

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY SUMMARY

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INTRODUCTION

- 1) This Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) is part of East Herts Council's Open Space and Sports Facilities Assessment Technical Study. The main document contains the detailed assessment of pitch needs, including site specific assessments and tabulated calculations. This document summarises the key findings.
- 2) The PPS includes the following types of pitch:
 - a) Adult grass football pitches
 - b) Youth grass 11v11 football pitches
 - c) Youth grass 9v9 football pitches
 - d) Mini-soccer grass 7v7 football pitches
 - e) Mini-soccer grass 5v5 football pitches
 - f) '3G' football turf pitches
 - g) Grass and artificial turf cricket pitches
 - h) Grass rugby pitches
 - i) Artificial Grass Pitches for hockey

ASSESSMENT PROCESS

- 3) The assessment adopted the approach advocated in Sport England's 'Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance' (2013). The process involves five stages and ten steps as follows:
 - a) **Stage A** - Prepare and tailor the approach (Step 1).
 - b) **Stage B** - Gather information on the supply of and demand for provision (Steps 2 and 3).
 - c) **Stage C** - Assess the supply and demand information and views (Steps 4, 5 and 6).
 - d) **Stage D** - Develop the strategy (Steps 7 and 8).
 - e) **Stage E** - Deliver the strategy and keep it robust and up-to-date (Steps 9 and 10).

- 4) The assessment established the following:
- a) The adequacy of current provision and any existing spare capacity.
 - b) Additional needs to 2033, based upon projected population participation increases.
 - c) The net requirement for additional provision has been calculated by comparing the extra required capacity to the current spare capacity where appropriate, to identify the difference.

FOOTBALL PITCH NEEDS IN EAST HERTS

What are the main characteristics of current supply and demand?

- 5) The key characteristics of current supply and demand for football in East Herts are as follows:
- a) 407 affiliated teams play football in East Herts and most local match demand can be accommodated within the district. A further 107 teams are attributable to unmet and latent demand. Only 4.8% of players in East Herts teams live outside the district.
 - b) Football is very buoyant in the district, with several large clubs with 20 teams or more based in the main centres of population.
 - c) Almost all clubs have experienced growth in the past three years, particularly in the youth and mini age groups. However, the main factor inhibiting growth is a shortage of pitches.
 - d) The activities of several of the larger FA Charter Standard clubs in the district are curtailed by the quantity and/or quality of pitch and ancillary facilities provision:
 - Bishop's Stortford Community FC plays at seven different sites, three of which have poor quality or no changing facilities. The Club is currently seeking to identify a site where it can develop a home base comprising two '3G' pitches, some grass pitches and a clubhouse.
 - Bengoe Tigers FC is operating at full capacity and is currently investigating the feasibility of developing additional pitches at a new site in Hertford.
 - Wodson Park FC has very poor quality changing facilities at its Crouchfields site, which it would like to improve.
 - Buntingford Cougars FC is currently playing at five different sites and would like to develop a '3G' pitch at The Bury, to create additional capacity.
 - e) Five adult pitches are currently unused, which reflects the reduction in affiliated teams in this age group.

- f) 24 youth and 23 mini-soccer pitches are on school sites with no community access. These represent an opportunity to develop community usage, given the resurgent demand for football in these age groups and the waiting lists being operated by several clubs at present.
- g) Only 3.8% of grass pitches in the district are rated as 'poor' quality, although a number of others score towards the lower end of the 'standard' quality range and could easily become poor quality if grounds maintenance regimes are allowed to deteriorate any further.
- h) 35.1% of all pitches in East Herts are served by 'poor' quality or no changing facilities, including those at key sites like Grange Paddocks, Crouchfields and Hartham Common/Leisure Centre.
- i) Demand for floodlit '3G' football turf pitches significantly outstrips supply, with many teams having to access pitches in neighbouring areas. Based on the FA calculation that there should be one full-sized '3G' pitch per 42 teams, there should be 12.24 pitches in East Herts, compared with the one current full-sized facility. However, construction has commenced on another full-sized pitch at Richard Hale School (Hertford).
- j) Pitch hire charges in East Herts are comparable to those in neighbouring areas, so prices should have no influence on imported or exported demand.
- k) Grounds maintenance expenditure is at or below the lower end of the levels recommended by Sport England, although the provision of voluntary labour by clubs to support pitch maintenance is not costed within the local figures.
- l) More than 80% of pitches in East Herts have secured community access and access to the remaining pitches on school sites could, in theory, be withdrawn in the absence of a formal community use agreement.

Is there enough accessible and secured use to meet current demand?

- 6) The situation for each type of football pitch is as follows:
 - a) **Adult pitches:** There is collective peak time surplus of 1.0 match equivalents and this figure changes to a deficit of 1.0 match equivalent if the site with unsecured community access (Freman College) is discounted.
 - b) **Youth 11v11 pitches:** There is a collective peak time deficit of 6.5 match equivalents. This figure increases to 11.5 match equivalents if the sites with unsecured community access are discounted.

- c) **Youth 9v9 pitches:** There is collective peak time deficit of 3.0 match equivalents and this figure would increase to 11.0 match equivalents if sites with unsecured community access are discounted.
- d) **Mini-soccer 7v7 pitches:** Supply and demand are balanced at peak time and but figure would become a deficit of 6.0 match equivalents if sites with unsecured community access are discounted.
- e) **Mini-soccer 5v5 pitches:** There is a collective peak time surplus of 4.0 match equivalents, although this figure would be a deficit of 2.0 match equivalents if sites with unsecured community access are discounted.
- f) **'3G' football turf pitches:** There is collective deficit of 9.52 '3G' football turf pitches based upon the FA's one pitch per 42 teams' formula.
- g) **Sub-area shortfalls:** Sub-area shortfalls are particularly prevalent in the Bishop's Stortford and Hertford and Ware sub-areas.

Is the accessible provision of suitable quality and appropriately maintained?

7) The current situation on pitch quality and maintenance is as follows:

- a) **Grass pitch quality:** Only 3.8% of grass pitches in the district are rated as 'poor' quality, although a number of others score towards the lower end of the 'standard' quality range and could easily become poor quality if grounds maintenance regimes are allowed to deteriorate any further.
- b) **Pitch quality:** More than half of local clubs believe that pitch quality has deteriorated since the previous season, although all pitches still meet league standards.
- c) **Changing facilities:** More than one-third of football pitches in East Herts are served by 'poor' quality or no changing facilities, including those at key sites like Grange Paddocks, Crouchfields and Hartham Common/Leisure Centre.

What are the main characteristics of future supply and demand?

8) The situation for each type of football pitch by 2033 will be as follows:

- a) **Adult pitches:** There will be extra demand equivalent to 19.5 pitches.
- b) **Youth 11v11 pitches:** There will be extra demand equivalent to 10.0 pitches.
- c) **Youth 9v9 pitches:** There will be extra demand equivalent to 8.5 pitches.
- d) **Mini-soccer 7v7 pitches:** There will be additional demand equivalent to 7.0 pitches.

- e) **Mini-soccer 5v5 pitches:** There will additional demand equivalent to 6.5 pitches.
- f) **'3G' football turf pitches:** There will additional demand equivalent to 3.07 pitches.
- g) **Sub-area shortfalls:** Sub-area shortfalls are particularly prevalent in the Bishop's Stortford and Hertford and Ware sub-areas, which reflects the main focus of housing growth in the district.

Is there enough accessible and secured use to meet future demand?

- 9) Given the current deficits in secured pitch provision in East Herts, extra provision will be required to meet the emerging future needs. The total spatial requirement is 41.96ha for additional grass pitches and 11.64ha for '3G' football turf pitches

Options for securing extra accessible and secured pitch capacity

- 10) The options for securing the additional pitches are as follows:

- a) **Protect:** Protecting existing pitch sites through the Local Plan will be key both to maintaining the current stock and to increase secured local capacity by:
 - Securing access to at least some of the 63 existing grass pitches on school sites.
 - Reinstating some or all of the 11 existing un-used pitches.
- b) **Provide:** Ensuring that new pitch and related changing provision is made in conjunction with new housing developments, either on site or through developer contributions that reflect the additional pitch demand arising from the increased population.
 - The FA's highest regional priority is to secure a home base for Bishop's Stortford Community FC. The preferred option is for a site with two '3G' full-sized football turf pitches and a clubhouse. East Herts Council should take a proactive approach to assisting the club with acquiring a site, which might include purchasing the land and leasing it to the club to develop and operate the facilities.
 - Bengo Tigers FC and Hertford Town FC are investigating the feasibility of developing pitches at a site near Hertford currently owned by Lafarge.
 - Several pitch developments on new and existing education sites have potential to meet additional community needs, providing access is secured through the planning process.
- c) **Enhance:** Improving the carrying capacity of existing pitches will accommodate additional play. The options include improved drainage and maintenance to grass pitches, floodlighting to extend usage periods and providing more '3G' surfaces in lieu of grass pitches.

Policy recommendations

11) Protect:

- a) **Recommendation 1 - Safeguarding existing provision:** The East Herts PPS comprises a robust and evidence-based assessment of current and future needs for football in the district. The Strategy has identified a need for all current and disused football pitch sites to be retained, on the basis of the specific identified roles that each can play in delivering the needs of the sport in East Herts both now and in the future. It is therefore recommended that existing planning policies continue to support the retention of all sites, based upon the evidence in the Playing Pitch Strategy.
- b) **Recommendation 2 - Community access to education facilities:** 24 youth and 23 mini-soccer pitches are on school sites with no community access. These represent an opportunity to develop community usage, given the resurgent demand for football in these age groups and the waiting lists being operated by several clubs at present.
 - Efforts are made to secure community use agreements at existing education pitches.
 - Community use agreements become a standard condition of planning consent at all new education pitches, along with a design and specification that is consistent with maximising school and community use.

12) Enhance:

- a) **Recommendation 3 - Capacity improvements:** Some current demand for football in East Herts can be accommodated by enhancing existing provision. It is recommended that the priorities identified in the site-specific action plan in the East Herts PPS be used as the basis for prioritising pitch and ancillary facility enhancements that will help to alleviate some of the current identified deficits.
- b) **Recommendation 4 - Developer contributions (enhancements):** Some of the additional demand for football arising from housing development in East Herts, can be accommodated through enhancements to existing pitches and facilities. It is recommended that the priorities identified in the site-specific action plan in the East Herts PPS be used as the basis for determining facility enhancements that demonstrably relate to the scale and location of specific developments and that an appropriate level of financial contributions be sought under Section 106 or CIL arrangements, using Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator tool, to cover the capital and revenue implications of the enhancements.

13) Provide:

- a) **Recommendation 5 - Strategic hub site solutions:** Several of the larger, strategically important clubs in East Herts currently experience operational difficulties, with teams playing on scattered sites and frequently on poor quality pitches. It is therefore recommended that in line with FA guidance strategic hub site solutions involving two '3G' pitches, grass pitches and clubhouse facilities be investigated for the following clubs and locations:
- Bishop's Stortford Community FC.
 - Bengio Tigers and Hertford Town FC.
 - Buntingford Cougars FC.
 - Wodson Park Sports Trust/North Ware extension.
 - Gilston Garden Village.
- b) **Recommendation 6 - '3G' football turf pitches:** There is a particularly large deficit of '3G' pitches in East Herts, amounting to a current shortfall of 9.5 pitches, with projected needs for an additional 3 pitches to meet future demand. It is therefore recommended that existing proposals for '3G' pitches be assessed in the context of the identified shortfalls and encouraged where appropriate. Where there are no active plans, the Strategy Implementation Group should seek local solutions on a proactive basis.
- c) **Recommendation 7 - Developer contributions (new provision):** Most of the extra demand for football arising from housing developments in East Herts, will need to be accommodated through new provision. It is recommended that the site-specific action plan in the East Herts PPS be used to determine which proposed provision demonstrably relates to the scale and location of specific developments and an appropriate level of financial contributions be sought under Section 106 or CIL arrangements, using Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator tool, to cover their capital and revenue cost implications. Some solutions are likely to involve provision in neighbouring areas and provision should be made for cross-border coordination and financial contributions.

Action plan

- 14) In the context of the recommendations above, the tables below set out the football action plan to guide the implementation of the strategy. The abbreviations stand for EHC - East Herts Council, IOG - Institute of Groundsmanship and FA - Football Association.

Strategic actions

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Resources</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Strategic hub site solution in Bishop's Stortford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and secure a suitable site • Feasibility study • Develop the site 	EHC	BSCFC Herts FA Football Foundation	TBC	High
Strategic hub site solution in Hertford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and secure a suitable site • Feasibility study • Develop the site 	EHC	Bengeo Tigers FC Hertford Town FC Herts FA Football Foundation	TBC	High
Strategic hub site solution in Buntingford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and secure a suitable site • Feasibility study • Develop the site 	EHC	Buntingford Cougars FC Herts FA Football Foundation	TBC	High
Strategic hub site solution in Ware	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and secure a suitable site • Feasibility study • Develop the site 	EHC	Wodson Park Trust Herts FA Football Foundation	TBC	High
Strategic hub site solution in Gilston Garden Village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and secure a suitable site • Feasibility study • Develop the site 	EHC	Developer Herts FA Football Foundation	TBC	High
Community access to education pitches	Pursue Community Use Agreements at existing high priority sites and all future proposed pitches on education sites.	EHC	Schools	Possible funding for improvements to physical accessibility.	Medium
Developer contributions	Secure developer contributions for new and improved pitch provision related to new development.	EHC	Developers	TBC	High

Bishop's Stortford and surrounds

Site	Issues	Action	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority
Albury Football Ground	Poor quality adult pitch and changing facility.	Improve pitch quality and new pavilion.	Albury FC	Albury Parish Council	£20,000 for pitch £200,000 for pavilion	Medium
Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust	Good quality pitch on cricket outfield. Trust wants to improve pavilion.	New pavilion	BS Sports Trust	EHDC	£500,000 for pavilion	Low for football
Braughing Playing Fields	Pitch and changing facilities towards the higher end of 'standard' quality.	Maintain current provision	Braughing Parish Council	-	-	Low
Brewery Field	Very poor quality pitch, no on-site changing. Site currently for sale.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review grounds maintenance regime with GaNTIP. • Ensure retention of site as a pitch. 	Rayments Brewery Furneux Pelham PC	IOG	£20,000 for pitch	Low
Friedberg Avenue Playing Fields	Pitch quality in the mid-range of 'standard', but changing is 'poor'.	Improve changing facilities as an interim measure prior to developing a hub site.	Bishop's Stortford Town Council	BS Community FC	£50,000 for upgraded changing	High
Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre	Pitch quality varies within the 'standard' range. Changing is rated as 'poor'. Could designate site for adult pitches once hub site provided elsewhere locally Proposals for a '3G' pitch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review grounds maintenance with GaNTIP. • Provide new changing facility as part of site developments. • Review needs in the context of the wider '3G' pitch strategy for BS 	EHC	IOG	£150,000 for changing as part of the leisure centre development	Medium
Pearce House	Pitch quality at the high end of 'standard' but no on-site changing.	Secure use via a Community Use Agreement	Birchwood HS	EHC	-	Low
Prokit Stadium	Pitch and changing very 'high' quality.	Maintain current provision	Bishop's Stortford FC	-	-	High
Silverleys Trust	The adult pitch and changing are 'high' quality, but the youth pitch is in the mid-range of 'standard'.	Investigate relocating BS Swifts FC to the proposed Hoggates Park site nearby.	Silverleys Trust	Bishop's Stortford Swifts FC	-	High

Site	Issues	Action	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority
Bishop's Stortford High School	No community access to Jobbers Wood pitches. Proposed relocation of the main school site	Initiate dialogue with the school to explore community use potential.	EHC	Herts FA BSHS	-	Medium
Birchwood High School	Proposals for a second '3G' pitch	Review needs in the context of the wider '3G' pitch strategy for BS	EHC	Herts FA BSHS	-	Medium
Herts and Essex High School	Proposals for a new playing field on Beldam's Lane	Secure Community Use Agreement and explore Hub Site potential.	EHC	Herts FA BSHS	-	Medium
Bishop's Stortford North	New school pitches to be provided on a site north of the A120	Secure Community Use Agreement and explore Hub Site potential.	EHC	Herts FA Herts CC	-	Medium
Bishop's Stortford South	New school pitches to be provided at the secondary school	Secure Community Use Agreement and explore Hub Site potential.	EHC	Herts FA Herts CC	-	Medium

Buntingford and surrounds

Site	Issues	Action	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority
All Saints Primary School	Pitch at the lower end of 'standard'. No changing for community users.	Secure use via a Community Use Agreement	EHC	All Saints Primary School	-	Low
Aston Park	Pitch quality at the high end of 'standard', but no on-site changing.	Maintain current provision	Datchworth Parish Council	-	-	Low
Aston St. Mary's Junior School	Pitch at the lower end of 'standard'. No changing for community users.	Secure use via a Community Use Agreement	EHC	Aston St. Mary's Junior School	-	Low
Benington Recreation Ground	Changing facilities are not fit for purpose.	Support the self-build project	Benington Parish Council	Football Foundation	£50,000	High
Cottered Playing Field	Pitch at the lower end of 'standard' but changing at the upper end of 'standard'.	Maintain current provision	Cottered Parish Council	-	-	Low

Site	Issues	Action	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority
Edwinstree Middle School	Pitch at the high end of 'standard'. No changing for community users.	Secure use via a Community Use Agreement	EHC	Edwinstree Middle School	-	Low
Freman College	Pitch quality at the high end of standard. Changing rated 'good'. Proposals to extend playing field.	Secure use via a Community Use Agreement	EHC	Freman College	-	Medium
Horseman's Meadow	'Standard' quality pitch with no on-site changing provision.	Maintain current provision	Little Munden Parish Council	-	-	Low
London Road Playing Field	Pitch quality in the mid-range of 'standard', but changing is 'poor'.	Review the future of the site in the context of a Hub Site at The Bury	Buntingford Cougars FC	Buntingford Relief in Need Charity	-	High
Norfolk Road Playing Fields	Pitch quality is 'poor' with a severe slope and uneven surface, but changing is 'good'.	Review grounds maintenance regime with GaNTIP.	Buntingford Town Council	IOG	-	Medium
Ralph Sadleir School	Pitch quality at the high end of 'standard', but changing is 'good'.	Secure use via a Community Use Agreement	EHC	Ralph Sadleir School	-	Low
Seth Ward Community Centre	Adult pitch is 'poor' and the youth pitch at the lower end of 'standard'. Changing is high end of 'standard'	Review grounds maintenance regime with GaNTIP.	Buntingford Town Council	IOG	-	Medium
Standon Playing Field	Pitch quality and changing both in the mid-range of 'standard'.	Maintain current provision	Standon Parish Council	-	-	Low
The Bury	Pitch quality and changing both in the mid-range of 'standard'.	Feasibility study to provide a Hub Site with '3G' pitch and improved pavilion	Buntingford Town FC	FA Football Foundation	£20,000 for feasibility study	High
Thundridge Playing Fields	Pitch towards the lower end of 'standard', but changing is in the mid-range of 'standard'.	Maintain current provision	Thundridge Parish Council	-	-	Low

Site	Issues	Action	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority
Thundridge Sports Ground	Pitch quality at the high end of 'standard', but changing is in the mid-range of 'standard'.	Maintain current provision	EHC	Ware Youth FC	-	Low
Walkern Jubilee Pavilion	Pitch quality is in the mid-range of 'standard', but changing is 'high' quality.	Maintain current provision	Walkern Parish Council	-	-	Low
Westmill Recreation Ground	Pitch quality is at the high end of 'standard', but changing is at the low end of 'standard'.	Maintain current provision	Westmill Parish Council	-	-	Low
East of Stevenage development	600 new homes to be built east of Stevenage.	Meet needs by securing developer contributions to enhance pitch provision in Stevenage	EHC	Stevenage BC Developers	TBC	High

Hertford and Ware

Site	Issues	Action	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority
Allenbury Sports and Social Club	Very high quality pitches, changing at the high end of 'standard' quality.	Maintain current provision	Allenbury Sports and Social Club	-	-	Low
Bengeo Sports Field	Pitch quality at the lower end of 'standard'. 'Good' quality changing.	Review grounds maintenance regime with GaNTIP.	Bengeo Parish Council	IOG	£20,000 for pitch	Medium
County Hall Sports Ground	Pitches and changing both at the lower end of 'standard' quality.	Make improved provision elsewhere via a new hub site.	Hertford Town YFC	Herts County Council	-	Low
Hartham Common/ Leisure Centre	Pitch quality at the lower end of 'standard', but changing is 'poor'.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide new changing facilities. • Could designate site for adult pitches once hub site provided elsewhere locally 	EHC	Leisure centre operator	£500,000 for pavilion	Medium

Site	Issues	Action	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority
Hertford Football Club	High quality pitch and changing facilities in an enclosed ground.	Maintain current provision	Hertford FC	-	-	High
Hertford Heath Playing Fields	Pitch quality and changing both at the lower end of 'standard'.	Maintain current provision	Hertford Heath Parish Council	-	-	Low
Presdales Recreation Ground	Pitches and changing both at the lower end of 'standard' quality which is not acceptable at a key multi-pitch site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review grounds maintenance regime with GaNTIP. • Provide new changing facilities. 	Bury Rangers FC	IOG EHC Football Foundation	£150,000 for pitches £500,000 for pavilion	High
Sacred Heart Primary School	Pitch quality at the mid-range of 'standard'.	Secure use via a Community Use Agreement	EHC	Sacred Heart Primary School	-	Low
St. Margaretsbury Sports & Social Club	Pitches and pavilion are high quality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain current provision • Provide small-sided '3G' pitch 	SMSSC	-	£150,000 for small-sided '3G' pitch	High
St. Mary's Junior School	Pitch quality at the mid-range of 'standard'.	Secure use via a Community Use Agreement	EHC	St. Mary's Junior School	-	Low
Simon Balle School	Pitch quality at the mid-range of 'standard'.	Secure use via a Community Use Agreement	EHC	Simon Balle School	-	Low
The Sele School	Pitch quality high end of 'standard, changing low end of 'standard'	Secure use via a Community Use Agreement	EHC	The Sele School	-	Low
Trinity Playing Fields	Pitch quality varies slightly but all are at the high end of 'standard' and changing is 'good'.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain current provision • Protect site against disposal by Herts CC 	Ware Youth FC	-	-	High
Ware Football Club	Pitch and changing both very 'high' quality.	Maintain current provision	Ware FC	-	-	Medium
West Street Playing Field	Pitch quality towards the lower end of 'standard'. No on-site changing.	Review grounds maintenance regime with GaNTIP.	Hertford FC	IOG	£10,000 for pitch	Medium
Wodson Park Sports Centre	Pitch and changing both 'high' quality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain current provision • Feasibility study for hub site 	Wodson Trust	-	£20,000 for feasibility study	High

Site	Issues	Action	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority
Chauncy School	Pitches formerly has community use	Investigate potential to reinstate community use	EHC	Chauncy School	-	Medium
Richard Hale School	'3G' pitch opened in 2017.	Review the role of the pitch in the context of the wider '3G' pitch strategy for H&W	EHC	Herts FA RHS	-	Medium
Haileybury College	Proposed provision of three '3G' pitches	Review the role of the pitches in the context of the wider '3G' pitch strategy for H&W	EHC	Herts FA HC	-	High
Ware North development	1,000 - 1,500 new homes to be built north of Ware.	Meet needs by securing developer contributions to develop Hub Site at Wodson Park	EHC	Wodson Trust Developers	TBC	High

Sawbridgeworth and surrounds

Site	Issues	Action	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority
Much Hadham Recreation Ground	Pitch quality in the mid-range of 'standard', but changing is 'good'.	Maintain current provision	Much Hadham Parish Council	-	-	Low
St. George's Playing Field	Pitch quality in the low end of 'standard', but changing is very 'poor'.	Review grounds maintenance regime with GaNTIP.	High Wych Parish Council	IOG	£20,000 for pitch	Medium
Sawbridgeworth Town FC	Pitch and changing both 'high' quality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review grounds maintenance regime with GaNTIP. Provide new changing facilities. 	STFC	Herts County Council IOG Football Foundation	£50,000 for pitches £200,000 for changing	High
Widford Playing Field	Pitch quality high end of 'standard'. No changing.	Maintain current provision	Angels Saviours FC	-	-	Low
Leventhorpe Academy	No community use of existing pitches. Land to the north allocated for pitches in the Local Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate potential to secure community use Include site in the BS Hub Site feasibility study 	EHC	Herts FA Leventhorpe Academy	-	Medium

Site	Issues	Action	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority
Gilston Garden Town	3,050 new homes to be built in Gilston by 2033	Meet needs by securing developer contributions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Hub Site in Gilston, co-ordinating needs with Hub Site feasibility studies in Harlow. • Provide community accessible pitches at the secondary school. 	EHC	Harlow DC Developers	TBC	High

Watton-at-Stone and surrounds

Site	Issues	Action	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority
Crouchfields	Pitch quality at the high end of standard, but changing very poor.	Make improved provision via a new hub site at nearby Wodson Park.	Wodson Park FC	Wodson Park Trust Herts FA Football Foundation	TBC	High
Watton-at-Stone Primary School	Pitch quality at the mid-range of 'standard'.	Secure use via a Community Use Agreement	EHC	Watton-at-Stone PS	-	Low
Watton-at-Stone Recn Ground	Pitch and changing are both 'standard' quality.	Maintain current provision	Watton-at-Stone PC	-		Low
East of Welwyn Garden City development	1,350 new homes to be built east of Welwyn Garden City.	Meet needs by securing developer contributions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make on site provision of '3G' and grass pitches • Enhance pitch provision in Welwyn Garden City in line with the findings of the emerging Welwyn Hatfield PPS 	EHC	Welwyn Hatfield DC Developers	TBC	High

CRICKET PITCH NEEDS IN EAST HERTS

What are the main characteristics of current supply and demand?

15) The key characteristics of current supply and demand for cricket in East Herts are as follows:

- a) 100 affiliated teams play cricket in East Herts, plus a further nine teams attributable to unmet and latent demand.
- b) Demand for cricket in East Herts has decreased slightly in the past three years, which is consistent with national trends. One local club, Furneux Pelham Cricket Club, became inactive in the same period.
- c) There are 33 cricket squares with community use and used, collectively comprising 285 grass and four artificial turf wickets.
- d) A further three sites are currently disused, collectively comprising one square, six grass and two artificial turf wickets. 16 squares on school sites, collectively comprising 86 grass and six artificial turf wickets have no community use.
- e) There is security of access to all but two of the sites with community use and used.
- f) The whole population is within 10-minutes driving time of at least one cricket pitch.

Is there enough accessible and secured use to meet current demand?

16) The current situation is as follows:

- a) There are small peak time deficits at Bishop's Stortford Cricket Club, Freman College, Hertford Cricket Club and Norfolk Road Playing Field, but at all other sites, peak time usage is balanced or there is spare capacity. The collective peak time spare capacity amounts to 2.5 match equivalents.
- b) There is seasonal spare capacity at all sites other than Freman College, Hertford Cricket Club and Norfolk Road Playing Field. The collective seasonal spare capacity is 500 match equivalents. If sites without secured community use are excluded, the collective seasonal surplus reduces to 395 match equivalents.

Is the accessible provision of suitable quality and appropriately maintained?

17) The current situation on pitch quality and maintenance is as follows:

- a) **Quality:** The quality of all grass wickets in the district is rated as good, but the artificial turf wicket at St. Margaretsbury Sports and Social Club is poor quality, as are the nets at Little Berkhamsted Recreation Ground and the changing facilities at Albury Sports Field and Thorley Cricket Club.
- b) **Maintenance:** There are no specific issues relating to cricket pitch maintenance in East Herts, with all grass wickets Rated as 'good' quality.

What are the main characteristics of future supply and demand?

- 18) The additional pitch requirements arising from increases in population and participation by 2033 amount to the equivalent of 78 extra good quality grass wickets, which equates to almost ten pitches.

Is there enough accessible and secured use to meet future demand?

- 19) With existing spare capacity of 2.5 pitches at secured sites, the equivalent of an additional 7.25 pitches will be needed by 2033.

The options for securing additional accessible and secured pitch capacity

- 20) The options for securing the additional and improved provision are as follows:

- a) **Protect:** Protecting existing pitch sites through the Local Plan will be key both to maintaining the current stock.
 - Reinstating some or all of the three un-used pitches in the district.
 - Securing access to at least some of the 16 existing grass pitches on school sites.
- b) **Provide:** Ensuring that new pitch and related changing provision is made in conjunction with new housing developments, either on site or through developer contributions that reflect the additional pitch demand arising from the increased population.
 - The development of a new junior ground and pavilion improvement proposals at the Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust site are Hertfordshire Cricket's top facilities priority in East Herts.
 - Several pitch developments on new and existing education sites have potential to meet additional community needs, providing access is secured through the planning process.

- c) **Enhance:** The artificial turf wicket at St. Margaretsbury Sports and Social Club is poor quality, as are the nets at Little Berkhamsted Recreation Ground and the changing facilities at Albury Sports Field and Thorley Cricket Club. Enhancements to the pavilion at Norfolk Road Recreation Ground in Buntingford to counter vandalism issues are also a priority.

Policy recommendations

21) Protect:

- a) **Recommendation 1 - Safeguarding existing provision:** The East Herts PPS comprises a robust and evidence-based assessment of current and future needs for cricket in the district. The PPS has identified a need for all current and disused cricket pitch sites to be retained, on the basis of the specific identified roles that each can play in delivering the needs of the sport in East Herts both now and in the future. It is therefore recommended that existing planning policies continue to support the retention of all sites, based upon the evidence in the PPS.
- b) **Recommendation 2 - Community access to education facilities:** There are 16 pitches collectively comprising 86 grass and six artificial turf pitches on school sites with no community access. These represent an opportunity to develop community usage.
- Efforts are made to secure community use agreements at existing education pitches.
 - Community use agreements become a standard condition of planning consent at all new education pitches, along with a design and specification that is consistent with maximising school and community use.

22) Enhance:

- a) **Recommendation 3 - Capacity improvements:** Some of the current demand for cricket in East Herts, can be accommodated through enhancements to existing pitches and facilities. It is recommended that the site-specific action plan in the East Herts PPS be used as the basis for prioritising pitch and ancillary facility enhancements that will help to alleviate the current identified deficits.
- b) **Recommendation 4 - Developer contributions (enhancements):** Some of the additional demand for cricket arising from the proposed housing development in East Herts, can be accommodated through enhancements to existing pitches and facilities. It is recommended that the site-specific action plan in the East Herts PPS be used as the basis for determining facility enhancements that demonstrably relate to the scale and location of specific developments and that an appropriate level of financial contributions be sought under Section 106 or CIL arrangements, using Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator tool, to cover the capital and revenue implications of the enhancements.

23) Provide:

- a) **Recommendation 5 - New cricket pitch provision:** New cricket pitch provision will be needed to meet some of the needs of the increased population of East Herts.
- The development of a new junior ground and pavilion improvement proposals at the Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust site are Hertfordshire Cricket's top facilities priority in East Herts.
 - Several pitch developments on new and existing education sites have potential to meet additional community needs, providing access is secured through the planning process.
- b) **Recommendation 6 - Developer contributions (new provision):** Most of the additional demand for cricket arising from the proposed housing development in East Herts, will need to be accommodated through the provision of new pitches and facilities. It is recommended that the site-specific action plan in the East Herts Playing Pitch Strategy be used as the basis for determining which proposed new facilities demonstrably relate to the scale and location of specific developments and that an appropriate level of financial contributions be sought under Section 106 or CIL arrangements, using Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator tool, to cover their capital and revenue cost implications.

Action plan

24) In the context of the recommendations above, the tables below set out the cricket action plan by sub area to guide the implementation of the strategy. The abbreviations stand for EHC - East Herts Council and ECB - England and Wales Cricket Board.

Strategic actions

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Resources</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Community access to education pitches	Pursue Community Use agreements at all existing high priority sites and all future proposed pitches on education sites.	EHC	Schools	Possible funding for improvements to physical accessibility.	Medium
Developer contributions	Secure developer contributions for new and improved pitch provision related to new development.	EHC	Developers	TBC	High

Bishop's Stortford and surrounds

Site	Issues	Action	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority
Albury Sports Field	Outfield is very uneven Pavilion in poor state of repair	Improve outfield quality and new pavilion (also for football use).	Albury Cricket Club	Albury Parish Council	£20,000 for outfield £200,000 for pavilion	Medium
Bishops Stortford Sports Trust	A high quality, well-maintained facility in all respects.	Provide a new junior ground and pavilion improvements.	BS Sports Trust	ECB	£100,000 for junior ground £500,000 for pavilion	High
Braughing Playing Fields	Outfield shared with football pitch.	Maintain current provision	Braughing Parish Council	-	-	Low
Hockerill Cricket Club	A high quality, well-maintained facility.	Maintain current provision	Hockerill Cricket Club	-	-	Medium
Little Hadham Cricket Club	A high quality, well-maintained facility.	Maintain current provision	Little Hadham Parish Council	-	-	Low
Thorley Cricket Club	Pavilion is very poor quality.	Provide a new pavilion.	Thorley Cricket Club	ECB	£200,000 for pavilion	High
Bishop's Stortford North	3,250 new homes to be built by 2033.	Secure developer contributions for extra capacity at BS Sports Trust and Hockerill CC	EHC	Developers BS Sports Trust Hockerill CC	-	Medium
Bishop's Stortford South	900 new homes to be built by 2033.	Secure developer contributions for extra capacity at Thorley CC	EHC	Developers Thorley CC	-	Medium

Buntingford and surrounds

Site	Issues	Action	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority
Aspenden, Standon & Puckeridge CC	Changing facilities are ageing and practice nets show signs of wear.	Pavilion improvements and new nets.	Aspenden, Standon & Puckeridge CC	ECB	£200,000 for pavilion £30,000 for nets	Medium
Aston Cricket Ground	A high quality, well-maintained facility.	Maintain current provision	Aston Parish Council	-	-	Low
Datchworth Sports Club	A high quality, well-maintained facility.	Maintain current provision	Datchworth Sports Club	Datchworth Parish Council	-	Low
Freman College	Outfield shared with football pitch.	Maintain current provision	Freman College	-	-	Low

Site	Issues	Action	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority
Little Munden Cricket Club	A high quality, well-maintained facility.	Maintain current provision	Little Munden PC	-	-	Low
Norfolk Road Playing Fields	Outfield shared with football pitch. Pavilion subject to vandalism.	Extend the pavilion and install anti-vandal measures.	Buntingford Cricket Club	Buntingford Town Council	£100,000 for pavilion extension	High
The Meads	Outfield shared with football pitches.	Maintain current provision	Hormead Parish Council	-	-	Low
Thundridge Sports Ground	A high quality, well-maintained facility.	Maintain current provision	Thundridge Parish Council	-	-	Low
Walkern Jubilee Pavilion	Outfield shared with football pitches.	Maintain current provision	Walkern Sports Club	Walkern Parish Council	-	Low
East of Stevenage development	600 new homes to be built east of Stevenage.	Secure developer contributions to enhance capacity at Datchworth Sports Club.	EHC	Datchworth Sports Club Developers	TBC	High

Hertford and Ware

Site	Issues	Action	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority
Allenbury Sports and Social Club	A high quality, well-maintained facility.	Maintain current provision	Allenbury Sports and Social Club	-	-	Low
Bengeo Sports Field	Outfield shared with football. Pavilion shows some vandalism.	Maintain current provision	Bengeo Parish Council	-	£20,000 for pitch	Medium
Hertford Cricket Club	Artificial turf wicket shows signs of vandalism.	Provide new artificial turf pitch	Hertford Cricket Club	-	£20,000 for artificial turf pitch	Medium
Hertingfordbury Recreation Ground	A high quality, well-maintained facility.	Maintain current provision	Recreation Ground Trustees	Hertingfordbury Cricket Club	-	Low
St. Margaretsbury Sports & Social Club	Artificial turf wicket needs replacing. Outfield shared with football pitch.	Provide new artificial turf pitch	St. Margaretsbury Sports & Social Club	-	£20,000 for artificial turf pitch	Medium
Ware North development	1,000 - 1,500 new homes to be built north of Ware.	Secure developer contributions to enhance capacity at Hertford CC and St. Margaretsbury CC	EHC	Wodson Trust Developers	TBC	High

Sawbridgeworth and surrounds

Site	Issues	Action	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority
Leventhorpe Academy	Outfield shared with football pitch.	Maintain current provision	Leventhorpe Academy	-	-	Low
Town Fields, Sawbridgeworth	A high quality, well-maintained facility.	Maintain current provision	Sawbridge-worth Cricket Club	-	-	Low
Ware Cricket Club	A high quality, well-maintained facility.	Maintain current provision	Ware Cricket Club	-	-	Low
Gilston Garden Town	3,050 new homes to be built in Gilston by 2033	Meet needs by securing developer contributions to establish a new cricket facility in the Garden Town	EHC	Developers	TBC	High

Watton-at-Stone and surrounds

Site	Issues	Action	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority
Bayford & Hertford Nondescripts CC	A high quality, well-maintained facility.	Maintain current provision	Bayford & Hertford NCC	-	-	Low
Bramfield Playing Field	Changing facilities are ageing.	Review the need for new changing facilities in 5 years.	Bramfield Parish Council	-	-	Low
Little Berkhamsted Recreation Ground	Pavilion shows signs of wear. Very poor quality practice nets are barely usable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the need for new changing facilities in 5 years. Provide new practice nets 	Little Berkhamsted Parish Council	Little Berkhamsted Cricket Club	£30,000 for nets	Low
Tewin Recreation Ground	Some damage to the outfield.	Maintain current provision	Tewin Parish Council	-	-	Low
Watton-at-Stone Recreation Ground	Outfield shared with football pitch.	Maintain current provision	Watton-at-Stone Parish Council	-	-	Low
East of Welwyn Garden City development	1,350 new homes to be built east of Welwyn Garden City.	Meet needs by securing developer contributions to enhance pitch capacity in Welwyn Garden City	EHC	Welwyn Hatfield DC Developers	TBC	High

RUGBY PITCH NEEDS IN EAST HERTS

What are the main characteristics of current supply and demand?

25) The key characteristics of current supply and demand for rugby in East Herts are as follows:

- a) The demand for rugby in East Herts is very buoyant, with the main limiting factor on further growth being a shortage of pitch capacity.
- b) The main factor inhibiting rugby development for women and girls in the district is a lack of pitch capacity.
- c) There is evidence of imported rugby demand from neighbouring areas.
- d) There are 12 pitches with community use and used, five of which are floodlit. There are supplemented by 19 temporarily marked mini-rugby pitches. There are a further 34 full-sized pitches on school sites that might offer some potential for community use.
- e) The quality of pitches is generally good, but all are used to beyond their full carrying capacity at present, which is not sustainable in the longer term.
- f) Hertford Rugby Club has complex security of tenure issues to address with its site.

Is there enough accessible and secured use to meet current demand?

26) There is a weekly deficit at all three club sites which results in the pitches being used to beyond their sustainable capacity. Peak time usage is balanced, but this reflects the fact that pitch usage is at full capacity and staggered fixture scheduling for junior and mini matches rather than a lack of additional demand.

Is the accessible provision of suitable quality and appropriately maintained?

27) All existing pitches are adequately maintained, although the quality is compromised by overuse at present.

What are the main characteristics of future supply and demand?

28) The additional pitch requirements arising from increases in population and participation by 2033 amount to the equivalent of 10.75 extra grass rugby pitches.

Is there enough accessible, secured use to meet future demand?

29) With an existing deficit of 6.25 pitches at secured sites, the equivalent of an additional 14.25 pitches will be needed by 2033.

The options for achieving additional accessible and secured pitch capacity

30) The options for securing the additional pitches are as follows:

- a) **Protect:** Protecting the existing pitches through the Local Plan will be key to maintaining the current stock. This will include retaining the former pitch south of Hadham Road in Bishop's Stortford.
- b) **Provide:** Additional pitch capacity would most appropriately be developed at the existing club sites. The site-specific capacity issues could be addressed as follows:
 - Bishop Stortford RFC's immediate pitch needs would be met by converting the existing football pitches at the Silverleys site to two additional rugby pitches, following the relocation of Bishop's Stortford Swifts FC to new pitches on the adjacent housing development site. Further pitch provision should be made on the adjacent site south of Hadham Road. Consideration should be also given to providing an artificial grass pitch.
 - Datchworth Rugby Club's pitch capacity could be expanded with improved drainage and pitch construction on the existing pitch on its 'back field'.
 - Hertford Rugby Club's pitch capacity could be expanded with planning consent for provision on the additional land that it has acquired.
- c) **Enhance:** Pavilion improvements at all three sites, particularly in relation to better provision for women and girls (players, coaches and match officials) would improve the overall user experience and facilitate further participation growth.

Policy recommendations

31) Protect:

- a) **Recommendation 1 - Safeguarding existing provision:** The East Herts PPS comprises a robust and evidence-based assessment of current and future needs for rugby in the district. The PPS has identified a need for all current rugby pitch sites to be retained, on the basis of the specific identified roles that each can play in delivering the needs of the sport in East Herts both now and in the future. It is therefore recommended that existing planning policies continue to support the retention of all sites, based upon the evidence in the PPS.

- b) **Recommendation 2 - Community access to education facilities:** There are 34 pitches on school sites with no community access. These represent an opportunity to develop community usage, given the waiting lists being operated by several clubs at present.

- Efforts should be made to secure community use agreements at existing education pitches close to the existing rugby club sites.
- Community use agreements should become a standard condition of planning consent at all new education pitches, along with a design and specification that is consistent with maximising school and community use.

32) Enhance:

- a) **Recommendation 3 - Capacity improvements:** Some of the current demand for rugby in East Herts, can be accommodated through enhancements to existing pitches and facilities. In particular:

- Bishop Stortford RFC's immediate pitch needs would be met by converting the existing football pitches at the Silverleys site to two additional rugby pitches, following the relocation of Bishop's Stortford Swifts FC to new pitches on the adjacent housing development site. Further pitch provision should be made on the adjacent site south of Hadham Road. Consideration should be also given to providing an artificial grass pitch.
- Datchworth Rugby Club's pitch capacity could be expanded with improved drainage and pitch construction on the existing pitch on its 'back field'.
- Hertford Rugby Club's pitch capacity could be expanded with planning consent for provision on the additional land that it has acquired.
- It is recommended that the site-specific action plan in the East Herts PPS be used as the basis for prioritising pitch and ancillary facility enhancements that will help to alleviate the current identified deficits.

- b) **Recommendation 4 - Developer contributions (enhancements):** Some of the additional demand for rugby arising from the proposed housing development in East Herts, can be accommodated through enhancements to existing pitches and facilities. It is recommended that the site-specific action plan in the East Herts PPS be used as the basis for determining facility enhancements that demonstrably relate to the scale and location of specific developments and that an appropriate level of financial contributions be sought under Section 106 or CIL arrangements, using Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator tool, to cover the capital and revenue implications of the enhancements.

33) Provide:

a) **Recommendation 5 - New rugby facilities provision:** New rugby facilities provision will be needed to meet some of the needs of the increased population of East Herts. In particular

- Bishop Stortford RFC should consider making further pitch provision on the adjacent site south of Hadham Road. Consideration should be also given to providing an artificial grass pitch.
- Pavilion improvements at all three rugby club sites, particularly in relation to better provision for women and girls (players, coaches and match officials) would improve the overall user experience and facilitate further participation growth.

b) **Recommendation 6 - Developer contributions (new provision):** Most of the additional demand for rugby arising from the proposed housing development in East Herts, will need to be accommodated through the provision of new pitches and facilities. It is recommended that the site-specific action plan in the East Herts PPS be used as the basis for determining which proposed new facilities demonstrably relate to the scale and location of specific developments and that an appropriate level of financial contributions be sought under Section 106 or CIL arrangements, using Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator tool, to cover their capital and revenue cost implications.

Action plan

34) In the context of the recommendations above, the tables below set out the rugby action plan by sub area to guide the implementation of the strategy. The abbreviations stand for EHC - East Herts Council and RFU - Rugby Football Union. The capital cost estimates are based upon Sport England's 'Facility Costs - Second Quarter of 2016' (2016).

Site	Issues	Action	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority
Bishop's Stortford RFC	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shortage of pitch capacity.• Additional changing provision needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Convert and upgrade the on-site football pitches if BS Swifts relocate.• Reinstate pitches on the site south of Hadham Road.• Reconsider providing an artificial grass pitch.• Expand changing facilities.	Bishop's Stortford RFC	RFU EHC	£20,000 for pitch upgrade £10,000 to reinstate pitches. £10,000 for AGP feasibility study. £1.22 million for AGP. £250,000 for expanded changing.	High

Site	Issues	Action	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority
Datchworth RFC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shortage of pitch capacity. • Additional changing provision needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve drainage on the 'Back Pitch'. • Expand changing facilities. 	Datchworth RFC	RFU EHC	£20,000 for pitch upgrade. £250,000 for expanded changing.	High
Hertford RFC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security of tenure issues. • Shortage of pitch capacity. • Additional changing provision needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure planning consent for converting adjacent land to pitches. • Provide new clubhouse on adjacent site. 	Hertford RFC	RFU EHC	£500,000 for clubhouse	High
Bishop's Stortford North	3,250 new homes to be built by 2033.	Secure developer contributions for extra capacity at BS Rugby Club	EHC	Developers BSRFC	TBC	High
Bishop's Stortford South	900 new homes to be built by 2033.	Secure developer contributions for extra capacity at BS Rugby Club	EHC	Developers BSRFC	TBC	High
East of Stevenage development	600 new homes to be built east of Stevenage.	Meet needs by securing developer contributions to enhance capacity at Stevenage RFC.	EHC	Developers Stevenage RFC	TBC	Medium
Ware North development	1,000 - 1,500 new homes to be built north of Ware.	Meet needs by securing developer contributions to enhance capacity at Hertford RFC.	EHC	Developers Hertford RFC	TBC	High
Gilston Garden Town	3,050 new homes to be built in Gilston by 2033	Meet needs by securing developer contributions to enhance capacity at Harlow RFC.	EHC	Developers Harlow RFC	TBC	Medium
East of Welwyn Garden City development	1,350 new homes to be built east of Welwyn Garden City.	Meet needs by securing developer contributions to enhance pitch capacity at Welwyn RFC	EHC	Developers Welwyn RFC	TBC	Medium
Education pitches	Potential to access additional pitch capacity at sites close to clubs.	Investigate access to pitches at: BS College Jobbers Wood Haileybury College	BSRFC Hertford RFC	-	TBC	Medium

HOCKEY PITCH NEEDS IN EAST HERTS

What are the main characteristics of current supply and demand?

35) The key characteristics of current supply and demand for hockey in East Herts are as follows:

- a) **Pitch quantity:** There are eight full-sized synthetic turf pitches used for hockey in the district, although only four are used by clubs from within the district, with one more being used by Harlow Hockey Club.
- b) **Pitch availability:** There is a total of 137 hours per week of community access to synthetic turf pitches used for hockey in East Herts. Hockey usage accounts for 44.5 hours per week (32.5% of the total available time), football usage for 74 hours (54.0%) whilst 18.5 hours (13.5% is unused). Of the eight pitches in the district, two have no community access and one further pitch has only three hours of week per use. Six of the pitches are on boarding school sites which places some limitations on availability and use.
- c) **Pitch quality:** The quality of all pitches is at least 'standard'.
- d) **Security of tenure:** All the pitches are on education sites and only one has any security of tenure. Hertford Hockey Club's hire agreement with Simon Balle School is due to expire in 2019.

Is there enough accessible and secured use to meet current demand?

36) Taking account of expressed, displaced, unmet and latent demand, there is a districtwide deficit of 1.8 artificial grass pitches for hockey. When offset against existing spare capacity equivalent to 0.74 pitches, this leave a net figure of 1.06 pitches. Only 59 of the 137 hours of peak pitch time are at secured sites at present.

Is the accessible provision of suitable quality and appropriately maintained?

37) All the pitches are at least 'standard' quality and all are well-maintained.

What are the main characteristics of future supply and demand?

38) The additional pitch requirements arising from increases in population and participation by 2033 amount to an extra 24 teams which, will collectively require 72 hours of peak time access per week, which is equivalent to 2.88 additional pitches

Is there enough accessible and secured use to meet future demand?

39) There is insufficient accessible pitch time to meet future needs, with the shortfall of 98.5 hours equivalent to 3.04 of a pitch. Only 59 of the 137 hours of peak pitch time are at secured sites.

The options for securing additional accessible and secured pitch capacity

40) The options for securing hockey provision are as follows:

- a) **Protect:** Protecting the existing pitches through the Local Plan will be key to maintaining the current stock. Resolving the Hertford HC's usage agreement with Simon Balle School will be important to secure continued usage.
- b) **Provide:** There are several options for new provision:
 - **Bishop's Stortford:** There are two options for the provision of a new pitch in Bishop's Stortford, either at the Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust site or more likely at Beldam's Lane.
 - **Hertford:** The provision of the new '3G' football turf pitch at Richard Hale School in Hertford should free up additional peak capacity at the Simon Balle School pitch for hockey usage, although the current 13 hours of football use is only slightly more than the 10 hours of demand currently exported by Hertford HC. Efforts should therefore be made to identify a location for a second pitch in the vicinity.
- c) **Enhance:** The operators of all pitches should be encouraged to make financial provision for the replacement of the current carpet, to ensure that there is no threat to its replacement once the surface is worn out.

Policy recommendations

41) Protect:

- a) **Recommendation 1 - Safeguarding existing provision:** The East Herts Playing Pitch Strategy comprises a robust and evidence-based assessment of current and future needs for hockey in the district. The Strategy has identified a need for all current hockey pitch sites to be retained, on the basis of the specific identified roles that each can play in delivering the needs of the sport in East Herts both now and in the future. It is therefore recommended that existing planning policies continue to support the retention of all sites, based upon the evidence in the Playing Pitch Strategy.

- b) **Recommendation 2 - Community access to education facilities:** There are three hockey pitches on school sites with very limited or no community access. These represent an opportunity to develop community usage, given the waiting lists being operated by several clubs at present.

- Efforts should be made to secure community use agreements at existing education pitches, in particular Haileybury College, where additional artificial grass pitch capacity may be created if current football use moves to the proposed '3G' football turf pitches at the site.
- Community use agreements should become a standard condition of planning consent at all new education pitches, along with a design and specification that is consistent with maximising school and community use.

42) Enhance:

- a) **Recommendation 3 - Pitch resurfacing:** All the hockey pitches in East Herts are currently rated as 'good' or 'standard' based in surface quality. However, the pitch carpets need periodic replacement to maintain quality, so it is recommended that all pitch providers make appropriate financial provision to enable resurfacing to be carried out when needed.

43) Provide:

- a) **Recommendation 4 - New hockey facilities provision:** New hockey facilities provision will be needed to meet some of the needs of the increased population of East Herts. In particular
- The provision of a new pitch at Herts and Essex High School in Bishop's Stortford.
 - The provision of a second pitch in Hertford.
- b) **Recommendation 5 - Developer contributions (new provision):** Most of the additional demand for hockey arising from the proposed housing development in East Herts, will need to be accommodated through the provision of new pitches and facilities. It is recommended that the site-specific action plan in the East Herts PPS be used as the basis for determining which proposed new facilities demonstrably relate to the scale and location of specific developments and that an appropriate level of financial contributions be sought under Section 106 or CIL arrangements, using Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator tool, to cover their capital and revenue cost implications.

Action plan

- 44) In the context of the recommendations above, the tables below set out the hockey action plan by sub area to guide the implementation of the strategy. The abbreviations stand for EHC - East Herts Council and EH - England Hockey.

Site	Issues	Action	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority
Bishop's Stortford HC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shortage of pitch capacity. • Co-located clubhouse needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursue proposals for an artificial turf pitch at Herts and Essex High School. • Explore potential to provide a clubhouse at the new pitch. 	Herts and Essex High School	Bishop's Stortford HC EHC EH	£760,000 for the pitch £500,000 for the clubhouse	High
Hertford HC	Shortage of pitch capacity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility study to identify a site for an artificial turf pitch. • Provide pitch. 	Hertford HC	EHC EH	£10,000 for feasibility study £760,000 for the pitch	High
Bishop's Stortford North	3,250 new homes to be built by 2033.	Secure developer contributions for extra capacity at BSHC	EHC	Developers BSHC	TBC	High
Bishop's Stortford South	900 new homes to be built by 2033.	Secure developer contributions for extra capacity at BSHC	EHC	Developers BSHC	TBC	High
East of Stevenage development	600 new homes to be built east of Stevenage.	Secure developer contributions to enhance capacity at Stevenage HC.	EHC	Developers Stevenage HC	TBC	Medium
Ware North development	1,000 - 1,500 new homes to be built north of Ware.	Secure developer contributions to enhance capacity at Hertford HC.	EHC	Developers Hertford HC	TBC	High
Gilston Garden Town	3,050 new homes to be built in Gilston by 2033	Secure developer contributions for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A pitch at the leisure centre/ secondary school. • Re-instating the hockey pitch at the former Passmores School, Harlow. 	EHC	Developers Harlow HC Harlow Council	TBC	High
East of Welwyn Garden City development	1,350 new homes to be built east of Welwyn Garden City.	Secure developer contributions to enhance pitch capacity at Welwyn HC	EHC	Developers Welwyn HC	TBC	Medium
Haileybury College	Potential to access additional pitch capacity.	Investigate access to pitch at Haileybury College	Hertford HC	-	TBC	Medium