

Huntingdonshire District Council

Sports Facilities Standards Report  
2007 - 2020

A

Final Report

By

Strategic Leisure Limited

March 2008

# CONTENTS

## CONTENTS

		Page
	<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>SECTION I</b>	<b>- Introduction and Background</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction</li><li>• Rationale for the Sports Facilities Strategy</li><li>• Strategy Scope</li><li>• Strategy Drivers</li><li>• Huntingdonshire District - a profile</li></ul>	<b>01</b>
<b>SECTION II</b>	<b>- Strategic Context</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• National Context</li><li>• Local Context</li></ul>	
<b>SECTION III</b>	<b>- Assessment of Current Provision</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Current Facility Provision</li><li>• Supply and Demand Analysis</li><li>• Current and Future Participation</li><li>• The need for new provision in St Neots</li><li>• Key Issues and Challenges</li></ul>	
<b>SECTION IV</b>	<b>- Local Standards</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Planning Framework</li><li>• Local Standards</li><li>• Developers' Contributions</li></ul>	
<b>SECTION V</b>	<b>- Conclusions and Recommendations</b>	

# *EXECUTIVE SUMMARY*

## **APPENDICES**

APPENDIX I	-	Consultation List
APPENDIX II	-	Supply and Demand Analysis and Modelling
APPENDIX III	-	Huntingdonshire Accessibility Calculations
APPENDIX IV	-	Summary of National Context
APPENDIX V	-	Activity Profile – Huntingdonshire District Council
APPENDIX VI	-	Market Segmentation
APPENDIX VII	-	Potential Funding Sources
APPENDIX VIII	-	GIS Maps

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Introduction and Rationale for the Huntingdonshire Sports Facilities Strategy

Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) identified the need for a sports facility strategy to assist in guiding the future provision of a range of sports facilities in the District. The need for a clear and prioritised framework for future investment in sports facility provision is particularly critical given the likely need for additional provision as a result of population growth in the District, and specifically in the St Neots area, and the need for ongoing investment in the existing infrastructure. Given the nature of the District, which is a combination of the four main towns of Huntingdon, Ramsey, St Neots and St Ives, smaller villages and more rural areas there is also a need to ensure that sports facilities are accessible throughout the District.

The development of the sports facilities strategy also provides the opportunity to assess the condition of existing provision, and whether it is appropriate to meet local needs and demand and to ensure that potential new provision helps to address any current deficiencies – quantitative or qualitative. In addition, there is a need to ensure that the appropriate quantity and quality of facilities are provided to facilitate increased participation (Government agenda), and improve the health of the local community.

There are two main factors which are particularly relevant to the future provision of sports facilities; these are the future implementation of the Building Schools for the Future Programme (BSF) in the District, and the significant area of population growth around St Neots. This strategy will be used to guide and inform the nature and extent of resources, financial and operational, which are needed to ensure that Huntingdonshire has up to date, fit for purpose, accessible and welcoming sports facilities for the existing community, people working in, or visiting the District, and any new residents in the District.

The Sports Facilities Strategy for Huntingdonshire 'fits' within the strategic framework for planning for future provision as follows:



## Strategy Scope

The focus of this strategy is indoor sports facilities (swimming pools, sports halls, health and fitness facilities, indoor bowls), and Artificial Turf Pitches (ATPs). The Strategy considers existing and planned facilities incorporating:

- Local authority leisure centres
- Voluntary sector sports clubs
- Private sector facilities
- Secondary schools that will be re-built or re-furnished under PFI or the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme

It is important to stress that this strategy focuses on community sports facility provision and the needs for provision both now and into the future. The District also has a significant sporting infrastructure which includes provision for activities such as golf, sailing etc, and a large number of individual sports clubs. These are very important to facilitate increased participation, and encourage people to become involved in activity on a regular basis.

## Strategy Drivers

The key drivers for the Strategy are:

- The need to plan strategically and ensure sustainability of future provision
- The Local Development Framework (LDF), and Supplementary Planning Documents setting out expectations for S106 contributions from developers towards current and future sports facility provision

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The priorities and objectives for the Sustainable Community Strategy
- The need to identify what provision is needed in St Neots given the significant population increases planned for this area of the District
- The need to identify how best to provide for those living in rural areas, where accessibility to sports facilities is more limited
- The need to increase participation at local level
- Opportunities for partnerships – Building Schools for the Future (BSF) - Schools, National Governing Bodies (NGBs), Sports Clubs etc.

N.B The feedback from NGBs reflects that gained in the development of 'Creating Active Places' and the Cambridgeshire County Strategy.

This approach to the future strategic planning of sports facilities will continue to be important for the District given a number of significant factors at local level, such as:

PARTICIPATION LEVELS	POPULATION GROWTH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The current high levels of participation in sport and physical activity in the District - over 50% of all Huntingdonshire residents aged 16+ participate in physical activity (participation is higher in Huntingdonshire than in England)</li> <li>• The Hinchingsbrooke School Sports Partnership is now established, and working towards the targets set for the provision of 2 hours of PE for children under 16 plus 2/3 hours of participation in after school sports and physical activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant growth in population in and around St Neots, to the south of the District</li> </ul>
HEALTH CHALLENGES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relatively high incidences of cancer</li> <li>• Growing incidence of Coronary Heart Disease (CHD)</li> <li>• Relatively high numbers of people smoking (1 in 5)</li> <li>• The rate of admissions to hospital with alcohol specific conditions is less than the England average</li> <li>• The need to ensure that obesity, especially amongst young people, reduces</li> <li>• The opportunity to harness the social aspects of sport and physical activity to address issues of social isolation</li> <li>• The opportunity for active participation to contribute to maintaining higher life expectancy for the District's population than the England average</li> </ul>	
PLANNING ISSUES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need to ensure investment in future provision of sports facilities, and the potential to achieve this through identification of priorities which inform the Local Development Framework (LDF)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need to develop Local Standards of provision to inform and guide future S106 contributions from developers</li> </ul>

### District Profile

Huntingdonshire is a rural area with four main settlements. Although no more than 12 miles apart in terms of distance, the nature of the district means that accessibility to community provision, including sports facilities, is a challenge. Current sports facility provision is situated in each of the main settlements to overcome this issue. There is a need to consider how those living in the rural areas can best be provided with participative opportunities.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The District is relatively affluent, but has small pockets of deprivation. There are high levels of employment and average wages are higher than other parts of the county, although some younger people lack formal qualifications. Life expectancy is high, and compared to some of the other more rural and urban areas, there are fewer serious health issues, with the exception of a growing incidence of CHD, and relatively high rates of cancer, experienced by the population.

The District has a large younger population, and a high proportion of 30-44 year olds; this profile is important for sports provision, as individuals tend to be more active when younger.

Based on the Active People Survey (Sport England December 2006), adult (ie those aged over 16 years) participation rates in sport and physical activity are higher than the rates at national level. The level of participation relates to taking part in 30 minutes of physical activity at least 3 times a week.

Sports facility provision in the District is well thought of (comment in Huntingdonshire Cultural Strategy 2007), but there is a continuing need for capital investment just to maintain the Council's existing five leisure centres. There are potential partnership opportunities for new provision through the education sector, and also linked to the growth agenda.

### Current and Future Demand - Supply and Demand Analysis

It is important to stress that this assessment is based on national models which identify the level of provision needed for a current and future level of population ie what level and type of sports facility provision is needed to provide adequately for a specific number of people. To make this more relevant at local level, the modeling then identifies the actual level of accessible sports facility provision ie that which is available on a pay and play basis; this highlights the fact that there are built facilities in the District that are not fully accessible for community use. This situation, which is common across the UK would suggest that the way forward is about a combination of opening up existing sports facilities to ensure there is greater community access, and developing new facilities where appropriate, but particularly to address the District's growth agenda eg in the St Neot's area.

### Current Demand

Table 1 Supply and Demand Analysis 2008

Facility Type	Required Level of Supply (based on 2007 population of 168,200 (2004 based population Government Actuary Department data, published October 2007)	Current Level of Provision	Current Level of Accessible Provision (based on accessibility for pay and play usage)	Surplus (+)/Deficit (-) of accessible provision (based on 212 sq m being 1 x 4 lane x 25m pool)
Swimming Pools	1756.67 sq m	938 sq m (of 25m x 4 lane pools and above)	688 sq m	-1068.67 sq m (equivalent to 5.1 x 4 lane x 25m pools)
Sports Halls (4 badminton court size)	48.26 badminton courts	35 courts (4 badminton court halls and above)	16 badminton courts (4 + courts)	- 32.3 (equivalent to 8 x 4 badminton court sports halls) N.B 3 court halls at Sawtry and Ramsey Leisure Centres not included in above figure)
Fitness Stations	433 stations (based on 12% participation rate (FIA))	561	210 stations	- 223 stations
Indoor Bowls	9.28 rinks	14 rinks	14	+5
All weather turf pitches (ATPs)	7 (based on 1 ATP :25,000 population)	4	4	-3

## ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

### **Impact of Increased Population and Participation**

Table 1 above illustrates the current supply and demand analysis for Huntingdonshire. In terms of strategic planning for future provision of sports facilities, it is important to consider the impact of both an increased population, and increased participation (modeled at a 13 %overall increase, ie !% per annum, over the life of the strategy).

Table 2 overleaf models the impact of both increased population and increased participation on demand for facility provision.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Table 2 Increased Population (to 2021) and Participation Impact

Facility Type	Required Level of Supply by 2021 (based on 2021 population of 188,400 (2004 based population Government Actuary Department data, published October 2007))	Current Level of Provision (2007)	Current Level of Accessible Provision (based on accessibility for pay and play usage)	Impact of 13 % increase in Participation over the life of the strategy i.e. to 2021, (based on 2007 population) in terms of facility requirements
Swimming Pools	2,066.02 sq m (9.7 x 4 lane x 25m pools (212 sq m))	938 sq m (of 25m x 4 lane pools and above)	688 sq m (of 25m x 4 lane pools and above)	2,211.63 sq m (10.43 x 4 lane x 25m pools (212 sq m))
Sports Halls (4 badminton court size)	56.75 badminton courts (14.1 x 4 badminton court sports halls)	35 courts (4 badminton court halls and above)	16 badminton courts (4 + courts)	60.75 badminton courts (equivalent to 15.2 sports halls of 4 badminton court size)
Fitness Stations	678 stations	561	210 stations	468 (based on a 0.5% increase year on year, which is the current trend)
Indoor Bowls	10.4	14 rinks	14	+4 rinks
ATPs	8	4	4	-7.7



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Analysis of Supply and Demand

### Swimming Pools

It is clear that in relation to current demand for sports facilities, there is an existing deficiency in provision of swimming pools, sports halls, fitness stations, and ATPs when supply and demand modeling is based on accessibility of facilities. However, the overall deficit in terms of current ie 2008 swimming pool provision (-1,068.67 sq m/5.1 x 4 lane x 25m pools) is not actually a true reflection of the existing swimming provision in Huntingdonshire District, given that 2 of the main public pools are excluded from the SFC modelling on the basis that they are not 25m in length. The pools at Sawtry Leisure Centre and Ramsey Leisure Centres are only 20m in length. In addition, the learner pool at St Neots Leisure Centre is only 20m long. The impact of including this water space in the supply and demand assessment reduces the deficit to 578.67 sq m (2.7 4 lane x 25m pools) in 2008, and 858.19 sq m (4.1 4 lane x 25m pools) by 2021.

Despite the fact that the three pools above are less than 20m in length, they provide very important and well-used facilities for the local community, and therefore should be adequately reflected in assessing current supply of swimming pools.

The reduction in deficit is also important as this facilitates consideration of the extensive commercial pool provision in the District, which, while not being accessible to many of the population because there is a requirement to pay a membership fee, quite obviously does provide for a percentage of the local community, who can, or who choose to, afford this membership fee. Therefore in relation to the current level of provision, it is considered that the deficit of 5.1 4 lane x 25m pools (which equates to 2.5 8 lane x 25m pools) is adequately addressed by other local provision of water space. This is through the commercial facilities, and also swimming pools at three other local schools – Godmanchester, Hinchbrook, and Kimbolton.

It is also important to stress that the existing HDC pools do not currently operate at full capacity; this is due to a number of factors including accessibility, quality and condition. Whilst dual-use facilities provide significant potential for effective operational management because they are used for both curriculum delivery and community use, access is restricted during the day to the community. This means that potential users may choose to access other provision they know is open, or they may not swim at all. A further factor is that dual-use facilities have intensive use because they are used for curriculum delivery and community use and therefore over time this can impact on their quality and condition. Although there are significant pockets of deprivation in the District, Huntingdonshire is a relatively affluent area which is reflected by the level of commercial sports facility provision in the towns; given the possible perceived accessibility issues with HDC facilities local residents may be choosing to swim at these facilities, or elsewhere, rather than in HDC facilities.

Having examined the possible reasons for the fact that HDC swimming pools do not currently operate at full capacity, it is critical to stress that this current position does not provide a reason not to provide the level of water space required in the District in the future.

In terms of future deficits in water space, it is predominantly the growth in population, and specifically that around the St Neots area, that increases demand, and therefore demonstrates a deficit. If the same argument is applied as above, the actual deficit in future supply of water space is (6.5 4 lane x 25m pool – 5.1 4 lane x 25m pool), which equates to 1.4 of a 4 lane x 25m pool. On this basis, it is suggested that there will be a need to provide 1 additional 6 lane x 25m pool, possibly on the site of the new secondary school to be developed in St Neots, to cater for the growth in population.

It is important to state that the supply and demand modelling above is based on a level of supply to provide for a number of people; whilst adult participation rates are high in the District existing pools are not always full to capacity, which indicates that people take part in a range of activities other than swimming.

However, the assessment of supply and demand clearly shows that pay and play accessibility is an issue in relation to quality water space in the District, and this is likely to be exacerbated by the growth in population. Demand for swimming will increase, and there will be a need for additional provision in St Neots by 2021.

Given the specific location of the majority of the District's future growth ie east of the railway line in St Neot's, there is potential to consider the provision of a new swimming pool alongside other community facilities.

Given the scale of the residential development, it is likely that there will be a new secondary school in this area and co-location (not dual-use) of a swimming facility on the same site may provide a practical option for future provision. Co-location is suggested to address some of the previously identified factors associated with accessibility to dual-use provision.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Sports Halls

There is almost sufficient actual sports hall in the District at the present time; the issue is that all existing facilities are not available on a pay and play basis (only 16 of the total existing 49 courts (all courts in the District) are available for pay and play access). Opening up community pay and play access at existing facilities is a priority, before any additional facilities are built. In 2008, there would be no deficit in sports hall provision if accessibility is improved at those facilities where community access is currently limited, and all existing courts were available for pay and play access..

By 2021, this sufficiency has decreased to 7.75 courts ie nearly 2 x 4 badminton court sports hall, if it is again assumed that existing hall accessibility is improved, and all courts in the District are accessible for pay and play usage. The provision of two additional sports halls, one, potentially at St Neots, would be required to address this deficit.

Given the comments from the clubs in relation to accessing existing public sports hall provision, and the existing deficit in accessible provision, there is a need to retain existing levels of sports hall in the District, and indeed seek to open up additional facilities. The proposals to extend fitness suites at Huntingdon and St Neots Leisure Centres will actually reduce existing accessible pay and play sports hall provision, and therefore increase the identified deficit moving forward.

## Health and Fitness

In terms of fitness stations, there are currently sufficient fitness stations in the District, across all providers to meet community demand; the same is true by 2021. It is the accessibility to this provision that is the critical issue, given that a significant level of existing facilities is operated commercially. However, there are also public facilities operated by HDC and other facilities available on Kimbolton and Hinchingsbrooke Schools; the challenge is to ensure that these facilities operate pricing policies which are inclusive, whilst reflecting the need to levy a membership fee to facilitate health and safety controls in terms of access. Only members who have passed an induction are allowed to use fitness facilities.

## Indoor Bowls

There is sufficient current supply of indoor bowls rinks to meet both current and future need (to 2021). Current provision is located centrally in Huntingdon and in St Neots and is within 20-30 minutes drivetime of the rest of the District.

## ATPs

There is a need to provide additional ATPs to meet both current and future demand. 3 additional facilities are required in the District now, which should be full size, floodlit, and be either sand based (principally for hockey, given that there is a general lack of such surfaces on the outskirts of Cambridge, which means the City is inundated with demand for hockey, which it currently struggles to accommodate), or if demand for additional football can be demonstrated, 3G. By 2021 there is a need for 4 additional ATP facilities.

Given that there are three planned developments of new ATP facilities in the next 12 months in the District, in reality there will be a deficit of just one ATP by 2021.

In developing new ATP provision, it will be important to address the current spatial deficiencies of this type of facility in the north of the District. The implementation of BSF may provide the opportunity to address this deficit in eg Sawtry.

## Key Issues and Challenges

Based on the analysis of current provision, and the district context, there are a number of emerging key issues and challenges to be considered in developing the Huntingdonshire Sports Facilities Strategy.

These include:

- **Current deficits in provision**, which will only increase as the local population increases; increasing participation will also have an impact on the demand for supply of swimming, sports hall and fitness station provision which is already insufficient, due to both quantitative and accessibility deficiencies.
- **Facility condition** - ongoing investment in the existing HDC facilities to maintain and improve provision.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Facility Design** – the design of some existing facilities could be improved to meet the needs of the local population, and specifically the needs of users with a disability. It is also important to consider alternative forms of provision, or perhaps less traditional type facilities, particularly to appeal to younger participants, where participation rates are lower in the District.
- **Population Growth** – this rapid growth over the next few years will increase the demand levels for sports facilities, particularly in and around St Neots.
- **Drive to increase participation** - given the current Government targets for increasing participation in sport and physical activity, and the existing high activity rates in the District, the continued provision of accessible, fit for purpose and quality sports facilities is a clear priority for HDC and its stakeholder partners
- **Increasing Participation amongst Younger People** ie 16-34 years – given that this group has low levels of active participation in sport and physical activity, it is important to ensure that future provision reflects, and responds to, their needs
- **Accessibility** eg school facilities, daytime - pools, sports halls; it is outside the control of HDC to open up school sites for community use. This approach needs to be undertaken in partnership with the County Council.
- **Commercial sector provision** – there is a significant level of commercial health and fitness provision in the District, some of which is of a better quality than the public sector facilities, however, it is not always accessible to those more deprived communities due to the cost of membership fees

### Strategic Recommendations

Based on the analysis and findings of the sports facility strategy, the following recommendations are made in terms of future sports facility provision in the District:

#### Recommendation 1

The priorities for future sports facility provision are accepted as:

#### Current Needs

- The theoretical deficiency in accessible water space; this can be addressed by increasing access to existing pool facilities on education sites and those operated commercially
- The deficiency in accessible sports hall provision; this could be addressed by opening up and extending community pay and play access to existing facilities, predominantly on school sites. The future implementation of BSF may also be an important factor in this in the future.
- The need to retain, not lose existing sports hall space operated through the public sector.
- The need to ensure fitness provision is accessible ie affordable, through appropriate partnerships with the commercial sector, pricing and programming policies
- The provision of additional ATPs (3 planned) and specifically the deficit of this type of facility in the north of the District.

#### Future Needs

- The theoretical deficiency in accessible water space; this can be addressed by increasing access to existing pool facilities on education sites and those operated commercially
- The deficiency in accessible sports hall provision; this could be addressed by opening up and extending community pay and play access to existing facilities, predominantly on school sites. The future implementation of BSF may also be an important factor in this in the future.
- The need to ensure fitness provision is accessible ie affordable, through appropriate partnerships with the commercial sector, pricing and programming policies
- The provision of 1 additional ATP and specifically the deficit of this type of facility in the north of the District.
- The need for 1 additional swimming pool in the St Neots area as a result of significant population growth.
- **Facility condition** - ongoing investment in the existing HDC facilities to maintain and improve provision.
- **Facility Design** – the design of some existing facilities could be improved to meet the needs of the local population, and specifically the needs of disability users.
- **Population Growth** – this rapid growth over the next few years will increase the demand levels for sports facilities, particularly in and around St Neots. There are a number of options to consider in addressing the need for new sports facilities in St Neots including their co-location with other community provision eg a new secondary school.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Drive to increase participation** - given the current Government targets for increasing participation in sport and physical activity, and the existing high inactivity rates in the District, the continued provision of accessible, fit for purpose and quality sports facilities is a clear priority for HDC and its stakeholder partners
- **Accessibility** eg school facilities, daytime - pools, sports halls
- **Commercial sector provision** – there is a significant level of commercial health and fitness provision in the District, some of which is of a better quality than the public sector facilities, however, it is not always accessible to those more deprived communities due to cost

### Recommendation 2 - Increasing Access

Given that there are actually sufficient sports hall facilities in the District to meet demand, but they are not all accessible, the option of negotiating increased community access should also be considered as a priority.

### Recommendation 3 - BSF

Given the identified deficiencies in pay and play accessible sports facility provision across the District it is recommended that opportunities for partnership with BSF, FE/HE and other strategic partners are supported by HDC to maximise participation opportunities for the Huntingdonshire community. The opportunities through BSF are particularly important for the north of the District.

### Recommendation 4 - Local Standards

The following Local Standards for future core community sports facility provision are adopted by HDC:

#### Quantity

Table 3 Local Standards of Provision

FACILITY TYPE	Local Standards of Provision per 1000 population
Sports Hall (4 badminton Court)	51.20 sq m
Swimming Pool (4 lane x 25m)	10.96 sq m
Fitness Stations(20+ gym)	3.6 stations
Indoor Bowls	0.05 rink
ATPs	0.04 ATPs (based on 1 pitch (100m x 64m per 25,000 population)

#### Quality

The future standard of provision for new facilities should be:

- The sports facilities are to be designed to a minimum playing standard of 'fit for purpose' depending on the terminology of the various national governing sporting bodies and Sport England Guidance.
- External elevations to utilise high quality, low maintenance finishes, and be sympathetic to the surrounding environment.
- Finishes being robust and suitable for location and use.
- Building fabric and services to be cost effective with low maintenance.
- First major maintenance to structure to be 50 years. Life expectancy of materials used to external elevations to be 25 years minimum (excluding routine maintenance).
- Sustainable, being responsible to environmental issues in terms of the use of energy and non-sustainable resources and the control of pollution. Use of environmentally friendly and sustainable building services and building materials to be maximised. Materials to be recyclable where possible.
- Services to be essentially economic and environmentally friendly, which allow cost in use to be minimised. The use of natural ventilation to be maximised. Full life cycle cost analysis will be required when considering the building fabric and services

# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

## **Accessibility**

- New sports facility provision should be located within a 20 minute walk time of its immediate catchment area, and where possible, should be linked to existing community provision eg education site
- All sports facility provision should be within a 20 minute drive time of its surrounding catchment area, and where possible and appropriate, depending on the nature of provision, should be located adjacent to other community provision, to facilitate access and reduce the overall need for travel around the District

## **Recommendation 5 - Retention of Sports Hall Space**

Given the lack of accessible sports hall provision in the District, it is recommended that careful consideration be given to reducing the available pay and play space further, unless other arrangements are made to increase access at other existing facilities.

## **Recommendation 6 - Partnership**

It is recommended that HDC seek to work in partnership wherever possible to address the identified deficiencies in sports facility provision. Key partners at local level will be education, local sports clubs, health services, NGBs and programmes such as BSF. This approach reflects HDC's role as an enabler at local level.

## **Recommendation 7 - St Neots Area**

The opportunities and options for delivering new sports facilities in the growth area around St Neots need to be carefully considered, to ensure new facilities complement and do not compete with, existing HDC provision. HDC should seek to work in partnership, particularly with education, in the development of new sports facilities to facilitate co-located provision at the heart of the new community. Funding options to deliver the new facilities include growth area funding, S106, HDC capital, a private sector partnership and potentially external grant support.

## **Recommendation 8 - Participation in Sport and Physical Activity**

The provision of opportunities for participation in sport and physical activity across the District should be supported as a key priority given its potential to contribute positively to improved health, reduced obesity and social inclusion. Given the increasing issue of CHD, youth obesity, and the high level of smoking in the District, the role that active participation can play in improving health is critical. Appropriate resources should continue to be made available to improve awareness of provision, increase accessibility and deliver sport development programmes to increase and retain participation.

# **SECTION I - INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

## **Introduction**

- 1.1 Strategic Leisure Limited (Strategic Leisure) was appointed by Sport England East in June 07 to develop a County Sports Facility Strategy for Cambridgeshire, covering Peterborough City Council, Huntingdonshire District (parts of) and Fenland District. SLL was asked to develop this work given the research and analysis undertaken to prepare the regional Sports Facilities Strategy ('Creating Active Places'), which has informed this strategy.
- 1.2 This draft strategy covers the analysis and findings relating to Huntingdonshire District sports facility provision.
- 1.3 This strategy will be incorporated into the final County Sports Facility Strategy, together with the analysis for Peterborough and Fenland, and the update of the Cambridgeshire Horizons Report (2006) (Major Sports Facilities Strategy).

## **Rationale for the Huntingdonshire Sports Facilities Strategy**

- 1.4 Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) identified the need for a sports facility strategy to assist in guiding the future provision of a range of sports facilities in the District. The need for a clear and prioritised framework for future investment in sports facility provision is particularly critical given the likely need for additional provision as a result of population growth in the District, and specifically in the St Neots area, and the need for ongoing investment in the existing infrastructure.
- 1.5 The development of the sports facilities strategy also provides the opportunity to assess the condition of existing provision, and whether it is appropriate to meet local needs and demand and to ensure that potential new provision helps to address any current deficiencies – quantitative or qualitative.
- 1.6 In addition, there is a need to ensure that the appropriate quantity and quality of facilities are provided to facilitate increased participation (Government agenda), and improve the health of the local community.
- 1.7 It is important to stress that this strategy focuses on community sports facility provision and the needs for provision both now and into the future. The District also has a significant sporting infrastructure which includes provision for activities such as golf, sailing etc, and a large number of individual sports clubs. These are very important to facilitate increased participation, and encourage people to become involved in activity on a regular basis.
- 1.8 Given the nature of the District, which is a combination of the four main towns of Huntingdon, Ramsey, St Neots and St Ives, smaller villages and more rural areas there is also a need to ensure that sports facilities are accessible throughout the District.
- 1.9 There are two main factors which are particularly relevant to the future provision of sports facilities; these are the future implementation of the Building Schools for the Future Programme (BSF) in the District, and the significant area of population growth around St Neots.
- 1.10 This strategy will be used to guide and inform the nature and extent of resources, financial and operational, which are needed to ensure that Huntingdonshire has up to date, fit for purpose, accessible and welcoming sports facilities for the existing community, people working in, or visiting the District, and any new residents in the District.

## **Strategy Scope**

- 1.11 The focus of this strategy is indoor sports facilities (swimming pools, sports halls, health and fitness facilities, indoor bowls), and Artificial Turf Pitches (ATPs).
- 1.12 The Strategy considers existing and planned facilities incorporating:
  - Local authority leisure centres
  - Voluntary sector sports clubs
  - Private sector facilities

## SECTION I - INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- Secondary schools that will be/are being re-built or re-furnished under PFI or the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme

### Strategy Drivers

1.13 The key drivers for the Strategy are:

- The need to plan strategically and ensure sustainability of future provision
- The Local Development Framework (LDF), and Supplementary Planning Documents setting out expectations for S106 contributions from developers towards current and future sports facility provision
- The priorities and objectives for the Sustainable Community Strategy
- The need to identify what provision is needed in St Neots given the significant population increases planned for this area of the District
- The need to identify how best to provide for those living in rural areas, where accessibility to sports facilities is more limited
- The need to increase participation at local level
- Opportunities for partnerships – Building Schools for the Future (BSF) - Schools, National Governing Bodies (NGBs), Sports Clubs etc.

N.B The feedback from NGBs reflects that gained in the development of 'Creating Active Places' and the Cambridgeshire County Strategy.

1.14 This approach to the future strategic planning of sports facilities will continue to be important for the District given a number of significant factors at local level, such as:

PARTICIPATION LEVELS	POPULATION GROWTH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The current high levels of participation in sport and physical activity in the District - over 50% of all Huntingdonshire residents aged 16+ participate in physical activity (participation is higher in Huntingdonshire than in England)</li> <li>• The Hinchingsbrooke School Sports Partnership is now established, and working towards the targets set for the provision of 2 hours of PE for children under 16 plus 2/3 hours of participation in after school sports and physical activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant growth in population in and around St Neots, to the south of the District</li> </ul>
HEALTH CHALLENGES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relatively high incidences of cancer</li> <li>• Growing incidence of Coronary Heart Disease (CHD)</li> <li>• Relatively high numbers of people smoking (1 in 5)</li> <li>• The rate of admissions to hospital with alcohol specific conditions is less than the England average</li> <li>• The need to ensure that obesity, especially amongst young people, reduces</li> <li>• The opportunity to harness the social aspects of sport and physical activity to address issues of social isolation</li> <li>• The opportunity for active participation to contribute to maintaining higher life expectancy for the District's population than the England average</li> </ul>	



## SECTION I - INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

PLANNING ISSUES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The need to ensure investment in future provision of sports facilities, and the potential to achieve this through identification of priorities which inform the Local Development Framework (LDF)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The need to develop Local Standards of provision to inform and guide future S106 contributions from developers</li></ul>

### Huntingdonshire District – A Profile

- 1.15 Huntingdonshire is a rural area of nearly 350 sq miles and is located within the County of Cambridgeshire. Historically it was a county in its own right. The population is around 168,200 with half living in the four market towns of Huntingdon (population 19,910), St Neots (population 26,230), St Ives (population 15,860) and Ramsey (population 6,070), with the remaining residents distributed within key settlements and rural villages.
- 1.16 The District has two rivers running through it, the River Great Ouse through the market towns (except Ramsey) and the River Nene to the north. The Districts market towns and villages reflect the areas history associated with both Roman and Anglo Saxon settlements.
- 1.17 The District has excellent transport links to the A1 and A14, which in turn links to the M1, M11, and M6. The District has a high level of out-commuting at around 35%.
- 1.18 The council along with other districts, county council, EEDA and GO East is part of the local 'infrastructure partnership' to deliver the Government's sustainable communities plan in the Cambridge sub region.
- 1.19 Huntingdonshire's current strategies look at addressing the negative effects of isolation ensuring that all residents, irrespective of their location, can access culture and cultural services.
- 1.20 The majority of housing and economic growth has been, and will continue to be, located within the district's largest towns of Huntingdon and St Neots, although HDC has also planned development in other market towns such as St Ives and Ramsey.



## SECTION I - INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.21 The map below shows the District and its main population settlements:



Based on the Ordnance Survey Mapping. (c) Crown Copyright. 100022322

### Summary

- 1.22 Huntingdonshire is a rural area with four main settlements. Although no more than 12 miles apart in terms of distance, the nature of the district means that accessibility to community provision, including sports facilities, is a challenge. Current sports facility provision is situated in each of the main settlements to overcome this issue. There is a need to consider how those living in the rural areas can best be provided with participative opportunities.
- 1.23 Sports facility provision in the District is well thought of (comment in Huntingdonshire Cultural Strategy 2007), but there is a continuing need for capital investment just to maintain the Council's existing five leisure centres. There are potential partnership opportunities for new provision through the education sector, and also linked to the growth agenda.

## ***SECTION II –STRATEGIC CONTEXT***

### **National Context**

- 2.1 The national context which informs the overall need for a strategic approach to the future planning of sports facilities at local level is summarised in Table 1, Appendix 3; this demonstrates the Government priorities in relation to health, physical activity and increasing participation.

## SECTION II –STRATEGIC CONTEXT

### Local Context

#### Review of Strategic Documents

2.2 The local context for the development of the sports facility strategy is summarised below. Given the clear focus on improving health and overall quality of life in the District, there is potential for provision of sport and physical activity to play a key role in contributing to the achievement of these local objectives.

Local Authority	Strategic Document	Vision / Main Aim(s):	Key Priorities	Other Relevant Info
Huntingdonshire District Council	<u>Huntingdonshire- "Growing success- Corporate Plan 2007/8"</u>	<p>The Council's Vision is for Huntingdonshire to become a place where future generations have a good quality of life and enjoy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued economic success</li> <li>• Opportunities for all</li> <li>• An environment that is protected and improved</li> </ul> <p>The Council's aims for the community are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A clean, green and attractive place</li> <li>• Housing that meets the local need</li> <li>• Safe, vibrant and inclusive communities</li> <li>• Healthy living</li> <li>• Access to services and transport</li> <li>• A strong diverse economy</li> </ul> <p>The Council's Corporate Aims are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve systems and practices</li> <li>• Learn and develop</li> <li>• Maintain sound finances</li> </ul>	<p><u>Priorities stemming from these aims:</u></p> <p><b>Community:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable provision of affordable housing</li> <li>• Achieve low level of homelessness</li> <li>• Lower carbon emissions</li> <li>• Improve access to Council services</li> <li>• Promote healthy lifestyle choice</li> <li>• Promote development opportunities in and around market towns</li> <li>• Enhance public, community and specialist transport into and around the market towns</li> </ul> <p><b>Council:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make performance management more effective and transparent</li> <li>• Re-balance saving and spending to ensure resources are available to achieve council priorities</li> <li>• Reduce number of car journeys to work by employees</li> <li>• Build new operations centre and headquarters</li> <li>• Be an employer people want to work for.</li> </ul>	

## SECTION II – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Local Authority	Strategic Document	Vision / Main Aim(s):	Key Priorities	Other Relevant Info
Huntingdonshire District Council	Open Space, Sport & Recreation Needs Assessment & Audit (August 2006)	Section 7 – Outdoor Sports	<p>Overview of findings:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall, the most common travel method for visiting outdoor sports facilities is walking (50.1%), followed by car 38.8%. The most frequent travel time to the facility was between five and ten minutes (37%), followed by between 11 and 14 minutes (29%).</li> <li>• Consultation highlights that there is a relatively even distribution of outdoor sports facilities across the district, with a large proportion owned and managed by Parish Councils.</li> <li>• The majority of use of the outdoor sports facilities within Huntingdonshire District is by formal clubs, and there is relatively little casual use of pitches.</li> <li>• Provision of tennis and bowls within Huntingdonshire is predominately focused around the club structure, with most facilities in club ownership or leased to clubs.</li> <li>• Consultation suggests that access to training facilities is a key issues, with only limited slots available at synthetic pitches for clubs wishing to train midweek.</li> </ul>	The Cambridge sub-region is the fastest growing area in the country. This significant increase in population will have far reaching consequences and will place demands on infrastructure and capacity of local services e.g. health services, transport and leisure facilities.
		<p>Section 8 – Playing Pitch Strategy</p> <p>The key areas of this part of the study included:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysing the current level of pitch</li> </ul>	<p>Overall, the research methods outlined identified 237 playing pitches in the District (all known public, private, school and other pitches). They compromise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 88 adult football pitches</li> </ul>	

## SECTION II – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Local Authority	Strategic Document	Vision / Main Aim(s):	Key Priorities	Other Relevant Info
		<p>provision within the District</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assisting the Council in meeting playing pitch requirements</li> <li>• Providing information for decision-making and future development proposals</li> </ul> <p>All calculations covered the following sports – association football, rugby, cricket, and hockey</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 54 junior football pitches</li> <li>• 14 mini soccer pitches</li> <li>• 43 cricket pitches</li> <li>• 7 adult rugby pitches</li> <li>• 7 junior rugby pitches</li> <li>• 1 junior rugby league pitch</li> <li>• 7 adult grass hockey pitches</li> <li>• 19 synthetic turf pitches</li> </ul> <p>Research showed that Huntingdonshire has a good number of football, cricket and hockey pitches for formal adult use in comparison to the national average.</p>	
	<p><b>Huntingdonshire Cultural Strategy 2007 2010</b></p>	<p>To enhance the quality of life and ensure that all of Huntingdonshire's residents have the opportunity to pursue a wide range of high-quality, sustainable cultural activities that fully reflect the diverse needs of the district</p>	<p><b>THEME 1</b> Improve access to culture and leisure opportunities</p> <p><b>THEME 2</b> Develop and improve life-long learning</p> <p><b>THEME 3</b> Develop vibrant communities which are safer, healthier, cohesive and economically sustainable</p>	

## SECTION II – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

### Local Demographic Profile

- 2.2 A review of local demographics is important to:
- Assess whether local facilities, often built some time ago, are located in the right place in relation to key population settlements
  - Identify where there is likely to be population growth and additional demand for facilities
  - Review the local population profile to identify particular inequalities e.g. health within Huntingdonshire
- 2.3 It is also important to consider the demographic make up of the District as key demographic and socio-economic characteristics are known to influence demand characteristics. For example certain age-groups are known to register higher participation rates in a number of sport and leisure activities; deprived communities often experience issues relating to access to services and opportunities; cultural backgrounds may result in some passive and active recreation pursuits being favoured over others; car ownership levels can impact on the range of facilities that can be accessed. A brief review of the key demographics (Source Census 2001 data) for the area shows that:
- 2.4 **Overall population:** According to 2004 based population data (Government Actuary Department (GAD)) published in October 2007, the 2007 population for the District is 168,200, increasing to 188,400 by 2021. The GAD figures have been used as the basis for supply and demand modelling to inform the sports facilities strategy.
- 2.5 The age structure of Huntingdonshire's population is very similar to the averages for England in terms of the proportion of the population aged between 20 and 50 years. Huntingdonshire has a higher proportion of children, teenagers and adults aged 0-14, and 30-54 and a lower proportion of those aged 54 and over. 24.4% of the population are aged between 30-44.
- 2.6 **Ethnicity.** Huntingdonshire's ethnic mix is the same as the national average with some 97% describing themselves as white. The next largest ethnic group (2.8%) in Huntingdonshire is from black and minority ethnic groups (BME).
- 2.7 **Deprivation Indices.** Huntingdonshire District is a predominantly prosperous area, benefiting from higher than average earnings, low unemployment and crime. However, the 2007 Indices of Deprivation show that of the 20% most deprived wards in Cambridgeshire, 11 are now in Huntingdonshire. These are Super Output Areas of which the most severe area of deprivation is Huntingdon North ward.
- 2.8 The population density in Huntingdonshire is lower than the England average of 3.87 (Office for National Statistics (ONS) data for 2005). This reflects the rural aspect of the area.
- 2.9 **Car Ownership** –4% more households in the District have access to 2 or more cars than the England average. This very high rate reflects the rural nature of the District.
- 2.10 **Education** - Despite the District's relative prosperity, in 2004 15% of school leavers left education with no qualifications; 25% of 16-74 year olds in the District have no formal qualifications.

### Department of Health – Local Authority Profile

- 2.11 Local authority health profiles are designed to show the health of people in each local authority area, and include comparisons with other similar populations. Profiles are produced by Public Health Observatories and are updated annually. With other local information e.g. Community Plans, Local Area Agreements, these profiles demonstrate where action can be taken to improve people's health and reduce inequalities.
- 2.12 Key points extracted from the 2007 profiles covering Cambridgeshire include:

#### Huntingdonshire

- It is estimated that in Huntingdonshire 1 adult in 4 eats healthily and 1 in 6 binge drinks. Although estimated smoking rates are below average, 1 adult in 5 still smokes
- Life expectancy for both men and women is higher than the England average

## ***SECTION II – STRATEGIC CONTEXT***

- Rates of early deaths from cancer are similar to those in England but have shown no improvement in trends over the last 4 years
- The rate of admission to hospital with alcohol specific conditions is lower than the England average
- CHD is a growing problem in the District
- Obesity levels, particularly amongst young people are also a growing issue

### **Summary**

- 2.13 Huntingdonshire District is relatively affluent, but has small pockets of deprivation. There are high levels of employment and average wages are higher than other parts of the county, although some younger people lack formal qualifications. Life expectancy is high, and compared to some of the other more rural and urban areas, there are fewer serious health issues, with the exception of a growing incidence of CHD, and relatively high rates of cancer, experienced by the population.
- 2.14 The District has a large younger population, and a high proportion of 30-44 year olds; this profile is important for sports provision, as individuals tend to be more active when younger.
- 2.15 Based on the Active People Survey (Sport England December 2006), adult (ie those aged over 16 years) participation rates in sport and physical activity are higher than the rates at national level. The level of participation relates to taking part in 30 minutes of physical activity at least 3 times a week.

## **SECTION III – ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT PROVISION**

### **Current Sports Facility Provision in Huntingdonshire**

#### **HDC Sports Facilities**

- 3.1 There are five existing HDC facilities in the District; these are:
- Huntingdon Leisure Centre, Huntingdon
  - St Neots Leisure Centre, St Neots
  - St Ivo Leisure Centre
  - Ramsey Leisure Centre
  - Sawtry Leisure Centre
- 3.2 These facilities are shown on Maps 1,, 3 and 4.
- 3.3 Existing HDC sports facilities are operated by HDC in-house. The majority of the HDC facilities were built in the mid 1970s - early 1980s. All facilities operate as dual-use provision; however the fitness suites are accessible throughout the day for community use. Overall the facilities are in reasonable condition, but none of them are fully DDA compliant. This situation is a consequence of the age of the buildings. Huntingdonshire Leisure Centre does have IFI recognition for part of the facility.
- 3.4 The usage of the leisure centres has increased significantly over the last three years, and is now around 1.5m visitors per annum.

#### **Huntingdon Leisure Centre, Huntingdon**

- 3.5 Huntingdon Leisure Centre, which is located adjacent to St Peter's School, comprises a 5 court sports hall, 25m pool and 48 station fitness suite, 2 x squash courts, aerobics studio and ancillary provision. The site is split with the pool and squash courts in one building, and the sports hall, studio and fitness suite in another. There is an artificial turf pitch (ATP) outside the sports hall, an indoor tennis centre, plus outdoor courts and an indoor bowling centre also adjacent to the site.
- 3.6 There are plans to extend the existing fitness suite later in 2008, and in so doing, reduce the 5 court sports hall to 3 court size, improve the changing rooms and install a kids' zone.
- 3.7 The Centre is Quest accredited.

#### **St Neots Leisure Centre, St Neots**

- 3.8 Built around 1991 , St Neots Leisure Centre, adjacent to St Neots College, comprises a 5 badminton court sports hall, 2 x squash courts, a 20m pool and shallow water lagoon area, health suite, aerobics studio, fitness suite and ancillary facilities, plus a full size ATP and a 7 aside football STP
- 3.9 The building is in average condition, but there is some need for capital investment, over and above the significant re-development of the wet side facilities. There is some further potential to develop the site eg linking wet and dryside facilities to increase operational effectiveness, and possibly extend the fitness suite. Work is currently being undertaken to the swimming pool roof and changing facilities.
- 3.10 The centre has a significant amount of club use eg St Neots Hockey Club, Swans Swimming Club, St Neots Squash Club, St Neots Badminton Club.

#### **St Ivo Leisure Centre**

- 3.11 St Ivo Leisure Centre was opened in 1974. It is located on a school site, and operates as a dual-use facility. The centre comprises a 6 badminton court sports hall, a 25m pool, a fitness suite, large viewing gallery and ancillary facilities.



## SECTION III – ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT PROVISION

- 3.12 There is significant club use of the facility, and it is also used for competitive swimming and wheelchair basketball competitions.
- 3.13 There is a significant need for capital investment; the priority would appear to be extension of the fitness suite, but this would need to be achieved in the existing building footprint. If such expansion were to happen, it would be important to retain the sports hall with 6 courts, as it is the only such venue in the District, and as such the only space that can provide adequately for competitive use for sports hall sports.

### St Ivo Outdoor Centre

- 3.14 The Outdoor Centre at St Ivo is a particularly important facility, unique in the County and District. It provides a wide range of outdoor activities and sports, including an athletics track, ATP, squash and tennis courts, and ancillary facilities, and is used by many local clubs and individuals.

### Ramsey Leisure Centre

- 3.15 The original facility was constructed in 1990, with an extension in 1999. The facility has a relatively poor appearance although there is no need for significant capital investment. The facility comprises a 3 badminton court sports hall, a 20m pool, a fitness suite, an aerobics studio, a 7 aside floodlit pitch, and ancillary provision.

### Sawtry Leisure Centre

- 3.16 Sawtry Leisure Centre was opened in 1974; there is a minimal requirement for investment in the facility. The overall appearance of the buildings and facilities is excellent. Sawtry Leisure Centre comprises a 3 badminton court sports hall, fitness suite, an aerobics studio, a 20m pool and ancillary provision.
- 3.17 There is some use of the facilities by local clubs, but usage relates predominantly to the community and the school (daytime).

### Qualitative Site Visits and Assessment - HDC Facilities

- 3.18 Indoor site audits were carried out using Strategic Leisure's non-technical proforma. This has been developed to reflect best industry practice eg QUEST, Sport England benchmarking etc, and assesses the quality of facilities from a user's perspective, at a specific point in time. The assessments are visual only, and are undertaken by visiting the facilities, and auditing the nature and condition of provision ie they reflect a moment in time and should be used as a guide only. The information obtained from the site visits was then analysed through a scoring system yielding the following results.

Table 3 - Indoor Facility Quality Scores

Site Name	Quality Score	Quality Rating
Huntingdon Leisure Centre	43%	Average
St Neots Leisure Centre	50%	Average
St Ivo Leisure Centre	52%	Average
Ramsey Leisure Centre	49%	Average
Sawtry Leisure Centre	63%	Good

- 3.19 The main issue relating to quality is the age and design of the existing buildings, which affect the user's experience. Both St Neots and Huntingdon Leisure Centres are split sites, disability access is not fully achievable on any site, and there is significant wasted space in many of the facilities as a result of their design.
- 3.20 The sites are well-maintained within available resources, but there is an ongoing need to invest in both the facilities and the fabric of the buildings to meet user expectations.
- 3.21 It is also important to consider that the age of the buildings and their design affects the range of activities that can be provided, and there is a need to modernize provision wherever possible.

## **SECTION III – ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT PROVISION**

### **Education Sports Facility Provision**

- 3.22 The District's Specialist Sports College is Hinchbrooke. This is a large mixed comprehensive, with a pupil roll of 1900.
- 3.23 The school has extensive sports facilities, which are also available for use by the community out of school time.
- 3.24 The school's sports facilities comprise a full size ATP, a 3 badminton court sports hall, a gymnasium, a dance studio, fitness suite, 25m swimming pool, 9 outdoor tennis courts, 2 outdoor basketball courts, and 2 artificial cricket wickets. The school also has access to Hinchbrooke Park and the lake, where students can participate in orienteering, cross country, sailing, kayaking and windsurfing.
- 3.25 The priority need for investment on the school site is improved changing rooms.
- 3.26 The existing ATP will be re-surfaced in the summer of 2008 to a 3G which will increase capacity for rugby and football, but impact negatively on use for hockey. The resurfacing of the pitch will effectively mean the loss of the league hockey pitch in Huntingdon.
- 3.27 There are a number of other schools in the District which also have sports facilities eg Kimbolton, St Peter's, Spring Common and Godmanchester. These facilities are available for limited community use out of curriculum time.

### **Other Sports Facility Provision**

- 3.28 Other sports facility provision in the District comprises small, independent gyms and fitness centres which are commercially owned and operated through hotels or fitness brands.
- 3.29 **RAF Alconbury** also has a large fitness suite, but this is operated privately. There is also an athletics track at the base. There is 1 other athletics track in the District at the **St Ivo Outdoor Centre**.
- 3.30 **Hunts Gymnastics Centre** is an existing facility but is in need of investment to extend provision, given that it is operating at capacity. Hunts Gymnastics is one of the leading clubs in Great Britain, and has in the past recorded achievements at Commonwealth, World and Olympic level. The existing gymnastic facilities are now too small to operate effectively; there are also inadequate changing, shower and car park facilities.
- 3.31 Hunts Gymnastics Club has secured planning permission for a second building adjacent to the existing building, and is now trying to secure funding to develop the facility.
- 3.32 **Grafham Water Centre** provides opportunities for canoeing, archery, kayaking, climbing, low and high ropes, mountain biking, orienteering, powerboating, sailing, windsurfing and raft building. Owned by Cambridgeshire County Council, the centre is residential, and aims to provide a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities accessible for all.
- 3.33 The Centre received NOF funding to develop an indoor adventure hall with a climbing wall and archery area; this opened in 2006. Work is now progressing on the construction of a new accommodation block, and the improvement of DDA access throughout the existing facility. In the longer term there is also a need to refurbish the existing buildings.

### **Planned/Proposed Sports Facilities:**

- 3.34 There are a number of existing proposals for new sports facility provision in and around the District. These include:
- Investment into Huntingdon and St Neots Leisure Centres
  - Re-surfacing of the existing ATP at Hinchbrooke School to a 3G facility
  - Development of an additional ATP at St Ivo Outdoor Complex
  - Development of an additional ATP at St Neots Town FC (Loves Farm)
  - Development of an additional ATP at Longsands School
  - The planned extension to Hunts Gymnastics Club
  - The need for investment in St Ivo Leisure Centre in the short to medium term

## **SECTION III – ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT PROVISION**

- The need to consider the long terms needs of St Neots, given the significant increase in population in this area of the District over the next 10 years
- The implementation of BSF in the District, and the impact this could have in terms of both new investment and opening up facilities for community access
- Planned improvements to residential accommodation at Grafham Water Centre
- Relocations of Ramsey Football Club and Huntingdon Rugby Club are planned; these relate to grass pitch developments

### **Feedback from Club Consultation**

- 3.35 The feedback from the club consultation undertaken identified the following needs and challenges for future provision of sport in the District:
- 3.36 **Hawks Netball Club** - the Club has a Club Link with Hinchbrooke School; currently the Club uses courts at RAF Brampton and Wyton, but this is scheduled to close in 3 years time. Ideally the Club needs access to an indoor court and 2 outdoor floodlit courts.
- 3.37 **Hunts Athletics Club** - The Club currently uses the outdoor facilities at St Ivo Leisure Centre. Ideally they need to access some indoor training space but like the netball club above find it very difficult to access indoor sports hall space in the district. There are no proper training facilities for throwers in the District.
- 3.38 **Hunts Cricket Board** - there is no specific indoor cricket facility in the District. Outdoor facilities tend to be owned by the clubs; St Ives is now a very good pitch. Clubs use outdoor pitches which are their own, owned by HDC or by schools.
- 3.39 **Sawtry Cricket Club** is planning to re-locate to a new ground; there is also potential for the development of a County Ground in Sawtry. There is a need for an indoor facility for Cambridgeshire County and Huntingdon District would be a good location.
- 3.40 **Huntingdon Canoe Club** - currently uses Hinchbrooke Lake in the Country Park, and also Sawtry Swimming Pool. Ideally the Club would like to access the pool at Hinchbrooke School to avoid having to transport canoes and equipment to Sawtry. The changing rooms at the Country Park need to be improved as there is no heat, light or water.
- 3.41 **Huntingdonshire Football Association** - there are 48 clubs in the District; 4 x CS (Charter Standard) Community; 5 Development clubs and 37 CS Adult/Youth clubs. 4 more clubs are working towards CS accreditation. The key issues for pitches in the District are quality, accessibility, lack of good quality changing provision and car parking.
- 3.42 Currently, all pitches in the District are grass, but this will change when the ATP at Hinchbrooke becomes a 3G later in 2008. There are 3 current Football Foundation bids progressing, two in schools and one with HDC. 3 new clubhouses are being developed and a fourth development is being worked on.
- 3.43 **Hunts Disability Forum** - the Forum holds 2 **Festivals per year, one at the St Ivo Indoor Centre one at the Outdoor Centre**. Disability access could be improved but given the age of the buildings, overall general access is good, and problems are minimal at the events..
- 3.44 The Upside Down Club (12 members)( December 2007) use St Ivo Indoor Centre. Disability access could be improved, and as the Upside Down Club grows there will be a need to provide more specific car parking space. The provision of on-site storage would also be very helpful for the Upside Down Club.
- 3.45 **St Ives Rugby Club** - The rugby club is currently in the process of purchasing their club grounds; the club already owns their own building. This is part of a longer term process to develop the club facilities; additional changing rooms are needed urgently, particularly to accommodate the growing numbers of young players. The facility development process is being supported by a small RFU grant. The Club would welcome the provision of additional ATPs in the District which provide for rugby training.

## SECTION III – ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT PROVISION

### Current Participation in Huntingdonshire

- 3.46 Current adult i.e. those aged over 16, participation rates in sport and physical activity in Huntingdonshire (23.5%) are above the average rate in both the East of England (20.5%) and England (21.3%) (Data from Active People Survey, December 2006). The following summarises current participation levels in Huntingdonshire:
- 45.8% of the respondents reported zero activity.
  - Zero participation is higher in the lower socio-economic groups (5-8) when compared to the higher socio-economic groups (1-4).
  - Huntingdonshire has among the lowest participation rates in the 16-34 year olds group when compared to geographical neighbours and its IMD and ONS areas, yet the highest participation rates in those who are 55 years old and over.
  - Once a week participation rates in Huntingdonshire are higher than the East of England in the 35-54 and the over 55 year olds, but interestingly lower in the 16-34 year olds.
  - The 55 and over age group has the lowest inactivity levels when compared to the District's geographical neighbours and its IMD and ONS areas.
  - Participation in walking and cycling is slightly higher in Huntingdonshire than in the East of England and England.
  - Levels of volunteering, club membership, those receiving coaching, competition and satisfaction with local sports provision are similar to East of England and England figures.

### Sport England Active People Participation and Volunteering Rates

- 3.47 The results of the recent Sport England Active People Survey (October 2005 – October 2006) shows that the percentage of adults participating in at least 30 minutes moderate intensity sport and active recreation (including recreational walking) on 3 or more days a week in Cambridgeshire is 22% compared to the national average of 21.8%. Volunteering results in Cambridgeshire is 5.3% compared to an average of 5.4%.
- 3.48 Table 4 below highlights the participation and volunteering rates for the individual local authorities within Cambridgeshire.

Table 4 – Participation and Volunteering rates

Area	Participation Rate*	Comparison to national average	Volunteering Rates**	Comparison to national average
Huntingdonshire	23.5%	21.3%	5.1%	5.0%
Cambridgeshire	22%	21.8%	5.3%	5.4%
East Cambridgeshire	21.3%	21.3%	5.7%	5.0%
South Cambridgeshire	20.1%	21.3%	5.4%	5.0%
Peterborough UA	20%	21.3%	4.2%	5.0%
Fenland	16.5%	21.3%	6.3%	5.0%

\* National average for participation rates is 21.3% (Local Authority) and 21.8% (County Council)

\*\* National average for volunteering rates is 5% (Local Authority) and 5.4% (County Council)

### Market Segmentation

- 3.49 The Market Segmentation Tool (Sport England 2007) (see Appendix 6) identifies that type 16 (Later Life Ladies) is the smallest group in the District, while there is a large group of type 6 (Settling Down Males). There is a higher level of types 6s in the District than the English average. There are fewer type 9 (Pub League Team Mate) in the District than the England average.
- 3.50 This market analysis suggests that there should be a focus on accessible facilities which provide for economically independent males eg fitness, ATPs, swimming, This analysis supports the fact that there is a high level of activity in the District, with the exception of the younger age group eg 16 – 34.

## **SECTION III – ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT PROVISION**

### **Supply and Demand Analysis**

- 3.51 An initial analysis of supply of, and demand for, sports facilities in Huntingdonshire, is set out below in Table 5. This analysis focuses on swimming pools, sports halls and fitness provision, and is modeled on the population figures provided by the GAD, 2007.
- 3.52 The supply of facilities relates to those that are accessible for pay and play community use (modeled on 100% weighting); commercial facilities have been included on a 30% weighting as a membership fee is required to use facilities; school facilities have also been included using a varying weighting, given that some schools actually have limited access to existing sports facilities. The supply and demand modeling is detailed in Appendix 2, and is based on the Sport England Sports Facility Calculator (SFC), and pay and play accessibility to provision.
- 3.53 Calculation of the need for fitness stations is based on the Fitness for Industry (FIA) penetration rates of 12% (December 2007).
- 3.54 It is important to stress that this assessment is based on national models which identify the level of provision needed for a current and future level of population ie what level and type of sports facility provision is needed to provide adequately for a specific number of people. To make this more relevant at local level, the modeling then identifies the actual level of accessible sports facility provision ie that which is available on a pay and play basis; this highlights the fact that there are built facilities in the District that are not fully accessible for community use. This situation, which is common across the UK would suggest that the way forward is about a combination of opening up existing sports facilities to ensure there is greater community access, and developing new facilities where appropriate, but particularly to address the District's growth agenda eg in the St Neot's area.

## SECTION III – ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT PROVISION

Table 5 Supply and Demand Analysis 2008

Facility Type	Required Level of Supply (based on 2007 population of 168,200 (2004 based population Government Actuary Department data, published October 2007)	Current Level of Provision	Current Level of Accessible Provision (based on accessibility for pay and play usage)	Surplus (+)/Deficit (-) of accessible provision (based on 212 sq m being 1 x 4 lane x 25m pool)
Swimming Pools	1756.67 sq m	938 sq m (of 25m x 4 lane pools and above)	688 sq m	-1068.67 sq m (equivalent to 5.1 x 4 lane x 25m pools)
Sports Halls (4 badminton court size)	48.26 badminton courts	35 courts (4 badminton court halls and above)	16 badminton courts (4 + courts)	- 32.3 (equivalent to 8 x 4 badminton court sports halls) N.B 3 court halls at Sawtry and Ramsey Leisure Centres not included in above figure)
Fitness Stations	433 stations (based on 12% participation rate (FIA))	561	210 stations	- 223 stations
Indoor Bowls	9.28 rinks	14 rinks	14	+5
All weather turf pitches (ATPs)	7 (based on 1 ATP :25,000 population)	4	4	-3

## ***SECTION III – ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT PROVISION***

### **Impact of Increased Population and Participation**

- 3.55 Table 5 illustrates the current supply and demand analysis for Huntingdonshire. In terms of strategic planning for future provision of sports facilities, it is important to consider the impact of both an increased population, and increased participation (modeled at a 13 %overall increase, ie !% per annum, over the life of the strategy).
- 3.56 Table 6 overleaf models the impact of both increased population and increased participation on demand for facility provision.

## SECTION III – ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT PROVISION

Table 6 Increased Population (to 2021) and Participation Impact

Facility Type	Required Level of Supply by 2021 (based on 2021 population of 188,400 (2004 based population Government Actuary Department data, published October 2007))	Current Level of Provision (2007)	Current Level of Accessible Provision (based on accessibility for pay and play usage)	Impact of 13 % increase in Participation over the life of the strategy i.e. to 2021, (based on 2007 population) in terms of facility requirements
Swimming Pools	2,066.02 sq m (9.7 x 4 lane x 25m pools (212 sq m))	938 sq m (of 25m x 4 lane pools and above)	688 sq m (of 25m x 4 lane pools and above)	2,211.63 sq m (10.43 x 4 lane x 25m pools (212 sq m))
Sports Halls (4 badminton court size)	56.75 badminton courts (14.1 x 4 badminton court sports halls)	35 courts (4 badminton court halls and above)	16 badminton courts (4 + courts)	60.75 badminton courts (equivalent to 15.2 sports halls of 4 badminton court size)
Fitness Stations	678 stations	561	210 stations	468 (based on a 0.5% increase year on year, which is the current trend)
Indoor Bowls	10.4	14 rinks	14	+4 rinks
ATPs	8	4	4	-7.7



## ***SECTION III – ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT PROVISION***

- 3.57 It is clear that in relation to current demand for sports facilities, there is an existing deficiency in provision of swimming pools, sports halls, fitness stations, and ATPs when supply and demand modeling is based on accessibility of facilities. However, the overall deficit in terms of current ie 2008 swimming pool provision (-1,068.67 sq m/5.1 x 4 lane x 25m pools) is not actually a true reflection of the existing swimming provision in Huntingdonshire District, given that 2 of the main public pools are excluded from the SFC modelling on the basis that they are not 25m in length. The pools at Sawtry Leisure Centre and Ramsey Leisure Centres are only 20m in length. In addition, the learner pool at St Neots Leisure Centre is only 20m long. The impact of including this water space in the supply and demand assessment reduces the deficit to 578.67 sq m (2.7 4 lane x 25m pools) in 2008, and 858.19 sq m (4.1 4 lane x 25m pools) by 2021.
- 3.58 Despite the fact that the three pools above are less than 20m in length, they provide very important and well-used facilities for the local community, and therefore should be adequately reflected in assessing current supply of swimming pools.
- 3.59 The reduction in deficit is also important as this facilitates consideration of the extensive commercial pool provision in the District, which, while not being accessible to many of the population because there is a requirement to pay a membership fee, quite obviously does provide for a percentage of the local community, who can, or who choose to, afford this membership fee. Therefore in relation to the current level of provision, it is considered that the deficit of 5.1 4 lane x 25m pools (which equates to 2.5 8 lane x 25m pools) is adequately addressed by other local provision of water space. This is through the commercial facilities, and also swimming pools at three other local schools – Godmanchester, Hinchingsbrooke, and Kimbolton.
- 3.60 It is also important to stress that the existing HDC pools do not currently operate at full capacity; this is due to a number of factors including accessibility, quality and condition. Whilst dual-use facilities provide significant potential for effective operational management because they are used for both curriculum delivery and community use, access is restricted during the day to the community. This means that potential users may choose to access other provision they know is open, or they may not swim at all. A further factor is that dual-use facilities have intensive use because they are used for curriculum delivery and community use and therefore over time this can impact on their quality and condition. Although there are significant pockets of deprivation in the District, Huntingdonshire is a relatively affluent area which is reflected by the level of commercial sports facility provision in the towns; given the possible perceived accessibility issues with HDC facilities local residents may be choosing to swim at these facilities, or elsewhere, rather than in HDC facilities.
- 3.61 Having examined the possible reasons for the fact that HDC swimming pools do not currently operate at full capacity, it is critical to stress that this current position does not provide a reason not to provide the level of water space required in the District in the future.
- 3.62 In terms of future deficits in water space, it is predominantly the growth in population, and specifically that around the St Neots area, that increases demand, and therefore demonstrates a deficit. If the same argument is applied as above, the actual deficit in future supply of water space is (6.5 4 lane x 25m pool – 5.1 4 lane x 25m pool), which equates to 1.4 of a 4 lane x 25m pool. On this basis, it is suggested that there will be a need to provide 1 additional 6 lane x 25m pool, possibly on the site of the new secondary school to be developed in St Neots, to cater for the growth in population.
- 3.63 It is important to state that the supply and demand modelling above is based on a level of supply to provide for a number of people; whilst adult participation rates are high in the District existing pools are not always full to capacity, which indicates that people take part in a range of activities other than swimming. However, the assessment of supply and demand clearly shows that pay and play accessibility is an issue in relation to quality water space in the District, and this is likely to be exacerbated by the growth in population. Demand for swimming will increase, and there will be a need for additional provision in St Neots by 2021.
- 3.64 Given the specific location of the majority of the District's future growth ie east of the railway line in St Neot's, there is potential to consider the provision of a new swimming pool alongside other community facilities. Given the scale of the residential development, it is likely that there will be a new secondary school in this area and co-location (not dual-use) of a swimming facility on the same site may provide a practical option for future provision. Co-location is suggested to address some of the previously identified factors associated with accessibility to dual-use provision.

## **SECTION III – ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT PROVISION**

### **Swimming Pools Spatial Analysis**

- 3.65 Map 3 shows all existing swimming pools in the District. In terms of a spatial analysis of current swimming provision, Map 3a illustrates that virtually the whole of the District is within 20 minutes drivetime of a swimming pool. Whilst this suggests that accessibility is therefore addressed in terms of swimming, the rural nature of the District and the impact that has on traveling to facilities cannot be ignored. The issue is that communities in Sawtry and Ramsey would need to travel to a 25m pool.
- 3.66 Given this situation it is also important to point out that some communities in the north of the District may choose to access swimming provision in neighbouring authorities eg Peterborough. There are plans to provide a new community swimming pool in the Hamptons residential development to the south of the City; current proposals indicate that this is likely to be a 25m x 4 or 5 lane swimming pool, plus some fitness provision.
- 3.67 In terms of a 20 minute walking distances, Map 3a illustrates that the existing swimming pools are only accessible by those living in the urban settlements within this timeframe. Those in the rural areas have little option but to drive or use public transport (which is limited) to access swimming facilities. This issue does however need to be seen in the context that over 50% of the local population live in the four main market towns, and there is very high car ownership in the District, particularly in the rural areas.

### **Sports Halls**

- 3.68 There is almost sufficient actual sports hall in the District at the present time; the issue is that all existing facilities are not available on a pay and play basis (only 16 of the total existing 49 courts (all courts in the District) are available for pay and play access).
- 3.69 Opening up community pay and play access at existing facilities is a priority, before any additional facilities are built. In 2008, there would be no deficit in sports hall provision if accessibility is improved at those facilities where community access is currently limited, and all existing courts were available for pay and play access..
- 3.70 By 2021, this sufficiency has decreased to 7.75 courts ie nearly 2 x 4 badminton court sports hall, if it is again assumed that existing hall accessibility is improved, and all courts in the District are accessible for pay and play usage. The provision of two additional sports halls, one, potentially at St Neots, would be required to address this deficit.
- 3.71 Given the comments from the clubs in relation to accessing existing public sports hall provision, and the existing deficit in accessible provision, there is a need to retain existing levels of sports hall in the District, and indeed seek to open up additional facilities. The proposals to extend fitness suites at Huntingdon and St Neots Leisure Centres will actually reduce existing accessible pay and play sports hall provision, and therefore increase the identified deficit moving forward.

### **Sports Halls Spatial Analysis**

- 3.72 Map 2 shows the spatial distribution of existing sports halls in the District. Whilst this appears to be reasonable, it is critical to note that at present there is a lack of 4 badminton court halls (ie 'fit for purpose sports halls') in both Sawtry and Ramsey. Opening up existing sports hall provision on education sites is therefore critical in terms of addressing both qualitative and quantitative deficiencies. The implementation of BSF in the north of the District may provide the opportunity to address the need for sports hall provision in these areas eg Sawtry Community College.
- 3.73 Map 2a demonstrates that accessibility by car (20 minute drivetime) to sports hall provision is achievable in virtually the whole of the District. The issue is the rurality of the area and the time it actually takes to travel to facilities. This issue does however need to be seen in the context that over 50% of the local population live in the four main market towns, and there is very high car ownership in the District, particularly in the rural areas.

### **Health and Fitness**

- 3.74 In terms of fitness stations, there are currently sufficient fitness stations in the District, across all providers to meet community demand; the same is true by 2021. It is the accessibility to this provision that is the critical issue, given that a significant level of existing facilities is operated commercially.

## SECTION III – ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT PROVISION

- 3.75 However, there are also public facilities operated by HDC and other facilities available on Kimbolton and Hinchingsbrooke Schools; the challenge is to ensure that these facilities operate pricing policies which are inclusive, whilst reflecting the need to levy a membership fee to facilitate health and safety controls in terms of access. Only members who have passed an induction are allowed to use fitness facilities.

### Health and Fitness Spatial Analysis

- 3.76 Map 4 shows all existing fitness provision in the District. A significant amount of this provision is operated by the commercial sector. All areas have access to fitness station provision within a 20 minute drivetime. The communities living in the four main settlements all have access to fitness stations within a 20 minute walktime; the issue is that a significant amount of this provision is operated by the commercial sector and may therefore be unaffordable, or has limited access because it is on an education site.
- 3.77 It is also important to reflect the impact of two specific fitness facilities right on the borders of the District. Harpers in Wyboston attracts significant use from residents in and around the St Neots area. Residents in the north of the District have easy access to Fitness Express on the outskirts of Peterborough.

### Indoor Bowls

- 3.78 There is sufficient current supply of indoor bowls rinks to meet both current and future need (to 2021). Current provision is located centrally in Huntingdon and also in St Neots and is within 20-30 minutes drivetime of the rest of the District.

### ATPs

- 3.79 There is a need to provide additional ATPs to meet both current and future demand. 3 additional facilities are required in the District now, which should be full size, floodlit, and be either sand based (principally for hockey, given that there is a general lack of such surfaces on the outskirts of Cambridge, which means the City is inundated with demand for hockey, which it currently struggles to accommodate), or if demand for additional football can be demonstrated, 3G. By 2021 there is a need for 4 additional ATP facilities.
- 3.80 Given that there are three planned developments of new ATP facilities in the next 12 months in the District, in reality there will be a deficit of just one ATP by 2021.
- 3.81 In developing new ATP provision, it will be important to address the current spatial deficiencies of this type of facility in the north of the District. The implementation of BSF may provide the opportunity to address this deficit in eg Sawtry.

### Key Issues and Challenges

- 3.82 Based on the analysis of current provision, and the district context, there are a number of emerging key issues and challenges to be considered in developing the Huntingdonshire Sports Facilities Strategy. These include:
- **Current deficits in provision**, which will only increase as the local population increases; increasing participation will also have an impact on the demand for supply of swimming, sports hall and fitness station provision which is already insufficient, due to both quantitative and accessibility deficiencies. The specific priorities to address are:

#### Current Needs

- The theoretical deficiency in accessible water space; this can be addressed by increasing access to existing pool facilities on education sites and those operated commercially
- The deficiency in accessible sports hall provision; this could be addressed by opening up and extending community pay and play access to existing facilities, predominantly on school sites. The future implementation of BSF may also be an important factor in this in the future.
- The need to ensure fitness provision is accessible ie affordable, through appropriate partnerships with the commercial sector, pricing and programming policies
- The need to retain, not lose existing sports hall space operated through the public sector.

## SECTION III – ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT PROVISION

- The provision of additional ATPs (3 planned) and specifically the deficit of this type of facility in the north of the District.

### Future Needs

- The theoretical deficiency in accessible water space; this can be addressed by increasing access to existing pool facilities on education sites and those operated commercially
  - The deficiency in accessible sports hall provision; this could be addressed by opening up and extending community pay and play access to existing facilities, predominantly on school sites. The future implementation of BSF may also be an important factor in this in the future.
  - The need to ensure fitness provision is accessible ie affordable, through appropriate partnerships with the commercial sector, pricing and programming policies
  - The provision of 1 additional ATP and specifically the deficit of this type of facility in the north of the District.
  - The need for 1 additional swimming pool in the St Neots area as a result of significant population growth.
- **Facility condition** - ongoing investment in the existing HDC facilities to maintain and improve provision.
  - **Facility Design** – the design of some existing facilities could be improved to meet the needs of the local population, and specifically the needs of users with a disability. It is also important to consider alternative forms of provision, or perhaps less traditional type facilities, particularly to appeal to younger participants, where participation rates are lower in the District.
  - **Population Growth** – this rapid growth over the next few years will increase the demand levels for sports facilities, particularly in and around St Neots.
  - **Drive to increase participation** - given the current Government targets for increasing participation in sport and physical activity, and the existing high activity rates in the District, the continued provision of accessible, fit for purpose and quality sports facilities is a clear priority for HDC and its stakeholder partners
  - **Increasing Participation amongst Younger People** ie 16-34 years – given that this group has low levels of active participation in sport and physical activity, it is important to ensure that future provision reflects, and responds to, their needs
  - **Accessibility** eg school facilities, daytime - pools, sports halls; it is outside the control of HDC to open up school sites for community use. This approach needs to be undertaken in partnership with the County Council.
  - **Commercial sector provision** – there is a significant level of commercial health and fitness provision in the District, some of which is of a better quality than the public sector facilities, however, it is not always accessible to those more deprived communities due to the cost of membership fees

## SECTION IV – LOCAL STANDARDS

### Local Standards

#### The Planning Framework

- 4.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act established by the Government in July 2004 reformed the planning system and introduced the establishment of overarching Local Development Frameworks (LDFs). The LDF consists of a range of Local Development Documents (LDDs). These include three types of LDDs:
- Development Plan Documents (DPDs) to replace local plans and unitary development plans,
  - Statements of Community Involvement (SCIs).
  - Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) to replace Supplementary Planning Guidance
- 4.2 The requirement is for Local Authorities to have established and adopted LDFs in place three years after commencement of the Act. The key driver for this is that LDFs will be Local Agreements that replace the former Local Plan. The Local Development Scheme states which planning documents the Council will be producing with the community over the next few years to guide development. HDC is currently working towards its LDF in the context of the Local Plan 1995 Saved Policies, the Core Strategy (consultation period finishing) and the Huntingdonshire Improvement Policies (HIPPS). These in turn are informed by the East of England Plan.
- 4.3 The Local Development Scheme is part of the new Local Development Framework. The LDF will need to include:
- A Community Involvement statement to outline how the Council will engage and involve the community in the planning decision process and the preparation of new strategic documents
  - The Council's Supplementary Planning Documents which will be based on Development Plan Documents and will reflect the previous supplementary planning guidance and provide comprehensive guidance
  - Annual Monitoring Reports to demonstrate progress in preparing Local Development Documents and what is being achieved through planning policy
  - A strategic policy for open space, indoor and outdoor sport and recreation contained within the Core Strategy of the Development Plan Documents. Policies to address open space standards and new residential development will be policies within the DPD.
- 4.4 As Supplementary Planning Documents enable the planning framework to establish and provide more detail as to the requirements of planning policy, SPDs will be used to provide developers with a clear framework and formulae to identify the scope and scale of on site/off site financial contributions. The critical issues for future planning policy in Huntingdonshire is the expansion of St Neots, east of the railway, which will see the development of around 3,000 houses, plus additional growth around Huntingdon.
- 4.5 This latter point is critical for the future provision of sport and recreation facilities, indoor and outdoor, given that other external capital funding opportunities are now more limited. The preparation of the LDF enables identified priorities for future sports facility provision to be integrated into the planning framework, based on qualitative and quantitative assessment, and an analysis of spatial distribution, as set out in the PPG17 Companion Guide. In order to facilitate this process, guidance set out in 'Creating Active Places', the East of England Sports Facilities Strategy should be followed:
- 4.6 The future provision of sports facilities requires a specific approach within the planning framework:
- Ensure internal communication between leisure and planning at local level
  - Integrate local needs for sport and leisure into S106 priorities
  - Ensure local priorities for sport and leisure are included in developing SPD and the Local Development Framework policies
  - Develop innovative policy frameworks facilitating planning gain contributions to sports facilities provision
  - Develop local standards for sports facilities provision, indoor and outdoor, to inform planning policy'

Source 'Creating Active Places' November 2007

## ***SECTION IV – LOCAL STANDARDS***

### **Local Standards**

- 4.7 The development of Local Standards for sports facility provision are important to guide future levels of provision, and therefore the capital investment required in an area over a period of time.
- 4.8 Current Local Standards of sports facility provision can be calculated in two ways as overleaf:

## SECTION IV – LOCAL STANDARDS

Table 7 – Huntingdonshire DC Options for Local Standards

FACILITY TYPE	Facilities per 1000 population 2007	Current Standard of Provision per 1000 population 2007 (Accessible facility supply divided by population)	Standard of Provision Required per 1000 population by 2021 to meet identified demand (Identified level of provision required divided by 2021 population)
Sports Hall (4 badminton Court)	0.3 courts	21.2 sq m per 1000 population (equates to 21 accessible courts, with 1 court being 170 sq m)	51.20 sq m (this could be reduced if existing sports halls were opened up for community use)
Swimming Pool (4 lane x 25m)	12.74sq m	4.1 sq m per 1000 population (equates to 688 sq m)	10.96 sq m (this could be reduced if existing swimming pools were opened up for community use)
Fitness Stations (20+ gym)	3.3 stations	1.3 stations per 1000 population	3.6 stations
Indoor Bowls	0.08 rinks	0.05 rink per person	0.05 rink
ATPs	0.02 of a full size pitch (128 sq m)	7 ATPs (based on 1 pitch per 25,000 population)	8 ATPs (based on 1 pitch per 25,000 population)

## SECTION IV – LOCAL STANDARDS

### Facilities per 1000 Population

- 4.9 The Facilities per 1000 population standard provides an assessment of the current level of provision in the District per 1000 of population. Using this as a baseline, it is then possible to calculate the future level of provision required to maintain this standard, or to maintain the County average.
- 4.10 Whilst this standard provides guidance on levels of future provision, its main disadvantage is that the calculation does not provide an analysis of whether the current standard of provision is in fact sufficient to meet current or future demand.
- 4.11 The policy decision needs to be taken at local level as to whether the Local Standards developed for sports facility provision reflect actual demand and there actual sufficiency or deficiency, or simply a level of provision per 1000 population. Given that there are existing small deficiencies in levels of provision for water space and fitness stations, and a greater deficiency in accessible sports halls, current levels of provision are inadequate to meet demand.
- 4.12 The Local Standards developed should reflect this, and be set at a level which actually increases provision moving forward, to address both current deficits, and increased demand for future provision as a result of population growth and potentially, increased participation.

### Local Standards based on Sports Facility Calculator

- 4.13 The second option (two far right columns in Table 7 above) for Local Standards is to develop them based on identification of both current and future need for sports facility provision, based on the SFC and accessibility for pay and play usage.
- 4.14 Local Standards of provision should reflect the need to address these deficiencies and facilitate provision of the identified sports facilities, to ensure opportunities for participation in sport and physical activity are maintained, and arguably extended, given the need to address health and obesity issues mentioned earlier in this document. On this basis, it is suggested the following should be adopted as Local Standards for sports facility provision in Huntingdonshire District:

Table 8 - Local Standards of Provision per 1000 Population

FACILITY TYPE	Local Standards of Provision per 1000 population
Sports Hall (4 badminton Court)	51.20 sq m (this could be reduced if existing sports halls were opened up for community use)
Swimming Pool (4 lane x 25m)	10.96 sq m (this could be reduced if existing swimming pools were opened up for community use)
Fitness Stations (20+ gym)	3.6 stations
Indoor Bowls	0.05 rink
ATPs	0.04 ATPs (based on 1 pitch per 25,000 population)

### Quality Standards

- 4.15 The quality of the existing HDC sports facilities will need to be maintained, and in the case of School facilities these need to be improved through BSF where possible.
- 4.16 The future standard of provision for new facilities should be:
- The sports facilities are to be designed to a minimum playing standard of 'fit for purpose' depending on the terminology of the various national governing sporting bodies and Sport England Guidance.



## SECTION IV – LOCAL STANDARDS

- External elevations to utilise high quality, low maintenance finishes, and be sympathetic to the surrounding environment.
- Finishes being robust and suitable for location and use.
- Building fabric and services to be cost effective with low maintenance.
- First major maintenance to structure to be 50 years. Life expectancy of materials used to external elevations to be 25 years minimum (excluding routine maintenance).
- Sustainable, being responsible to environmental issues in terms of the use of energy and non-sustainable resources and the control of pollution. Use of environmentally friendly and sustainable building services and building materials to be maximised. Materials to be recyclable where possible.
- Services to be essentially economic and environmentally friendly, which allow cost in use to be minimised. The use of natural ventilation to be maximised. Full life cycle cost analysis will be required when considering the building fabric and services

### Accessibility Standards

- 4.17 The development of accessibility standards for the District needs to reflect the rurality of the area. As discussed earlier, all existing pay and play accessible sports facilities are located in and around the four major settlements in the District. Communities in these urban areas are able to access facilities within a 20 minute walk time. All pay and play facilities in the District are accessible within a 20 minute drive time, with the exception of fitness stations. In the extreme west of the District the travel time by car to such facilities is more than 20 minutes.
- 4.18 The rurality of the District is a factor in terms of sustainable accessibility; ideally communities should be able to access provision on foot, using public transport or by bicycle to reduce reliance on the car. In rural areas there is more reliance on the car given the distances to be traveled, the limited public transport and the time it operates, and the safety issues to be considered in relation to cycling or walking on country roads, particularly in the dark.
- 4.19 Given the current spatial distribution of sports facility provision in the District, the locations of growth areas, and the rural nature of the District accessibility standards will need to be based in realism, and how communities actually access provision. Issues such as transporting children, sports kit, directional signage and information etc will also need to be considered in relation to access. These latter in particular suggest that users of sports facilities will continue to access provision by car.
- 4.20 It is suggested that accessibility standards reflect the above and the findings of the spatial and supply and demand analysis. On this basis the following standards could be adopted:
- New sports facility provision should be located within a 20 minute walk time of its immediate catchment area, and where possible, should be linked to existing community provision eg education site,
  - All sports facility provision should be within a 20 minute drive time of its surrounding catchment area, and where possible and appropriate, depending on the nature of provision, should be located adjacent to other community provision, to facilitate access and reduce the overall need for travel around the District

### Developers' Contributions

- 4.21 Local Standards to inform the Local Development Framework need to be prepared and implemented, to maximise capital investment in sports facility provision in the District through planning gain, particularly linked to the health agenda.
- 4.22 HDC should ensure that developers with permission for new developments make contributions towards the capital expenditure that is initially required to provide and enhance provision(i.e. capital contribution), whilst also contributing to the ongoing revenue cost of maintaining the provision( i.e. revenue contribution).
- 4.23 The Council should use the audit findings as a means of identifying where provision and quality improvements require further investment. If appropriate, there may also be potential to link this into the Communities Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which is due to be introduced.

## SECTION IV – LOCAL STANDARDS

- 4.24 Maintenance (commuted) sums are also an important consideration when dealing with developer contributions; PPG17 Guidance identifies that the simplest way to express the requirements for future maintenance is to express it in terms of a sum per unit of provision such as £/ hectare or £/ sqm.
- 4.25 HDC may wish to consider the development of a pooled fund especially for the more rural areas within the District boundaries, as there may be developments that are small in size and do not generate a contribution that is large enough for improvements, yet the development will still incur additional demand on existing facilities.
- 4.26 In identifying the level for developers' contributions, there is a need to reduce all requirements to a unit per person so that household contributions can be calculated based on information from Sport England of current costs. On this basis, the requirements for Huntingdonshire could be as follows:

Table 9 Household Contribution

FACILITY TYPE	Local Standards of Provision per 1000 population	Provision per Person	Cost per Unit	Cost per sq m	Cost per Person
Sports Hall (4 badminton Court)	51.20 sq m	0.0512 sq m	£675,000	£3,970 (ie £675k / 170 sq m)	£203.26 (ie £3,970 x 0.0512)
Swimming Pool (4 lane x 25m)	10.96 sq m	0.011 sq m	£2.6m (5 lane x 25m pool i.e. 265 sq m)	£9,811 (ie £2.6m/265 sq m)	£107.92 (ie £9,811 x 0.011 sq m)
Fitness Stations (20+ gym)	3.6 stations	0.004 stations	£225,000 (for 20 station area including fit out -Strategic Leisure costs - 60 sq m)	£3,750 (ie £225,000/60 sq m)	£15 (ie £3,750 x 0.004)
Indoor Bowls	0.05 rink	0.00006 rinks	£1,525,000	£1,270 (ie £1,525,000/1200 sq m)	£0.07 (ie £1,270 x 0.00006)
ATPs	0.04 ATPs /256 sq m	0.246 sq m	£580,000	£90.62 (ie £580,000/6400 sq m)	£22.29 (ie £90.62 x 0.246)

- 4.27 The above calculations should also include reasonable maintenance contributions over a relevant period of time. They should include an inflation factor and be discounted to Year 1.
- 4.28 In Table 9, the cost per person (column 6) of the new sports facilities is calculated by taking the capital cost of the individual facility (column 4), calculating the cost per sq m of this facility (column 5 ie cost per unit divided by its sq m)) and multiplying this by the level of provision required per person (column 3). This provides the cost per person which is then used to calculate the potential income to be generated by different sizes of development as shown in Table 13. It is critical to stress that the examples in this strategy are based on capital costs provided through the Sport England Facility Costs kitbag, as of the 4th quarter 2007. These costs are updated on a regular basis and therefore future use of the above formulae may require the figure in column 4 ie the cost per unit to change, depending on the capital costs provided through the Sport England Facility costs kitbag.
- 4.29 N.B The costs in Table 9 include allowances for the following:
- External works (car parks, roads, paths, services connections etc) are included at an average rate of 15% addition to the cost of the works.
  - Fees are included at 15% for:
    - Sports Halls
    - Pools
    - Changing rooms

## SECTION IV – LOCAL STANDARDS

4.30 The costings above *exclude* the following:

- Inflation beyond current 4Q2007 prices;
- Site abnormalities such as poor ground conditions, difficult access, long service connections;
- VAT;
- Land acquisition costs
- Regional cost variations in materials and labour.

### Planning Agreements

4.31 A review of best practice case studies advocated through Sport England has identified the following formula for establishing quantity standards and contribution levels from developments:

Table 10 Example Planning Agreement

Sports Facility requirement = A x B (x C)		
Sports Facility requirement = (A) number of people in development	x (B) level of sports facility provision per person (m <sup>2</sup> )	x (C) cost of sports facility provision per person (£)
The number of people in a development is based on an assumed occupancy rate for the District. This is normally established through the number of dwellings and the overall population to establish an average of people per dwelling. (Factoring in a vacancy rate can help make this calculation more robust and accurate).	Existing and future needs for sports facility provision have been identified through the quantity analysis within this report and can be incorporated into HDC DPD and SPD. The standards reflect provision per person.	This cost relates to off site provision per person. In accordance with the best practice guidance this requires a further calculation to establish the cost of sports facility provision per person. According to the guidance the cost of sports facility provision needs to follow best practice and should reflect the cost based on the elements included within the costing, for example, whether the cost of a facility should include site preparation, drainage, special surfaces and levelling, ancillary facilities, equipment and land costs.

4.32 A recommended approach that is in keeping with Circular 05/2005 is to develop a costings spreadsheet that is included as an appendix to the Supplementary Planning Document. It is a more open approach that speeds up the planning process by allowing developers to predict the likely contributions they will be asked to pay. Sport England can provide detailed costs for a number of specific facility projects ([http://www.sportengland.org/kitbag\\_fac\\_costs.doc](http://www.sportengland.org/kitbag_fac_costs.doc))

4.33 It is suggested the following ratios be used to calculate the amount of sports facility provision that will be required by dwelling size, based on the following occupancy ratios:

- 1 bed dwelling – 2 persons
- 2 bed dwelling – 3 persons
- 3+ bed dwelling – 4 persons

4.34 The decision as to whether a developer shall develop a swimming pool or sports hall on site, or whether the developer shall make a contribution towards off site provision, will depend on whether the total quantity of new provision required as a result of the new development calculated using the above figures, is above the minimum acceptable size, of 212.25 sqm for a four lane swimming pool and 148.5 sq m for 1 badminton court (594 sq m for a 4 badminton court sports hall). If it is, provision will normally be required on site. If not, a contribution towards off site provision will be required.

## SECTION IV – LOCAL STANDARDS

- 4.35 Examples of how Local Standards can be used to calculate developer contributions for sports facility provision are set out below; these reflect guidance in the PPG17 Companion Guide, and best practice in local authorities.

Table 11 Financial Contribution towards Capital Cost of Facility

Indoor Sports	£
Swimming Pool (cost of construction, excl. land)	a
Landscaping	b
Roads and parking	c
Sub Total	$a + b + c = d$
Professional Fees @ 12%	$12\% \times d$
<b>Total cost of Swimming Pool</b>	$d + (12\% \times d) = e$
Typical area required for one pool, including associated facilities	1,687 sqm
<b>Cost per sqm</b>	$\frac{e}{1687} = f$

Table 12 - Financial Contribution towards Capital Cost of Facility

Indoor Facility	£
Sports Hall (cost of construction, excl. land)	a
Landscaping	b
Roads and parking	c
Sub Total	$a + b + c = d$
Professional Fees @ 12%	$12\% \times d$
<b>Total cost of Sports Hall</b>	$d + (12\% \times d) = e$
Typical area required for one court sports hall, including associated facilities	1000sqm
<b>Cost per sqm</b>	$\frac{e}{1000} = f$

- 4.36 On the basis of the above, a new residential development of the scale illustrated below could realise the following contributions towards the provision of new sports facilities:

Table 13 Potential Contributions

Scale of Housing Development	People (houses x 2.5)	Sports halls contribution @ £203.26 per person	Pools contribution @ £107.92 per person	Total	Total per person	Total per house
4,000	10,000	£2.03m	£1.08m	£3.11m	£311.18	£777.95
10,000	25,000	£5.08m	£2.69m	£7.77m	£311.18	£777.95
15,000	37,500	£7.62m	£4.05m	£11.67	£311.18	£777.95

- 4.49 The contribution per person (column 3 in Table 13) used to calculate the above total contributions is taken from Table 9 (column 6); this contribution is then multiplied by the number of people (2.5 taken as the average) who will live in the new residential development to give an overall total contribution per person and per household towards identified sports facility needs.

## SECTION V – CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusions

- 5.1 At this stage in the development of the sports facility strategy, it is clear that there are three main issues to address in moving forward. These are:
- The current deficit in publicly accessible indoor sports facility provision (swimming pools, sports halls, fitness facilities); as the population increases, this deficit will increase. As participation increases, this will also impact on current levels of supply; increased demand will require additional facility provision
  - The resources required to improve/extend/replace existing HDC sports facility provision over time – swimming pools, sports halls and fitness facilities
  - The need to provide a minimum 6 lane x 25m pool in St Neots to provide for the increased population
- 5.2 There are a number of options to address these issues, and others may become available once the levels of supply and demand for outdoor sports facility provision are assessed in more detail.

### Recommendations

- 5.3 Based on the analysis and findings of the sports facility strategy, the following recommendations are made in terms of future sports facility provision in the District:

#### Recommendation 1

- 5.4 The priorities for future sports facility provision are accepted as:

#### Current Needs

- The theoretical deficiency in accessible water space; this can be addressed by increasing access to existing pool facilities on education sites and those operated commercially
- The deficiency in accessible sports hall provision; this could be addressed by opening up and extending community pay and play access to existing facilities, predominantly on school sites. The future implementation of BSF may also be an important factor in this in the future.
- The need to retain, not lose existing sports hall space operated through the public sector.
- The need to ensure fitness provision is accessible ie affordable, through appropriate partnerships with the commercial sector, pricing and programming policies
- The provision of additional ATPs (3 planned) and specifically the deficit of this type of facility in the north of the District.

#### Future Needs

- The theoretical deficiency in accessible water space; this can be addressed by increasing access to existing pool facilities on education sites and those operated commercially
- The deficiency in accessible sports hall provision; this could be addressed by opening up and extending community pay and play access to existing facilities, predominantly on school sites. The future implementation of BSF may also be an important factor in this in the future.
- The need to ensure fitness provision is accessible ie affordable, through appropriate partnerships with the commercial sector, pricing and programming policies
- The provision of 1 additional ATP and specifically the deficit of this type of facility in the north of the District.
- The need for 1 additional swimming pool in the St Neots area as a result of significant population growth.
  - **Facility condition** - ongoing investment in the existing HDC facilities to maintain and improve provision.
  - **Facility Design** – the design of some existing facilities could be improved to meet the needs of the local population, and specifically the needs of disability users.
  - **Population Growth** – this rapid growth over the next few years will increase the demand levels for sports facilities, particularly in and around St Neots. There are a number of options to consider in addressing the

## SECTION V – CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

need for new sports facilities in St Neots including their co-location with other community provision eg a new secondary school.

- **Drive to increase participation** - given the current Government targets for increasing participation in sport and physical activity, and the existing high inactivity rates in the District, the continued provision of accessible, fit for purpose and quality sports facilities is a clear priority for HDC and its stakeholder partners
- **Accessibility** eg school facilities, daytime - pools, sports halls
- **Commercial sector provision** – there is a significant level of commercial health and fitness provision in the District, some of which is of a better quality than the public sector facilities, however, it is not always accessible to those more deprived communities due to cost

### Recommendation 2 - Increasing Access

- 5.5 Given that there are actually sufficient sports hall facilities in the District to meet demand, but they are not all accessible, the option of negotiating increased community access should also be considered as a priority.

### Recommendation 3 - BSF

- 5.6 Given the identified deficiencies in pay and play accessible sports facility provision across the District it is recommended that opportunities for partnership with BSF, FE/HE and other strategic partners are supported by HDC to maximise participation opportunities for the Huntingdonshire community. The opportunities through BSF are particularly important for the north of the District.

### Recommendation 4 - Local Standards

- 5.7 The following Local Standards for future core community sports facility provision are adopted by HDC:

#### Quantity

Table 14 Local Standards of Provision

FACILITY TYPE	Local Standards of Provision per 1000 population
Sports Hall (4 badminton Court)	51.20 sq m
Swimming Pool (4 lane x 25m)	10.96 sq m
Fitness Stations (20+ gym)	3.6 stations
Indoor Bowls	0.05 rink
ATPs	0.04 ATPs (based on 1 pitch (100m x 64m per 25,000 population)

#### Quality

- 5.8 The future standard of provision for new facilities should be:
- The sports facilities are to be designed to a minimum playing standard of 'fit for purpose' depending on the terminology of the various national governing sporting bodies and Sport England Guidance.
  - External elevations to utilise high quality, low maintenance finishes, and be sympathetic to the surrounding environment.
  - Finishes being robust and suitable for location and use.
  - Building fabric and services to be cost effective with low maintenance.
  - First major maintenance to structure to be 50 years. Life expectancy of materials used to external elevations to be 25 years minimum (excluding routine maintenance).

## **SECTION V – CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Sustainable, being responsible to environmental issues in terms of the use of energy and non-sustainable resources and the control of pollution. Use of environmentally friendly and sustainable building services and building materials to be maximised. Materials to be recyclable where possible.
- Services to be essentially economic and environmentally friendly, which allow cost in use to be minimised. The use of natural ventilation to be maximised. Full life cycle cost analysis will be required when considering the building fabric and services

### **Accessibility**

- New sports facility provision should be located within a 20 minute walk time of its immediate catchment area, and where possible, should be linked to existing community provision eg education site
- All sports facility provision should be within a 20 minute drive time of its surrounding catchment area, and where possible and appropriate, depending on the nature of provision, should be located adjacent to other community provision, to facilitate access and reduce the overall need for travel around the District

### **Recommendation 5 - Retention of Sports Hall Space**

- 5.9 Given the lack of accessible sports hall provision in the District, it is recommended that careful consideration be given to reducing the available pay and play space further, unless other arrangements are made to increase access at other existing facilities.

### **Recommendation 6 - Partnership**

- 5.10 It is recommended that HDC seek to work in partnership wherever possible to address the identified deficiencies in sports facility provision. Key partners at local level will be education, local sports clubs, health services, NGBs and programmes such as BSF. This approach reflects HDC's role as an enabler at local level.

### **Recommendation 7 - St Neots Area**

- 5.11 The opportunities and options for delivering new sports facilities in the growth area around St Neots need to be carefully considered, to ensure new facilities complement and do not compete with, existing HDC provision. HDC should seek to work in partnership, particularly with education, in the development of new sports facilities to facilitate co-located provision at the heart of the new community. Funding options to deliver the new facilities include growth area funding, S106, HDC capital, a private sector partnership and potentially external grant support.

### **Recommendation 8 - Participation in Sport and Physical Activity**

- 5.12 The provision of opportunities for participation in sport and physical activity across the District should be supported as a key priority given its potential to contribute positively to improved health, reduced obesity and social inclusion. Given the increasing issue of CHD, youth obesity, and the high level of smoking in the District, the role that active participation can play in improving health is critical. Appropriate resources should continue to be made available to improve awareness of provision, increase accessibility and deliver sport development programmes to increase and retain participation.