund the creation of Leigh Sports Village. Its clubhouse, grass pitch and all weather shale surface were included in the purchase with the Club in return receiving the use of facilities at Leigh Sports Village.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Other sports

Lacrosse is able to be played on both 3G and sand based AGP surfaces. At present, there are no lacrosse clubs in the Borough and as such no lacrosse use of 3G pitches.

American Football play and training is able to take place on either grass or 3G pitches. Wigan Warhawks Flag American football team does not presently use 3G provision, instead using the AGP at St John Fisher Catholic High School throughout the winter months before moving to train on grass at Woodhouse Playing Fields. However, Warrington Revolution flag American Football team imports demand to use part of the 3G pitch at LSV on Sunday afternoons.

Touch Rugby club Wigan Touch Warriors uses the 3G pitch at St John Rigby College between 8-9pm on Wednesday evenings for training. During the summer months training usually takes place on grass pitches, with matches played on a series event basis across various weekends over the UK.

Imported/exported demand

Given the significant size of the Borough, some facilities on the boundary of neighbouring authorities such as West Lancashire or St Helens may be more accessible to some Wigan Borough teams and vice versa. For example, St Peters Catholic High School 3G pitch is accessed by Appley Bridge FC (West Lancashire Borough) for training demand. The Club is less than four miles from Wigan Borough and it may find importing its training demand more accessible than finding a suitable locating within West Lancashire.

There is demand imported from other local authorities to access 3G pitch provision in the Borough. Westhoughton Lions RL imports demand from Bolton to use Howe Bridge Leisure Centre for training, whilst Warrington Revolution American Football uses the LSV pitch for training on Sunday afternoons.

In the same way as teams within Wigan Borough play on 3G pitches due to leagues being based at central venues, this dictates why demand is in some cases exported. For example, 15 teams from Atherton Labernum Rovers FC, Atherton Town FC and Hindley Green FC play on 3G pitches at Bolton Arena (Bolton) where the Bolton & Bury District Junior Football League (BBDJFL) hosts central venue leagues.

Key trends and changes in demand for pitches

Football

Demand from football for 3G pitches has increased in recent years due to demand from clubs for training but also due to a growing acceptance by local leagues of use for competitive matches, where play on 3G pitches is now included within the FA Standard Code of Rule. This considered, the general condition of local authority pitches and increasingly limited budget for regular and adequate maintenance may lead more teams to consider AGPs as a possible alternative should it be financially viable.

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A number of leagues around the country now use 3G pitches as central venues where all play takes place. This is especially prominent in Wigan and the general format for mini and youth football up to older youth age groups is based on 3G pitches at central venues. Mini soccer leagues especially are increasingly adopting this approach either for whole seasons or a number of months throughout the winter because they can continually offer a high quality playing experience, in many cases beyond that of grass pitches which are generally of comparatively poorer quality. It also allows leagues to continue to run throughout the winter, largely unaffected by poor weather which has disrupted the football season over recent years, causing it to run into summer and clash more often with summer sports. This trend is likely to increase in the future and more mini soccer, Flexi and Vets leagues could be played exclusively on 3G pitches.

Rugby union

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 strategy on investment in 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.

Rugby league

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. However, in Wigan this is not the case and instead there is a preference for 3G pitches for both training and match play, in contrast to most areas nationally. 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.

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7.4: Supply and demand analysis

FA training scenario

The FA considers high quality third generation artificial grass pitches as an essential tool in promoting coach and player development. The FA 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.

The FA's long-term ambition is to provide every affiliated team in England the opportunity to train once per week on floodlit 3G surface, together with priority access for every Charter Standard Community Club through a partnership agreement. The FA standard is calculated by using the latest Sport England research "AGPs State of the Nation March 2012" assuming that 51% of AGP usage is by sports clubs when factoring in the number of training slots available per pitch at peak times. It is estimated that one full sized AGP can service 42 teams.

It is considered that there are 584 teams which require access to train once per week on floodlit 3G surface. When applied on an analysis area level, this equates to the need for 12 full sized 3G pitches to service this level of training demand. At present, there are seven available full sized 3G pitches across the Borough. Therefore, there is a shortfall of five full sized 3G pitches to meet training demand for football. A new full sized 3G pitch is under construction at Ashton Leisure Centre/Cansfield High School which when completed will reduce the shortfall in the Ashton Area from two to one and in turn the Borough wide shortfall from five to four.

The table below considers the number of full sized 3G pitches required if every team was to remain training within the analysis area in which they play. For this, please note that the 3G requirement is rounded down to the nearest whole number.

Table 7.7: Current demand for 3G pitches in Wigan Borough for football training (42 teams per pitch)

Analysis area	Current number of teams	Current requirement	Current number of available 3G pitches	Current shortfall	Future number of teams ⁴⁵	Future shortfall
Ashton	107	2.54 - 2	0	2	107	2
Leigh	204	4.85 - 4	3	1	210	2
Wigan Town	273	6.5 - 6	4	2	280	2
Total	584	12	7	5	597	6

The model assumes that all pitches are fully available for club use at peak time when in practice a number of pitches operate commercial small sided leagues which reduce capacity available. It also projects all football teams as training on full sized 3G pitches when in practice a proportion of football training demand should be retained on sand based AGPs in order to maintain financial and commercial sustainability of these pitches.

⁴⁵ Based on increased demand forecasted from team generation rates

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There are also 18 smaller sized pitches shown in Table 7.8 that help to accommodate demand, for example, from mini teams and for training. However, not all of these serve this function and those at commercial sided football centres such as Lucozade Powerleague Soccerdome primarily cater for small sided football leagues.

The small sided 3G pitch at Hindsford AFC was opened in late 2016. It was 90% funded by a waste management company with the Club contributing 10% of the cost.

Table 7.8: Summary of small sized 3G pitches in Wigan

Site ID	Site name	Floodlights	Surface type	Quantity	Size (metres)
51	Hindsford AFC	Yes	Medium Pile 3G	1	20x10
70	Lowton St. Marys C of E School	No	Short Pile 3G	1	20x10
71	Lucozade Powerleague Soccerdome (Wigan)	Yes	Short Pile 3G	3	40x20
				2	32x21
				1	30x20
92	Robin Park Arena Sports & Tennis Centre	Yes	Short Pile 3G	4	33x18
143	Wigan Youth Zone	Yes	Short Pile 3G	4	37x18
163	Leigh Sports Village	Yes	Medium Pile 3G	1	70x50 ⁴⁶
		Yes		1	30x18

7.5: Conclusion

In conclusion, there is an insufficient supply of full sized 3G pitches to meet current and anticipated future demand based on the FA training model for football in Wigan Borough. Furthermore, there is competition for access to 3G pitches from other sports for both training and match play, particularly rugby league and rugby union, which may exacerbate the forecasted requirement for five additional full sized 3G pitches. For example, capacity at some sites such as LSV and St John Rigby is secured through agreement for use by key partners such as Leigh East ARLFC and Wigan Athletic FC and is therefore not accessible to community clubs. Though Table 7.6 identifies spare capacity at some level on all pitches, in practice there is very little midweek capacity which is the peak time for use, with most capacity midweek present in 5-6pm timeslots which are undesirable as many club volunteers are commuting from work.

The presently identified shortfalls by the FA training model will be reduced to four through creation of a new full sized 3G pitch in the Ashton Area. There are also six small sized sand based AGPs which are not of suitable size for use for adult/senior hockey, football or rugby matches. All are considered to require surface replacement in the short term and consequently there may be potential to at the same time extend these pitches as part of a conversion to 3G to help meet these shortfalls, on the condition there is no anticipated detriment to hockey in the Borough.

⁴⁶ Split into three smaller pitches by removable dividers within and hired as such but also able to be used as one larger pitch.

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

3G pitches summary

- ◀ **Supply and demand analysis highlights that Wigan Borough has insufficient supply of 3G pitches to meet current and future demand, based on the FA training model and the multitude of sports which also require access to 3G pitch provision. This shortfall equates to five full sized 3G pitches.**
- ◀ There are seven full sized 3G pitches in Wigan Borough, all of which have floodlighting. All seven pitches available for community use.
- ◀ There are a further 18 small sized 3G pitches, six of which are located at a commercial small sided football centre.
- ◀ There are six full sized FA or FIFA certified 3G pitches suitable for competitive football play, with only St John Rigby College not certified. There is also one small sized pitch at Leigh Sports Village certified to host competitive match play.
- ◀ There are two 3G pitches suitable for competitive and contact rugby union activity certified as World Rugby compliant and on the RFU register of compliant pitches. Robin Park Arena Sports & Tennis Centre was previously certified but has not been retested since the December 2016 renewal date.
- ◀ There are two RFL Community Standard 3G pitches suitable for competitive and contact rugby league play.
- ◀ There are plans and aspirations for development of new 3G pitch provision, most notably the ongoing construction of a full sized 3G pitch at Ashton Leisure Centre/Cansfield High School.
- ◀ Of the seven pitches, four are rated as good quality, three as standard and none rated as poor.
- ◀ The pitch at St John Rigby College currently exceeds the recommended lifespan and resurfacing should be considered in the short-term dependant on rate of deterioration.
- ◀ There are also six sand based AGPs at school sites measuring approximately 80 metres long which do not meet minimum dimension criteria to host competitive adult/senior matches for hockey, football or either code of rugby. Where feasible and where there is no impact on hockey, these pitches could be extended and converted to 3G surfaces.
- ◀ Use of 3G pitches is significant and extends beyond football and rugby union, including rugby league, Touch Rugby and American football.
- ◀ The FA training model estimates that there is a need for 12 full sized 3G pitches to service football training needs in the Borough. There are presently seven full sized pitches, all available for community use, therefore representing a shortfall of five full sized pitches. This will be reduced to four upon the completion of the pitch at Ashton Leisure Centre/Cansfield High School

WIGAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY ASSESSMENT REPORT

PART 8: OTHER PITCH SPORTS

8.1: Touch

Introduction

Touch (also known as Touch Football or Touch Rugby) is a variant of rugby organised and administered globally by the Federation of International Touch (FIT). Touch is essentially a variation of rugby league with the tackling of opposing players replaced by a touch. Touch is therefore not a contact sport but a limited-contact sport.

Touch is able to be played on natural turf and 3G pitches, with the field of play measuring 70 metres in length from score line to score line (excluding touchdown areas of an additional 5 metres at each end) and 50 metres in width excluding the interchange areas. On field teams are made up of six players each, with up to eight substitutes permitted per team. Touch allows for mixed sex participation at all levels and offers mixed, men's or women's playing formats, with on field male/female ratios applicable to teams in mixed competition. Matches are generally made up of two twenty-minute halves.

England Touch (ETA) is the governing body for Touch in England. Its role is to promote, encourage, foster, develop and grow the sport of Touch in England, under the Federation of International Touch (FIT) rules and guidelines. England Touch a non-profit organisation primarily funded by membership fees, led by a volunteer-run Executive Committee selected by members. Though ETA stands as an independent governing body, it affiliates to the RFU and in some areas assists in the delivery of the RFU O2 Touch Programme.

Its aim is to ensure anyone wanting to play the sport can do so in a safe, consistent and enjoyable environment. This is done in a variety of ways:

- ◆ Administering and delivering referee and coaching courses
- ◆ Hosting player development days
- ◆ Organising and promoting events and tournaments from grass-roots to elite divisions at Touch Nationals
- ◆ Ensuring sound policies are in place, updated and monitored
- ◆ Liaising and working with a number of our partners to deliver the sport
- ◆ Developing and selecting national squads
- ◆ Supporting and setting up Touch leagues
- ◆ Working with the European and worldwide Touch community to grow the game

England Touch reports experiencing unrivalled growth in terms of the number of people playing Touch in England. Current focus is on supporting this increased participation over forthcoming years at all levels, but with a particular emphasis on youth participation and development thus providing a strong base for the future.

It is responsible for the competitive structure in England which operates on a series circuit basis throughout the summer. There are three main tiers of ETA competition; the National Touch Series (NTS), Challenge Touch Series (CTS) and recently introduced Development Touch Series (DTS), all played as a mixed sex format. There are four NTS and CTS events each year, operating simultaneously on Saturdays and culminating in a fifth finals weekend, whilst there are national and regional DTS events.

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These three tiers make up the club based competition and one half of the main season, with Touch Nationals accounting for the remainder where players are selected to represent their region in competition against others from across the country. England Touch also operates the University Touch Series (UTS) which has five events each year, whilst 2017 has seen the introduction of the Men's and Women's Touch Cup (MWTC) which will men's and women's competitions running simultaneously over three events.

Demand

There are two ET affiliated touch clubs based in the Borough; Wigan Touch Warriors and Orrell St James Touch. Ashton Bears ARLFC also operates a ladies' touch team which uses the provision at Low Bank Road.

Wigan Touch Warriors

Wigan Touch Warriors currently has approximately 40 members and has seen an increase in participation within the previous three years. Although it does not host official competitive fixtures within the Borough, the Club still requires pitch provision for training throughout the year. The Club accesses Shevington Recreation Ground for its current summer training for four hours a week. It does not officially rent use of the site from Shevington Parish Council, marking out a touch pitch with cones on the playing field instead. The Club reports this is to limit associated costs for its members as the majority are students.

It should be noted that the Club previously used a piece of land at Standish High School, in 2016, where it marked out a designated touch pitch, annexed from the main site by perimeter fencing and openly accessible to the Standish cycleway currently in development. However, this area of land stopped being maintained by the school which has led the Club to find an alternative venue, whilst it is not known whether management of this piece of land will remain with the school as it seeks transfer to Academy status. The Club also used the AGP at Standish High School for winter training but due to reported increase in pitch hire costs it now uses the 3G pitch at St John Rigby for two hours a week.

The Club participates in nationwide tournaments and has aspirations to host such a tournament in Wigan Borough, having achieved relative success in recent years winning the NTS in 2016. This would require the marking of approximately eight to ten dedicated touch pitches at least temporarily for the event.

Orrell St James Touch

Orrell St James ARLFC is predominately a rugby league club which also has developing rugby union and touch teams. Its touch team, much like Wigan Touch Warriors, plays in tournaments outside the Borough with the main requirement for provision within the Borough being for training. The Orrell St James Touch (OSJ Touch) trains with the rugby league section teams at Bankes Playing Fields, on the grass rugby league pitches in the summer and on the full sized 3G pitch at St Peters Catholic High School in the winter. OSJ Touch uses ancillary facilities Bankes Playing Field which are detailed fully in Part 4: Rugby League.

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The Club reports aspirations to create an additional team which would also be based at Bankes Playing Fields; however, there is not presently a dedicated touch pitch at the site with any future demand likely to train with the existing squad on the already overplayed rugby league pitches. Orrell St James ARLFC states it rotates pitch usage for both competitive and training demand in order to maintain quality and give heavily used pitches time to recover.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is considered there is not a suitable level of supply for the level of touch demand across the Wigan Borough. Given the poor quality football pitch area used by Wigan Touch Warriors at Shevington Recreation Ground is presently unused for football; the current level of use by the Club is sustainable. Consideration should be given as to whether the Parish Council could reconfigure this pitch to be marked for touch during the summer. However, touch use of Bankes Playing Fields (incorporated with the rugby league training sessions) is not sustainable and as highlighted in Part 4: Rugby League, there is need for increased capacity to accommodate training demand onsite to alleviate overplay by a combination of rugby union, rugby league and touch training. Both teams have sufficient access to training facilities on 3G pitches throughout the winter, whilst demand for touch may increase should England Touch experience further growth and anticipated growth from rugby union and rugby league be reflected in other related forms of the sport such as touch.

Touch summary

- ◀ **There is presently insufficient pitch provision to cater for demand from the two ET affiliated touch clubs in Wigan.**
- ◀ **Level of use at Bankes Playing Fields (touch sessions are combined with rugby league training) is not sustainable and additional capacity is required as a whole for rugby league, rugby union and touch use onsite.**
- ◀ **Since the touch pitch at Standish high School is no longer marked and maintained, there demand for a specifically marked touch pitch for use by Wigan Touch Warriors.**
- ◀ There are no longer any specifically marked touch pitches in Wigan Borough. A pitch previously marked at Standish High School (annexed from the main site) used by Wigan Touch Warriors is no longer marked and maintained for use.
- ◀ There are two England Touch affiliated touch clubs in the Borough; Wigan Touch Warriors which uses Shevington Recreation Ground and Orrell St James Touch based at Bankes Playing Fields.
- ◀ Regular requirements for pitch provision for touch extend to training use rather than matches. Both clubs report using 3G pitches for winter training.

8.2: American Football

Introduction

American football in the UK is governed and administered by the British American Football Association (BAFA). Adult men's contact teams play within its National Leagues (BAFANL) on Sunday afternoons and play five home fixtures per regular season with a playoff system to follow for those which qualify. Junior (U19) contact football is played as a full 11v11 format league season whilst youth (U17) contact football is played as a 5v5 format with full equipment and tackling based across a series of day tournaments as part of a festival structure.

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The men's and junior seasons run from April to August with junior games starting at noon followed by adults at 3pm. Youth teams play 5v5 games on smaller pitches, usually two pitches marked widthways across a large pitch. Women's contact is 7v7 format game which also operates on a tournament series basis much like youth football. Flag football (a non-contact version of the game) operates both men's and women's competitions and is played at younger junior age groups, offering an alternate route into participation.

Demand

There are no American football clubs playing contact formats of play in Wigan Borough. There are however two flag football teams using pitch provision; one based in the borough and one imported from Warrington.

Wigan Warhawks American Flag Football Team plays within Wigan Borough. As mentioned earlier American flag football is the non-contact version of American Football where tackles are made by pulling off a flag worn by all participants much the same as tag-rugby. The Team plays competitive matches in a number of tournaments throughout the season which runs from April to July. The tournament hosts a numerous games on one day and a team's performance dictates whether or not it qualifies for playoffs in August and early September.

Wigan Warhawks American Flag Football Team has one senior men's team, which plays in the BAFA Adult Flag competitions. It uses the grass rugby league pitches at Woodhouse Playing Fields or sand based AGP at St John Fisher Catholic High School for training throughout the season on either Tuesday evenings from 6.30pm until dark or on Sunday mornings 10am-12pm, dependent on upcoming fixtures. It only accesses provisions in the Borough for its training demand as competitive fixtures are played at central venues.

There is also some imported American Football training demand from neighbouring Warrington. Warrington Revolution American Flag Football Team accesses Leigh Sports Village 3G pitches for occasional training during the early months of the season, later reverting to use of grass pitches at Birchwood Forest Park in Warrington for Sunday afternoon training during the summer months.

American football summary

- ◀ **Overall, current demand for flag American football is able to be catered for by existing playing field provision.**
- ◀ There are no American football clubs playing contact format competition in the Borough, though there is one flag football team, Wigan Warhawks.
- ◀ Warrington Revolution imports demand from neighbouring Warrington on occasion during the winter months to access 3G pitch provision for training at Leigh Sports Village

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APPENDIX 1: 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.

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

National Planning Policy Framework

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.

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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 Game Strategy (2015 – 2019)

The Football Association's (FA) National Game Strategy provides a strategic framework that sets out key priorities, expenditure proposals and targets for the national game (i.e., football) over a four year period. The main issues facing grassroots football are identified as:

- ◀ Sustain and Increase Participation.
- ◀ Ensure access to education sites to accommodate the game.
- ◀ Help players to be the best that they can be and provide opportunities for them to progress from grassroots to elite.
- ◀ Recruit, retain and develop a network of qualified referees
- ◀ Support clubs, leagues and other competition providers to develop a safe, inclusive and positive football experience for everyone.
- ◀ Support Clubs and Leagues to become sustainable businesses, understanding and serving the needs of players and customers.
- ◀ Improve grass pitches through the pitch improvement programme to improve existing facilities and changing rooms.
- ◀ Deliver new and improved facilities including new Football Turf Pitches.
- ◀ Work with priority Local Authorities enabling 50% of mini-soccer and youth matched to be played on high quality artificial grass pitches.

England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) Cricket Unleashed 5 Year Plan

The England and Wales Cricket Board unveiled a new strategic five-year plan in 2016 (available at <http://www.cricketunleashed.com>). Its success will be measured by the number of people who play, follow or support the whole game.

The plan sets out five important headline elements and each of their key focuses, these are:

- ◀ **More Play** – make the game more accessible and inspire the next generation of players, coaches, officials and volunteers. Focus on:
 - ◀ *Clubs and leagues*
 - ◀ *Kids*
 - ◀ *Communities*
 - ◀ *Casual*

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- ◀ **Great Teams** – deliver winning teams who inspire and excite through on-field performance and off-field behaviour. Focus on:
 - ◀ *Pathway*
 - ◀ *Support*
 - ◀ *Elite Teams*
 - ◀ *England Teams*

- ◀ **Inspired Fans** – put the fan at the heart of our game to improve and personalise the cricket experience for all. Focus on:
 - ◀ *Fan focus*
 - ◀ *New audiences*
 - ◀ *Global stage*
 - ◀ *Broadcast and digital*

- ◀ **Good Governance and Social Responsibility** – make decisions in the best interests of the game and use the power of cricket to make a positive difference. Focus on:
 - ◀ *Integrity*
 - ◀ *Community programmes*
 - ◀ *Our environments*
 - ◀ *One plan*

- ◀ **Strong Finance and Operations** – increase the game's revenues, invest our resources wisely and administer responsibly to secure the growth of the game. Focus on:
 - ◀ *People*
 - ◀ *Revenue and reach*
 - ◀ *Insight*
 - ◀ *Operations*

The Rugby Football Union National Facilities Strategy (2013-2017)

The RFU National Facility Strategy 2013-2017 provides a framework for development of high-quality, well-managed facilities that will help to strengthen member clubs and grow the game in communities around them. In conjunction with partners, this strategy will assist and support clubs and other organisations, so that they can continue to provide quality opportunities for all sections of the community to enjoy the game. It sets out the broad facility needs of the sport and identifies investment priorities to the game and its key partners. It identifies that with 1.5 million players there is a continuing need to invest in community club facilities in order to:

- ◀ Create a platform for growth in club rugby participation and membership, especially with a view to exploiting the opportunities afforded by RWC 2015.
- ◀ Ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of rugby clubs, through supporting not only their playing activity but also their capacity to generate revenue through a diverse range of activities and partnerships.

In summary, the priorities for investment which have met the needs of the game for the Previous period remain valid:

- ◀ Increase the provision of changing rooms and clubhouses that can sustain concurrent adult and junior male and female activity at clubs
- ◀ Improve the quality and quantity of natural turf pitches and floodlighting
- ◀ Increase the provision of artificial grass pitches that deliver wider game development

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It is also a high priority for the RFU to target investment in the following:

- ◀ Upgrade and transform social, community and catering facilities, which can support the generation of additional revenues
- ◀ Facility upgrades, which result in an increase in energy-efficiency, in order to reduce the running costs of clubs
- ◀ Pitch furniture, including rugby posts and pads, pitch side spectator rails and grounds maintenance equipment

England Hockey Strategy

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.

Our club market is well structured and clubs are required to affiliate to England Hockey to play in community leagues. As a result, only relatively few occasional teams lie outside our affiliation structure. Schools and Universities are the other two areas where significant hockey is played.

The 3 main objectives of the facilities strategy are:

1. PROTECT: To conserve the existing hockey provision

We currently have over 800 pitches that are used by hockey clubs (club, school, universities.) We need 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. There needs to be 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.

The research has identified key areas across the country where there is a lack of suitable Hockey provision and there is a need for additional pitches. 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.

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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

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APPENDIX 2: STEERING GROUP CONTACTS

The Steering Group will be responsible for the vision and direction of the Playing Pitch Strategy from a strategic perspective and supporting, checking and challenging the work of the project team. The Steering Group will be the client for any consultancy support required. The group will consist of the following officers and stakeholders:

Wigan Council:		
Name	Role	
Councillor J Moodie	Chair (also Chair of SHAPE Board)	
Penny McGinty	Assistant Director, Land and Property (SRO for PPS project)	
Karen Hewitt	Corporate Land Manager	
Nick Clarke	Planning Policy and Projects Manager	
Paul Barton	AD Environment (including Greenspaces/Grounds maintenance)	
Nic Rigby	Engagement Manager	
Emma Edwards	Lead Commissioner: Early Intervention and Prevention (Public Health)	
Jorge Solis	Project Manager (Secretary)	
Michael Fishwick	Greenspace Development Officer (Resources Directorate - Corporate Contracts & Assets)	
Nick Clarke	Planning & Transportation Policy Service Manager (Places: Growth & Housing)	
External stakeholders:		
Organisation	Name	Role
Sport England	Fiona Pudge	Planning Manager
Greater Sport	Shirley Veevers	Development Manager
Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles	Pete Burt	Executive Director – Business Development
Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles	Jeff Gorse	Performance Management Officer
Leigh Sports Village	Simon Toon	Chief Executive
Leigh Sports Village	Justin Cawthra	Senior Duty Manager
England & Wales Cricket Board	Fiona Prescott	Regional Club & Facilities Manager (North West)
Lancashire County Cricket Board	Bobby Denning	Managing Director
Rugby Football League	John McMullen	Club & Competition Manager
Football Association	Alice Watson	Regional Facilities & Investment Manager (North West)
Lancashire County Football Association	Shaun Burke	Facilities & Investment Officer
Lancashire County Football Association	Michael Nadal	Football Development Officer

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External stakeholders:		
Organisation	Name	Role
Rugby Football Union	Tom Bartram	Area Facilities Manager
England Hockey	Julie Longden	Relationship Manager
English Lacrosse	Martin Cragg	North West Officer & Boys National Academy Co-Ordinator
British American Football Association	Russell Hewitt	Competitions Director