

Outdoor Sports Needs Assessment 2016

Athletics summary

- There is one track in Thurrock, located at Thurrock Athletics Stadium.
- There is one athletics club, Thurrock Harriers Athletics Club, which has around 200 members.
- The Club is coming to the end of a 25 year lease of Thurrock Athletics Stadium.
- The Club assesses its facility as good quality overall, but states that the track is coming to the end of its lifespan.
- The Club expresses latent demand in that it has waiting lists in place due to a lack of qualified coaches.
- A Park Run event is held every Saturday at Pyramid Centre.
- There are three Run England groups; Chafford Hundred Running Group, Ockendon Running Club and Silvia's Striders.
- There are currently no 3-2-1 national network of running routes in Thurrock.
- Priority should be focused on ensuring the quality at Thurrock Athletics Stadium is sustained. To that end, the lease of the site requires extending and the track requires resurfacing.
- Future options should also be explored in relation to Park Run, Run England and 3-2-1 routes.

Bowls summary

- There are 12 flat green bowling greens in Thurrock provided across ten sites which are currently in use. In addition, there is a disused green at Pegasus Club.
- Concerns have also been raised over the future of the greens at Aveley Sports & Social Club and Billet Recreation Ground.
- Of the 13 bowling greens within Thurrock, nine are assessed as good quality and three are assessed as standard quality. The only green assessed as poor quality is the disused green at Pegasus Club.
- Aveley Sports & Social Club, Billet Recreation Ground and Corringham Recreation Ground are adjudged to have poor quality ancillary facilities by clubs.

- There are 14 clubs using bowling greens in Thurrock. Of the 11 responding clubs, there are a total of 433 members which consists of 293 men, 138 women and two juniors.
- When asked to quantify potential future growth, nine clubs report plans to increase membership by a combined 132 senior members and 18 junior members. Further to this, due to an increase in persons aged 65 and over, demand is likely to increase for greens.
- No clubs suggest that an additional bowling green at their ground or in the area would lead to an increase in club membership. Perception is that any planned increases/future demand can be accommodated on existing greens.
- As Blackshots Recreation Ground, Corringham Recreation Ground, Orsett Recreation Ground and Aveley Bowling Club are operating above the average membership in Thurrock, support is required to ensure that green quality and ancillary provision remains sufficient to meet demand at these sites.
- It is also recommended that New Phoenix BC and Pegasus BC are supported in order to find the clubs a new home green should Aveley Sports & Social Club and Billet Recreation Ground be taken out of use in the future.
- To that end, there is scope to amalgamate clubs onto a lesser number of greens, especially those clubs with the lowest membership numbers.

Cricket summary

- In total, there are 11 grass cricket pitches identified in Thurrock, all of which are available for community use.
- There are non-turf wickets accompanying grass wicket squares at three sites and there are standalone non-turf wicket pitches at four sites.
- Disused or lapsed pitches are evident at Pegasus Club, Billet Recreation Ground, Orsett Heath, Impulse Leisure (Belhus Park), Daisyfield and Thurrock Rugby Club.
- The audit of grass wicket cricket pitches found three pitches to be good quality, five pitches to be standard quality and three pitches to be poor quality. Both pitches at Blackshots Recreation Ground are assessed as poor, as is the pitch at Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground.
- The main issue affecting pitch quality is basic levels of council maintenance, particularly at Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground and Blackshots Recreation Ground.
- Changing facilities at Blackshots Recreation Ground are considered to be poor quality and are in need of refurbishment.
- All clubs report a demand for additional training facilities, particularly in terms of indoor cricket nets.
- In total, there are four clubs generating 28 men's and 22 junior teams.

- Despite a national recognition that cricket is currently experience a reduction in participation, the amount of teams in Thurrock has increased over the previous three years.
- Despite no Last Man Standing (a short version of traditional cricket) currently servicing Thurrock, it can be considered as a target location in the future and as such a new non-turf wicket pitch may be required.
- All clubs have plans to increase their number of teams in the future.
- No non-turf wicket pitches are recorded as accommodating more than 60 matches per season, therefore, all non-turf wickets are considered to have spare capacity.
- There are nine pitches which have potential spare capacity on grass wickets, totalling 111 match sessions per season, however, only two pitches have actual spare capacity during peak time for senior cricket (Saturdays).
- There is a current shortfall of pitches in the East Analysis Area, which can be attributed to six match sessions of overplay at Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground. There is actual spare capacity of one match equivalent session in the Central Analysis Area, whilst the West Analysis Area is played to capacity.
- When considering future demand, a shortfall is evident in the West Analysis Area and the shortfall worsens in the East Analysis Area. The Central Analysis Area is at capacity.

Football – grass pitch summary

- The audit identifies a total of 122 football pitches across 46 sites in Thurrock. Of these, 102 are available, at some level, for community use across 32 sites.
- Disused pitches are identified at Aveley Sports & Social Club and Daisyfield Tilbury. The recent loss of Aveley Sports & Social Club has left Little Thurrock Dynamo's FC (37 teams) without a home ground.
- Many youth 11v11 teams (71) are playing on adult pitches, which may in part be due to a lack of youth 11v11 pitches rather than a preference for adult pitches.
- Plans are in place for the creation of pitches at Aveley Football Club, Mobil Fields, Ockendon Academy and Orsett Heath. East Thurrock United Football Club, Aveley Sports & Social Club and Linford Recreation Ground are subject to planning proposals which could result in the loss of pitches.
- Of the pitches available for community use, two are assessed as good quality, 55 as standard quality and 45 as poor quality.
- Basic maintenance regimes are a key factor for pitches being assessed as poor or standard quality, particularly at council and school sites.
- The overall assessment of changing facilities rated 12% as good quality, 55% as standard quality and 33% as poor quality. Poor quality facilities at Blackshots Recreation Ground are of particular concern.

- Security of tenure is an issue for Little Thurrock Dynamo's FC and Linford Wanderers FC, whilst Grays Athletic FC expresses a demand for its own home venue.
- Priority should be placed on relocating Little Thurrock Dynamo's FC as failure to do this will result in the Club being unable to play.
- As there are numerous senior clubs looking to relocate, there is a clear opportunity for the Council to take a strategic look at ground sharing possibilities to provide a more sustainable long term future for the senior club network in Thurrock.
- A total of 274 teams are recognised as playing within Thurrock across 91 clubs. This consists of 76 men's, three women's, 99 youth boys', 12 youth girls' and 84 mini teams.
- There is latent demand amounting to 1.5 match equivalents for adult pitches, 3.5 match equivalents for youth 11v11 pitches, three match equivalents for 9v9 pitches and 2.5 match equivalents for both 7v7 and 5v5 pitches.
- There are nine teams from within five clubs registered to Thurrock which are accessing pitches outside of the local authority area. Of these, only Grays Athletic FC reports that it would prefer to play within Thurrock.
- Team generation rates predict a growth of nine men's, 31 youth boys', three youth girls' and 12 mini teams across Thurrock.
- Future demand expressed by clubs equates to one adult, 12 youth and 14 mini teams across Thurrock.
- There is a total of ten match sessions of actual spare capacity across Thurrock, the majority of which is on adult pitches and in the East Analysis Area.
- There are 33 pitches overplayed across ten sites by a total of 42 match equivalent sessions.
- Current shortfalls are evident across all pitch types, with the exception of youth 11v11 pitches.
- Future demand results in shortfalls of youth 11v11 pitches and increased shortfalls of all other pitch types.
- There are current shortfalls of adult and 9v9 pitches in the Central Analysis Area, whilst youth 11v11, 7v7 and 5v5 pitches are played to capacity.
- In the East Analysis Area, current spare capacity exists on youth 11v11 and 9v9 pitches, whilst shortfalls exist on adult, 7v7 and 5v5 pitches.
- In the West Analysis Area there are current shortfalls of each pitch type, with the exception of youth 11v11 pitches which are played to capacity.
- The removal of unsecured pitches results in shortfalls worsening. An over-reliance on unsecured education sites is a particular issue.

3G summary

- There are two full size 3G pitches within Thurrock, both of which are available to the community and floodlit.
- St Clere's School is FA approved to host competitive matches, whilst Lakeside Sports Ground is due to undergo testing in the near future in order to become FA approved.
- In addition, there is a smaller sized 3G pitch located at Gable Hall School.
- Aveley FC has been granted planning permission to develop a stadia pitch with a 3G surface and the Club expects this to be in place ahead of the 2017-2018 season. Both Thurrock FC and East Thurrock United FC also report plans to develop a 3G pitch.
- As Lakeside Sports Ground has only been provided this year, no quality issues exist and the pitch is considered to be good quality. St Clere's School was provided in 2008 and is therefore nearing the end of its lifespan, as is Gable Hall School which was provided in 2006.
- In order to satisfy current training demand, there is a need for seven full size 3G pitches. Taking into account future demand, there is a need for nine.
- If each team was to remain within their respective analysis area then there is a current need for nine full size 3G pitches and a future need for ten.
- Moving all competitive mini football matches from grass pitches to 3G pitches would require five full size 3G pitches currently and eight 3G pitches in the future. Moving all 9v9 football would require four full size 3G pitches currently and five 3G pitches in the future.
- There are currently no World Rugby compliant 3G pitches in Thurrock, however, Thurrock RUFC expresses a demand to have one within its site.
- Both St Clere's School and Gable Hall School report that their pitches are operating close to capacity during the peak period for football training demand. Lakeside Football Ground has only recently been provided, therefore usage is difficult to calculate.
- The FPM run in Thurrock shows that unsatisfied demand is relatively high and that there is an undersupply of full size AGPs as demand outweighs supply.

Hockey summary

- There are three full size (sand based/dressed) AGPs in Thurrock, all of which are fully available to the community and floodlit; The Gateway Academy, Harris Academy Chafford Hundred and Palmers Sports & Fitness Centre (Palmers College).
- In addition, there is a smaller sized pitch at William Edwards School. Although too small to host competitive matches it can be used to accommodate some training demand.

- Only Palmers Sports & Fitness Centre is used for hockey, by Thurrock HC (the only club playing in Thurrock). Albeit security of tenure is deemed to be unsecure as there is no formal use agreement in place.
- Both academies report that the majority of midweek capacity is taken up by football teams for training, particularly during winter months, with plenty of spare capacity existing on weekends.
- Neither Palmers Sports & Fitness Centre nor Harris Academy Chafford Hundred have been resurfaced since they were first provided in 2002 and 2005 respectively. As such, both have quality issues and imminent resurfacing is recommended in order to sustain usage.
- All AGPs are serviced by ancillary facilities and although there are no reported issues, Thurrock HC expresses demand to have its own clubhouse at Palmers Sports & Fitness Centre or access to a suitable social area.
- The Club has 58 senior and 38 junior members and provides three senior men's and three senior women's teams, all of which play at Palmers Sports & Fitness Centre. Membership at the Club has decreased over the previous three years.
- Further to this, no future demand was expressed as the Club is more focused on sustaining its current membership numbers.
- The FPM shows that unsatisfied demand for access to AGPs for hockey use is relatively high and that demand outweighs supply; however, an identified shortfall of 0.36 pitches is alleviated by The Gateway Academy, which is not included within the run.
- There is demand for one full size hockey suitable AGP in Thurrock to service current and future hockey demand.
- Priority should therefore be placed on improving the quality of Palmers Sports & Fitness Centre in order to sustain its use for hockey.
- It is also recommended that greater security of tenure is provided to Thurrock HC and a resolution to the Club's requirement for a more suitable social space is also required.
- As Harris Academy Chafford Hundred and The Gateway Academy are currently unused by hockey clubs, consideration should be given to converting the pitches to a 3G surface.

Netball summary

- There is a large supply of outdoor netball courts across Thurrock although consideration needs to be given to indoor facilities
- The majority of courts are available to the community, with the exception of St Clere's School and Grays Convent High School.
- Of the courts, 12 are assessed as standard quality and 12 are assessed as poor quality. None are assessed as good quality.
- All of the courts are a macadam surface.

- Four courts are floodlit, all of which are located at Hassenbrook Academy.
- The South Essex Thurrock Netball Association accesses the courts at Hassenbrook Academy as a central venue for all of its league matches.
- The Association considers the number of courts available to be adequate but expresses a need for more floodlit courts and more indoor courts.
- Back to Netball sessions are also ran at Hassenbrook Academy.
- Priority should be placed on improving court quality in order to sustain usage. To that end, Hassenbrook Academy is seen as a key site due to the level of demand it attracts.

Rugby union summary

- Within Thurrock there are nine sites containing a total of 16 senior, one junior and two mini rugby union pitches. Of these, 12 senior and both mini pitches are available for community use.
- Of the pitches available to the community, there are ten senior pitches assessed as standard quality and two assessed as poor quality; no pitches are assessed as good quality. Both mini pitches are assessed as standard.
- The clubhouse facilities at Thames Rugby Club are assessed as poor quality. A planning application has been submitted for a new clubhouse, although funding is yet to be secured.
- Tenure is considered unsecure for Pegasus Palmerians RUFC as St Clere's School can stop allowing community use at any point. It is therefore recommended that the Club enters a community use agreement with the School.
- Four rugby union clubs play within Thurrock, consisting of 10 senior men's, four senior women's, 11 junior boys', three junior girls' and 11 (mixed) mini teams.
- Over the previous three years, Thurrock RUFC reports that it has grown by one junior boys' team, whilst Thames RUFC reports that it has lost one senior women's and one junior boys' team.
- Many teams train at their home ground on match pitches. As a result, usage is concentrated which reduces the capacity for match play on these pitches and means they are more likely to be overplayed.
- Thurrock RUFC expresses an aspiration to provide a World Rugby compliant 3G pitch within its site.
- Team generation rates predict a growth of one senior men's team, three junior boys' teams and two mini teams. In addition, all clubs report plans to increase their number of teams.
- Thames Rugby Club contains one match equivalent of spare capacity on one of its senior pitches, which translates to 0.5 match equivalents of actual spare capacity.

- It is recommended that spare capacity at Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground, William Edwards School and Thurrock Rugby Club is retained to protect pitch quality.
- Overplay is evident on four senior pitches (one at St Clere's School and two at Thurrock Rugby Club) amounting to nine match equivalent sessions.
- There is an overall shortfall of senior pitches amounting to 11 match equivalent sessions and a shortfall is evident within each analysis area.
- Improving pitch quality will reduce shortfalls. This can be achieved through improved maintenance and the installation of drainage systems.
- One of the main reasons for overplay is training on match pitches. Through installing additional floodlighting at sites in order to spread out training demand.
- Alternatively, a World Rugby compliant AGP would reduce overplay.

Tennis summary

- There are 34 tennis courts identified in Thurrock located across 15 sites. Of the courts, 25 are categorised as being available for community use across 12 sites.
- All courts have a macadam surface.
- St Clere's School has gained planning permission to improve its courts through resurfacing, fencing and floodlighting. The School also reports that community use will be made available after the development takes place, with Thurrock Tennis Club referred to in the planning application as priority users.
- Of provision that is currently available for community use, five courts are assessed as good quality, six are rated as standard and 14 are rated as poor.
- The only courts in Thurrock that are floodlit are located at Palmers Sports & Fitness Centre (Palmers College) with regular community use for informal tennis during the summer.
- Thurrock Tennis Club is the only tennis club within Thurrock and provides of 56 senior and 50 junior members and fields two senior men's, two senior women's, one mixed and two junior teams.
- The Club reports that it is operating at capacity and expresses latent demand for access to more courts and which are floodlit. This would result in future demand totalling 20 senior and 30 junior members.
- It is considered that all council courts in Thurrock have spare capacity for a growth in demand but poor quality is an issue which deters informal usage.
- As Thurrock Tennis Club reports that it is operating at capacity, priority should be placed on enabling the Club to access more courts and which are floodlit if possible. Further consultation with the Club is therefore required once the development at St Clere's School takes place.
- As all remaining courts are deemed to have spare capacity improving quality, particularly at council sites which are assessed as poor should help to sustain

regular use during the summer months and further contribute to the usage and value of the open spaces they are located within.