



Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

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A report by Strategic Leisure Limited

V9 September 2022

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary	1
Introduction and Strategic Context	1
Project Scope and Objectives	1
Summary of key demographic factors and their implications	4
Indoor Facilities Assessment Recommendations	6
2. Stage A - Introduction and Scope	9
Introduction	9
Purpose and Objectives in Developing a Sports Facilities Assessment	9
Assessment Structure	12
Methodology for the assessment of Indoor sports facilities – ANOG	13
Sports and Geographical Scope	13
Proportionate Approach	15
3. Strategic Policy and Context	16
Introduction	16
National Level	16
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021	16
Sport England Definitions	17
A New Strategy for Sport – Department for Culture, Media and Sport	17
Sport England Uniting the Movement Strategy 2021 -2031	18
Local Level	19
Future Development in the District	20
Population Profiles and Projections	20
Current Population Profile – Deprivation 2019	20
Health Profile	20
Physical Activity and Participation	21
The Intrinsic Value of Participation	21
Current Participation Rates – Physical Activity Participation	21
4. Stage B - Existing Facility Provision	23
Introduction	23
Supply of Indoor Sport Facilities in Wealden	23
Operational Management and Lease Arrangements for Wealden District Council Leisure Facilities	24
Catchment Areas	24
Demand for Indoor sports facilities	25
Stage B (ANOG) - Assessment of Existing Sports Facility Provision	26
Quality Audits	27
Consultation	28
Schools	28
Neighbouring Local Authorities	28
Assessment of Individual Facility Types	29
Sports Halls and Activity Halls	29
Quantity	29
Quality	36
Accessibility	37
Availability	38
National Governing Bodies (NGB's) and Sports Clubs	39
Sport England Facility Planning Model (FPM)	41
Sports Halls	41
Supply and Demand Analysis	43
Impact of Future Population Growth	44

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Swimming Pools	47
Quantity	47
Quality	50
Accessibility	55
Availability	55
National Governing Bodies	57
Sport England Facility Planning Model (FPM)	57
Impact of Future Population Growth	61
Health and Fitness Facilities	63
Quantity	63
Quality	65
Accessibility	66
Availability	67
Fitness Studios	67
Quantity	67
Quality	71
Accessibility	71
Availability	72
Supply and Demand Analysis – Health and Fitness and Studios	73
Squash	77
Quantity	77
Quality	79
Accessibility	79
Availability	80
NGB Consultation: England Squash	80
Summary of Supply and Demand	81
Indoor Bowls	82
Quantity	82
Indoor Bowls: Summary of Supply and Demand	83
Indoor Tennis	84
Quantity	84
Quality	85
Accessibility	85
Availability	86
Indoor Tennis: Summary of Supply and Demand	86
Gymnastics Centres	87
Quantity	87
Quality	87
Accessibility	87
Availability	87
NGB Consultation: British Gymnastics and Trampolining	88
Gymnastics and Trampolining: Summary of Supply and Demand	88
Other Sports	88
Judo	88
Boxing	88
Martial Arts, Dance, Table Tennis, Yoga	89
5. Penultimate Stage - Applying the Assessment Analysis	90
Facility Specific Analysis	90
Hailsham Aspires	90

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

6. Recommendations and Action Plan	107
Overview	107
Vision	107
Aims	108
Principles for Future Provision	108
Priority Investment Needs	109
Other Priorities and Needs	109
Capital Investment	109
Continued Local Partnership Working with Education Sites and Other Partners	109
Planning Policy, Securing Developer Contributions, Planning Obligations, S106 Obligations, and the Community Infrastructure Levy – An overview	110
Recommendations	111
Action Plan	114
Disclaimer	119

Table Listings

Table 1:	Active Lives survey Results May 2019 – May 2020	21
Table 2:	Existing Indoor sports facilities – Wealden	23
Table 3:	Summary of WDC Contract with Freedom Leisure	24
Table 4:	Quality Audit Scoring System	27
Table 5:	Supply of Strategic Size Sports Halls i.e. 3 courts+ in Wealden	32
Table 6:	Supply of Activity Halls in Wealden	34
Table 7:	Summary of the Quality Assessment of Wealden leisure facilities: Sports Halls	36
Table 8:	Summary Analysis – Sports Hall and Activity Hall Supply and Demand	43
Table 9:	Swimming Pools in Wealden Including Teaching Pools on Main Pool Sites. Providing Pay and Play, Sports Club or Registered Membership Use and meet minimum requirements	48
Table 10:	Other pool Provision in Wealden but not recognised in the Sport England Facility Planning model as they are too small	49
Table 11:	Analysis of Swimming Pool Supply in Wealden	49
Table 12:	Summary Qualitative Assessments - Swimming Pools	50
Table 13:	The Hailsham Swimming Club Programme August 2022	55
Table 14:	Summary Analysis – Swimming Pool Supply and Demand	60
Table 15:	Fitness Facilities (Fitness Suites) in Wealden	64
Table 16:	Analysis of overall Fitness Suite Provision in Wealden	65
Table 17:	Summary of Fitness Suite Size	65
Table 18:	Summary Qualitative Assessments - Health and Fitness Facilities (fitness suites and studios)	66
Table 19:	Fitness Facilities (Studios) in Wealden	69
Table 20:	Analysis of overall Studio Supply – Wealden	71
Table 21:	Summary of Quality Assessments Studios in Wealden	71
Table 22:	Summary Analysis – Health and Fitness Supply and Demand	74
Table 23:	Squash Courts in Wealden	78
Table 24:	Summary of Quality Assessments Squash Courts in Wealden	79
Table 25:	Summary Analysis – Squash Courts Supply and Demand	81
Table 26:	Summary Analysis – Indoor Bowling Supply and Demand	83
Table 27:	Indoor Tennis Centres in Wealden	85
Table 28:	Summary Analysis – Indoor Tennis Supply and Demand	86
Table 29:	Summary of Affiliated British Gymnastics Clubs	87
Table 30:	Summary Analysis – Gymnastics and Trampolining Supply and Demand	88
Table 31:	Key Issues, and Actions by Facility Type	92
Table 32:	Summary of Current and future Need Priorities	97
Table 33:	Assessment Action Plan	115

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Map Listings

Map 1:	Sports Hall sites in Wealden	31
Map 2:	Activity Halls in Wealden	35
Map 3:	Sports Halls Catchment areas in Wealden (10 minute and 20-minute drive time)	37
Map 4:	Swimming Pool Sites Wealden District Council	47
Map 5:	Catchment areas for Swimming Pools Wealden District Council (20 mins and 10-minute drive time)	50
Map 6:	Health and Fitness Facilities Wealden District Council	63
Map 7:	Fitness Suites within a 20-minute and 10-minute drive time catchment area	66
Map 8:	Studio Facilities – Wealden District Council	68
Map 9:	Studios – Wealden District Council with a 20-minute and 19-minute drivetime catchment	72
Map 10:	Squash Facilities – Wealden District Council	78
Map 11:	Squash Facilities – Wealden District Council 20minute and 10 minute Drive time Catchments	80
Map 12:	Indoor Bowls Site location and 20 minute and 10-minute drive time catchment	83
Map 13:	Indoor Tennis Site Wealden District Council and 20-minute and 10-minute Drive time Catchment	85

Figure Listings

Figure 1:	Wealden Location	2
Figure 2:	Geographical illustration showing the risk of loneliness in the over 65's	11
Figure 3:	ANOG Stages	12
Figure 4:	Sport England Uniting the Movement Strategy 2021 – 2031	18

Appendices

1	National Context
2	District Strategic Context – Local Strategy and Policy Overview
3	Summary Consultation Feedback - NGB's
4	Summary Consultation Feedback – Sports Cubs
5	Detailed Sports Facility Audit
7	Assessment of Health and Fitness Supply and Demand 2020

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Glossary of Terms

Terms	Explanation
Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance (ANOG)	The Sport England guidance on preparing and developing needs assessments for built sports facilities, which provides the evidence to support a Local Plan.
Community Use	A facility has community use if it is open for use by sports clubs/community groups and pay and play use (use by individuals in the community).
Community Use Agreement (CUA)	A CUA is a formal agreement between an education facility and a Local Authority (and sometimes also Sport England) for community use of a sports facility on an education site out of school hours.
Affordable Fitness Facilities	These are fitness facilities which may be in the public, private or voluntary sectors, which offer similar prices as those operated by Wealden District Council; these facilities are therefore considered to be both affordable and accessible, and providing for at least some of the community, in a way that membership only facilities may not.
Facility Planning Model (FPM)	The FPM is a facility modelling toolkit, developed by Sport England to inform the current and future need for provision of sports halls, swimming pools and all-weather pitches.
Wealden, Wealden District or WDC	Reference to Wealden, Wealden District or WDC, means the entirety of the geographic area for which Wealden District Council is responsible.
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies and how they are expected to be applied. It covers both plan -making and development management.
Pay and Play	Sports facilities which are available for use by the general public; facilities can be booked by individuals or groups, without membership necessarily being required.
School Lettings	A school open for lettings provides community access but these tend to just be for clubs/groups i.e., pre-organised groups as opposed to individual pay and play use.
Sports Facility Calculator (SFC)	The SFC is a facility modelling toolkit, developed by Sport England to calculate the future need for provision of sports halls, swimming pools and indoor bowls, based on a specified population increase in an identified location.
Strategic Size	Strategic size refers to either a sports hall of minimum 3 badminton courts, or a pool of a minimum 160 sq. m. These are definitions used by Sport England in the FPM.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

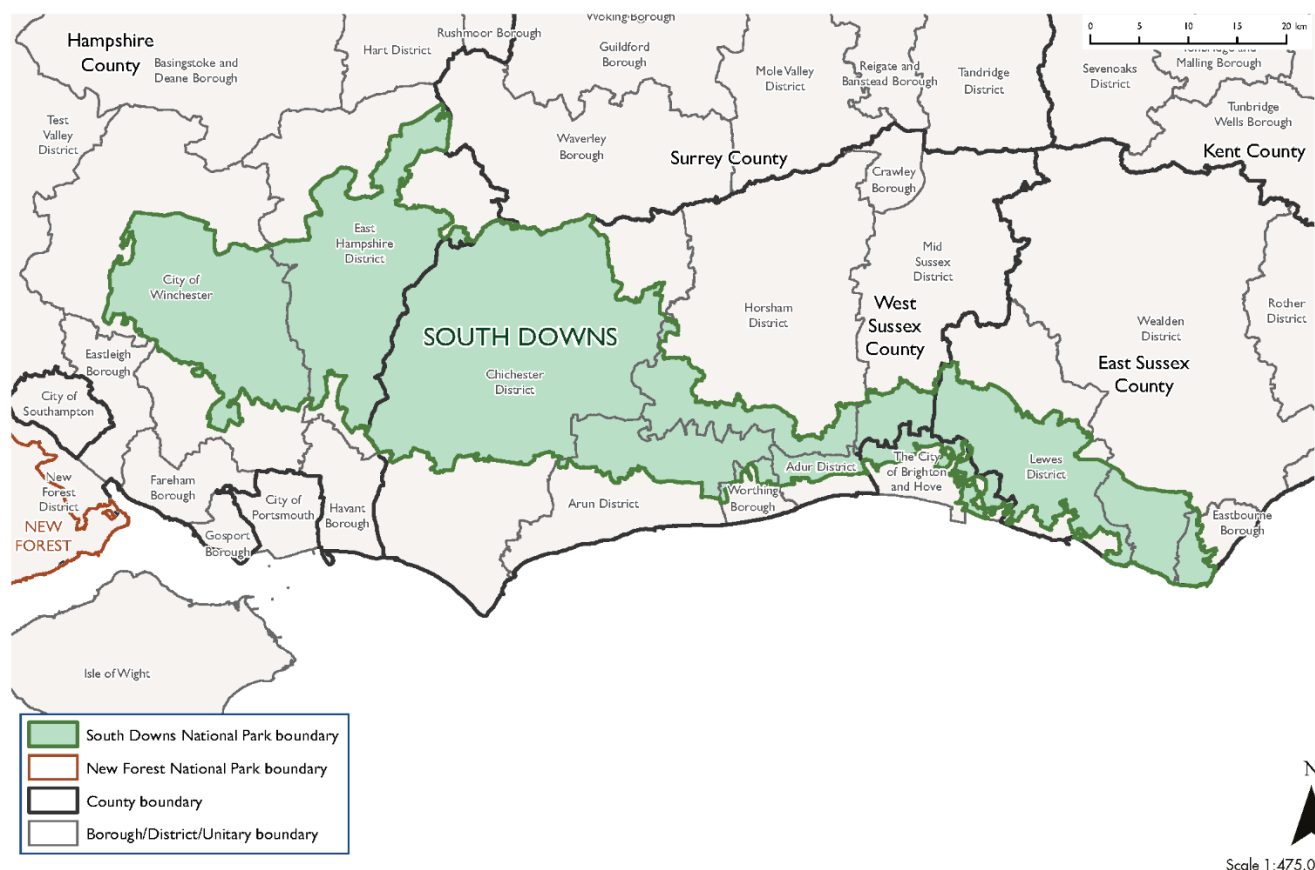
1. Executive Summary

Introduction and Strategic Context

Project Scope and Objectives

- 1.1. Wealden District Council (WDC) commissioned Strategic Leisure Limited (SLL) to prepare an Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (ISFA), to provide the Council with a clear evidence base and guide future provision and management of new indoor sports facilities in the Wealden District Council area in the context of national policy, local sports development criteria and health and well-being objectives.
- 1.2. The ISFA provides an assessment of the needs for Indoor Sports Facilities in Wealden.
- | Sport | Sport |
|--|----------------------------------|
| • Swimming | • Sports Halls |
| • Health and Fitness (fitness suites and studios) | • Indoor Bowls |
| • Indoor Tennis | • Gymnastics/Trampolining |
| • Table Tennis | • Martial Arts |
| • Boxing | • Squash |
- 1.3. The scope of the ISFA includes analysis of provision for the following facility types across Wealden District, including the area of the District within the South Downs National Park administrative boundary where it is the local planning authority.

Figure 1: Map showing local planning authority area

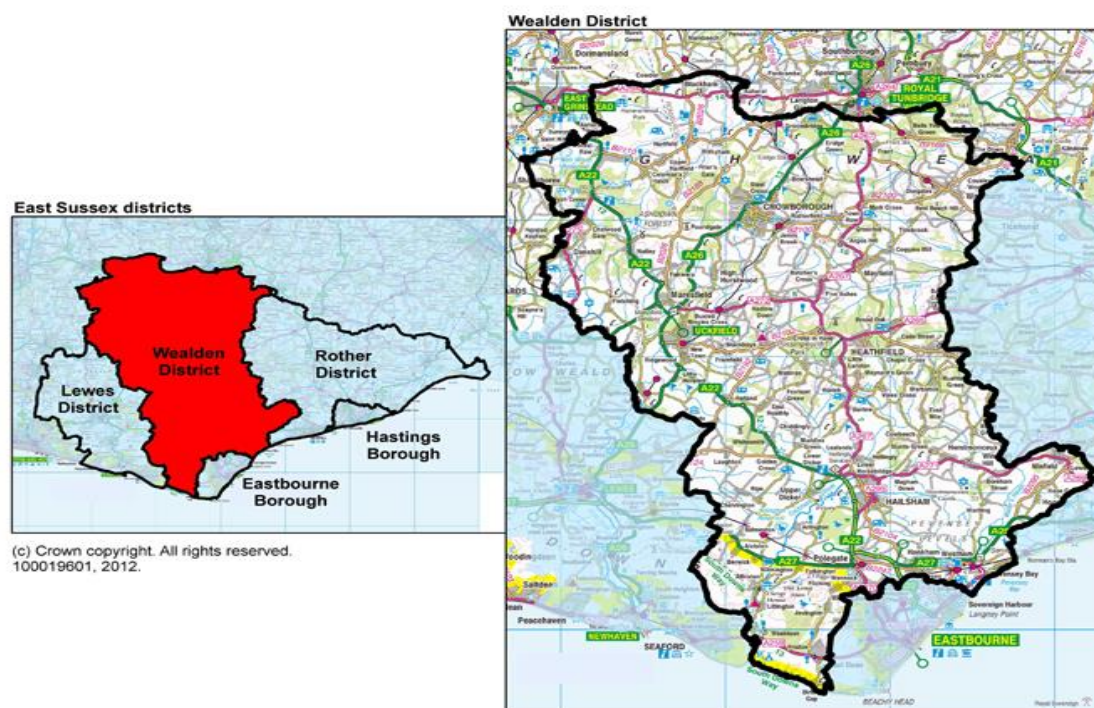


Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

- 1.4. The ISFA provides a holistic analysis of sports facilities across the Assessment Area, leading to a comprehensive set of recommendations based on current supply and future demand for the provision of facilities, in line with the needs of residents.

Figure 2: Wealden Location



- 1.5. Wealden District is defined as a mainly rural district and covers some 835 square kilometres, with around 53% of it being located within the High Weald AONB in the north and around 7% being within the South Downs National Park in the south. The 2020 population was 162,447, with a forecast growth of 9.5% by 2039, based on trend-based population projections. The district has an older age profile with a forecast growth in the over 65's bracket of 33.3% by 2039, based on trend-based population projections.
- 1.6. Within the district, the greatest proportion of employment is in the public administration, education, and health sectors. In terms of the overall level of deprivation based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) statistics, Wealden is ranked 254 most deprived out of 317 Local Authorities nationally overall, with 1 being the most deprived. There are however pockets of deprivation within the district, for example within Hailsham.
- 1.7. Wealden District covers the low weald and two main upland areas: the section of the High Weald within East Sussex; and the eastern end of the South Downs, between which lies the Vale of Sussex, the lowlands of which are named the Pevensy Levels.
- 1.8. It is the central of the three East Sussex non-borough (low density) districts: the others being Lewes to the west, and Rother to the east. There is also a relationship with Tunbridge Wells and Eastbourne as key centres, as well as other local planning authorities such as Hastings.
- 1.9. The major trunk road is the A22, London to Eastbourne. It is crossed by the A26 Maidstone–Lewes road at Uckfield; and the A267 Tunbridge Wells to Eastbourne road. There are also three west-east roads: the A259 coastal route; next inland is the A27 Pevensy–Brighton trunk road; and further

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

to the north the A272 cross-country route to Winchester.

- 1.10. The East Coastway Line, serving Eastbourne and Hastings, uses the Vale of Sussex and has four stations in Wealden. Berwick and Polegate to the west and two serving different sides of Pevensey, which forms a generally suburban conurbation with Westham and a largely rural holiday and visitor coastline, Pevensey Bay. There are a further two stations at Wadhurst and Frant on the Hastings Line. The other railway line is the Uckfield Branch Line from London Bridge which has stations at Uckfield, Buxted, Crowborough and Eridge in Wealden.
- 1.11. Wealden is crossed by several National Cycle Network routes:
- **Route 2 (South Coast Cycle Route)**
 - **Route 21 (London to Eastbourne) which makes use of the Forest Way and Cuckoo Trail paths along disused railway lines.**
- 1.12. The current and future population profile of Wealden and the locations of growth are important to understand in relation to planning provision for sport and physical activity.
- 1.13. A new Local Plan is currently being developed covering 2019 – 2039. This assessment considers the impact of 1) ONS population projections to 2039; and 2) WDC housing need based on the Government's 'Standard Method' of 1225 dwellings per year¹ to determine future demand and supply issues.

¹This provides for 24,500 homes over the plan period minus commitments and completions of 9,436. The total to test as part of assessment is therefore 15,064 with an average household size of 2.3 persons per household.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

1.14. Several current strategic policies, strategies and factors influence current and future supply and demand for sport and recreation facilities in the District. As well as providing the context for future facility provision, e.g., health improvement, improving accessibility and increasing participation, these strategies also provide opportunities to link priority areas and needs, and ensure that outcomes are aligned with identified local objectives.

1.15. The relevant strategies and policies include:

- **Wealden District Corporate Plan 2019 - 2023**
- **Active Sussex Strategy 2018 – 2023**
- **Wealden District Council Core Strategy 2013 - 2027**
- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021**
- **Wealden Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2025**
- **Sporting Future – A New strategy for an Active Nation 2015**
- **Sport England Uniting the Movement Strategy 2021– 2031**
- **Public Health England (PHE – Health Matters: Getting Every Adult Active Every Day – Published July 2016)**

Summary of key demographic factors and their implications

1.16. The following summarises the demographic profile of Wealden District Council, reflecting the overall demographic analysis and factors for the District as discussed above:

- Wealden is the largest and also the most rural local authority in East Sussex. There are 74 defined settlements, ranging from the larger towns of Hailsham, Crowborough, Uckfield, Heathfield and Polegate and Willingdon to a range of large villages, such as Forest Row and Wadhurst, as well as much smaller settlements. In general terms, over half of residents live within the towns, with the remainder of the population living in our more rural areas. **(Source: Wealden District Council Direction of Travel New Local Plan November 2020).**
- The largest increase in population will be the 65+ age group, with a rise of 38.3% by 2032. East Sussex 65+ age group is projected to rise by 32%. Wealden is the only district in East Sussex likely to see a significant increase in the number of children and young people between 2017 and 2032, although a slight rise is predicted in Lewes. Eastbourne is expected to see a significant fall of 8%, with a smaller fall in Hastings (2%). The district expecting to see the largest increase in the number of school age children is Wealden, where there are projected to be 12% more school age aged 4-15 in 2032 than in 2017. East Sussex as a whole will see a small increase of 0 – 17-year-olds by 2032 (2.4%). Wealden will see an increase of 7.1% in the 18-64 age group by 2032 and East Sussex 18 -64 age group is projected to fall by 0.7%. **(Source: East Sussex Population Projections in Brief May 2019 Dwelling-led demographic projections: housing figures provided by the districts and boroughs as at April 2019.).**
- Wealden has a high car ownership 87.6% of households with a car/van in 2011 and households with no car or van 12.4% **(Source: Census 2011).** In East Sussex as a whole, more than one in five households (21.9%) had no access to a car or van in 2011 and nationally this figure was 25.6% (Source: East Sussex County Council Facts and Figures

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

- The proportion of adults classified as overweight or obese in Wealden (64%) is slightly higher, albeit not significantly different, than the average in England (63%). **(Source: Wealden District Council Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2017 – 2020)).**
- The obesity rate of year 6 children in Wealden is 15.7%. This is better than the England average of 20% **(Source: Wealden Health Profile 2018).**
- 81.7 years is the life expectancy of males from birth, compared to the national average of 79.5; 84.7 years is the life expectancy for females from birth, compared to the national average of 83.1. **(Source: Sport England Wealden Local Profile Health)**
- 5% of the population report their health as being ‘bad’ or ‘very bad’ in Wealden. East Sussex is 6% and England is 6%. **(Source: Sport England Wealden Local Profile Health)**
- 18% of people self-report having a limiting long-term health problem or disability. This is similar to England 18% and slightly less than East Sussex 20%. **(Source: Sport England Wealden Local Profile Health).**
- Wealden is one of the 20% least deprived districts in England, however about 10% of children live in low-income families. **(Source: Wealden Health Profile 2018)**

1.17. The provision of good quality, local community facilities, accessible and affordable to meet identified need, is key to facilitating participation growth, and contributing to a reduction in the health inequalities in the District. This reflects Public Health and Wealden District Council’s health and well-being priorities, to facilitate sustained behaviour change to reduce obesity, improve health, contribute to addressing mental health issues and increase participation.

1.18. Retaining and improving the quality of provision is important in Wealden to ensure that participation levels are retained and wherever possible increased. Active Lives highlights that 21.3% of the Wealden community is not active enough to have any health benefit.

1.19. The supply and demand analysis identifies that there is clearly a need for:

- **Additional improved swimming pool provision required to meet current and potential future population growth.**
- **Additional sports hall provision either using existing unused sports hall space (because there is no formal community use access agreed) or through the provision of new sports hall space to meet current demand and any future population growth.**
- **Retaining existing levels of community accessible (including pay and play) sports halls, swimming pools, and fitness stations as a minimum.**
- **For martial arts, table tennis, dance, exercise classes, tai chi and yoga etc. it is important to retain the ability to use community halls as venues for their classes.**
- **Consideration of the future need for additional indoor tennis courts to be considered alongside Lawn Tennis Association and Tennis club needs.**
- **There is a need to protect the existing squash courts across Wealden.**

Indoor Facilities Assessment Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 1 (R1) (PROTECT)

To protect the existing sport and physical activity facilities in the District; invest in and develop facilities and the activities they provide to increase capacity to address need as a result of population growth or an increase in participation levels.

RECOMMENDATION 2 (R2) (PROVIDE)

Improve Hailsham Leisure Centre and swimming pool and also swimming pool at Crowborough Leisure Centre (provision of learner pool) to address deficits in provision, meet local health and wellbeing priorities and deliver increased opportunities for participation in physical activity and sport for clubs and the community.

RECOMMENDATION 3 (R3) (PROVIDE)

Wealden District Council to work with funding and delivery partners to identify short and medium to longer term investment opportunities for additional sports hall and swimming pool provision to meet identified current and future demand.

The recommendations for halls and pools should go beyond just identifying the future demand for facilities. Once future demand for sports halls and swimming pools has been confirmed, options for meeting future needs should be identified and feasibility work should be undertaken. Such feasibility work should include the use of Sport England's Facilities Planning Model (FPM) to undertake **bespoke local modelling** of the impact of the options on meeting needs e.g., if applicable an option of siting a new leisure centre or dual use secondary school facility in a major residential development.

Sport England's Facility Planning model should be used to identify the impact of facilities closing or remaining closed and new facilities opening.

RECOMMENDATION 4 (R4) (PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

It is recommended for any new education provision involving new or enhanced sports facilities to have a Community Use Agreement (CUA) as part of the planning consent so as to secure pay and play opportunities for individuals, clubs and groups in the future.

RECOMMENDATION 5 (R5) (PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Consider the opportunity for increased community access to existing education sports facilities where community access is currently provided, and where it is not; where possible, seek enhanced provision through a Community Use Agreement (CUA). This is to ensure the equivalent of 6 badminton courts are brought into community use (at least 1.4 courts are needed to meet existing demand) on existing education sites. These schools are:

Michael Hill School, Uplands Community College Sports Centre, Bede's School, Beacon Academy (Beeches) and Hailsham Community College (announced October 2021 that the sports hall will be prioritised for school examinations during exam times).

Working with Willingdon Community School to develop community use of its new four court sports hall as part of the formal Community Use Agreement is also recommended to address the current undersupply of badminton courts / sports hall availability.

RECOMMENDATION 6 (R6) (PROVIDE AND PROTECT)

Existing levels of community accessible and affordable fitness suite provision in the District should be retained as a minimum, and where appropriate, opportunities for investment in additional health and fitness provision where there is an identified need/business case justification should be considered by all providers.

RECOMMENDATION 7 (R7) (PROTECT AND ENHANCE)

It is very important that the potential to utilise community centres/halls, and other informal places and spaces for sport and physical activity continues and is considered when providing new community centres and halls.

Wealden District Council and its partners should look to prioritise investment in the development of high-quality community sports facilities/spaces, with local partners. Increasing available capacity and therefore opportunities to take part in regular physical activity, in the local community, will contribute to reduced health inequalities, increased participation better community cohesion.

RECOMMENDATION 8 (R8) (PROVIDE)

Regular dialogues should be maintained with gymnastic and trampoline clubs to ensure future population demands / participation rates can be met. Encouragement should be given to leisure facility operators to provide additional gymnastic and trampoline classes and courses

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

RECOMMENDATION 9 (R9) (PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Conversations to take place, where appropriate, with the Lawn Tennis Association and local tennis clubs about provision of additional Community Indoor Tennis facilities before any new indoor tennis facilities are developed in Wealden.

RECOMMENDATION 10 (R10) (PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

The existing indoor bowls facilities at Wealden Bowls Club should be protected and maintained. Funding opportunities should also be sought to upgrade / refurbish the facility to meet both current and future demands arising from an increase in population and / or participation.

RECOMMENDATION 11 (R11) (PROTECT)

There should be on-going monitoring of this Assessment through its implementation, but as a minimum, progress should be reviewed and refreshed every five years. On-going monitoring should include partnership collaboration with neighbouring local authorities to keep aware of facility changes and developments.

2. Stage A - Introduction and Scope

Introduction

- 2.1 This Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (ISFA) provides an assessment of the need for built sports facilities in Wealden District. The ISFA will guide future provision of indoor sports facilities to serve existing and new communities in Wealden.

Purpose and Objectives in Developing a Sports Facilities Assessment

- 2.2 The development of this ISFA has been undertaken to provide the current facilities and demand of indoor sports facilities within the district. It has been developed to provide evidence and support for the Sport England's Strategic Outcomes Planning Guidance (SOPG) process and it has also been developed to inform the emerging Wealden Local Plan. This includes considering future growth scenarios which can be used as evidence to support and inform Local Plan policy.
- 2.3 Development of the ISFA has been undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) and Sport England's Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance (ANOG) throughout; it provides an updated evidence base for the Local Plan 2019-2039 and underpins future priorities for provision.
- 2.4 Having current strategies and strong supporting evidence until 2039 (to coincide with the Council's proposed new Local Plan from 2019-2039), will secure the continued provision of the appropriate level of valuable community assets, to meet increasing population levels.
- 2.5 The assessment will enable the Council to plan in the longer term, by ensuring the future provision of sustainable sport and leisure facilities across the district.
- 2.6 The purpose of this ISFA is to:

Review	Review the current supply and demand for indoor sports and recreation facilities in Wealden.
Demand	Model the demand to assess the current and projected over/under supply of facilities using a recognised modelling technique that satisfies the requirements of Sport England e.g. Facilities Planning Model (FPM).
Provide	Provide conclusions and recommendations on policy and proposal development.

- 2.7 The ISFA assessment covers the geographical area of Wealden but references areas outside Wealden boundaries as appropriate. It also reflects the diversity of sport and recreational needs across Wealden. The population figures used to assess under/oversupply of provision are set out in the various scenarios later in this report, but all figures relate to the population within the geographical boundaries of Wealden district.
- 2.8 The 60 sq. km of the South Downs National Park (SDNP) that are within Wealden District are included in this assessment. The South Downs are a range of chalk hills that extends for about 260 square miles (670 km²) across the south-eastern coastal counties of England from the Itchen valley of Hampshire in the west to Beachy Head, in the Eastbourne Downland Estate, East Sussex, in the east. The South Downs National Park is the planning authority for its area.
- 2.9 Wealden District Council's Corporate Plan 2019 – 2023 sets out a vision for the District and what the council wants to achieve. A mid-term update was developed in 2021, reflecting the impact of the

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

pandemic, and a refreshed approach to address the impact of this.

“Shaping Wealden as a District which offers a fulfilling and worthwhile quality of life for our residents, a thriving and prosperous place for businesses where local people and visitors can enjoy the outstanding beauty and heritage of our landscape and environment.

www.wealden.gov.uk/UploadedFiles/Corporate-Plan-2019-23-Mid-term-update-2021-final-for-web.pdf

2.10 The Corporate Plan 2019-2023 mid-term review states - Promote a better quality of life for Wealden people through activities that improve health, resilience and well-being. How? We will work alongside partners to reduce health inequalities by encouraging and promoting better leisure, sporting and recreational facilities.

2.11 The Council's plan to achieve this involves:

Meet	Meet local needs in our housing market particularly for first time buyers and elder people seeking to downsize
Build and maintain	Build and maintain more council homes to a high standard, and help people who are, or are likely to become homeless
Work in	Work in partnership to develop an overall approach for advice and guidance on health, skills, jobs and benefits
Support	Support initiatives to address changing health needs across the District, including work on dementia and social isolation
Seek	Seek opportunities to invest in more modern GP surgeries and local health hubs in Wealden
Work	Work with partners to reduce harm from substance misuse, poor mental health and the impact of poverty on diet and exercise
Help	Help local people feel safe, creating a secure public realm and reducing anti-social behaviour in partnership with Sussex Police and other agencies
Promote	Promote digital inclusion and good access to mobile and broadband networks
Design	Design new development to protect our communities from environmental contamination, poor air quality and noise
Encourage and promote	Encourage and promote better leisure, sporting, and recreational facilities across the District

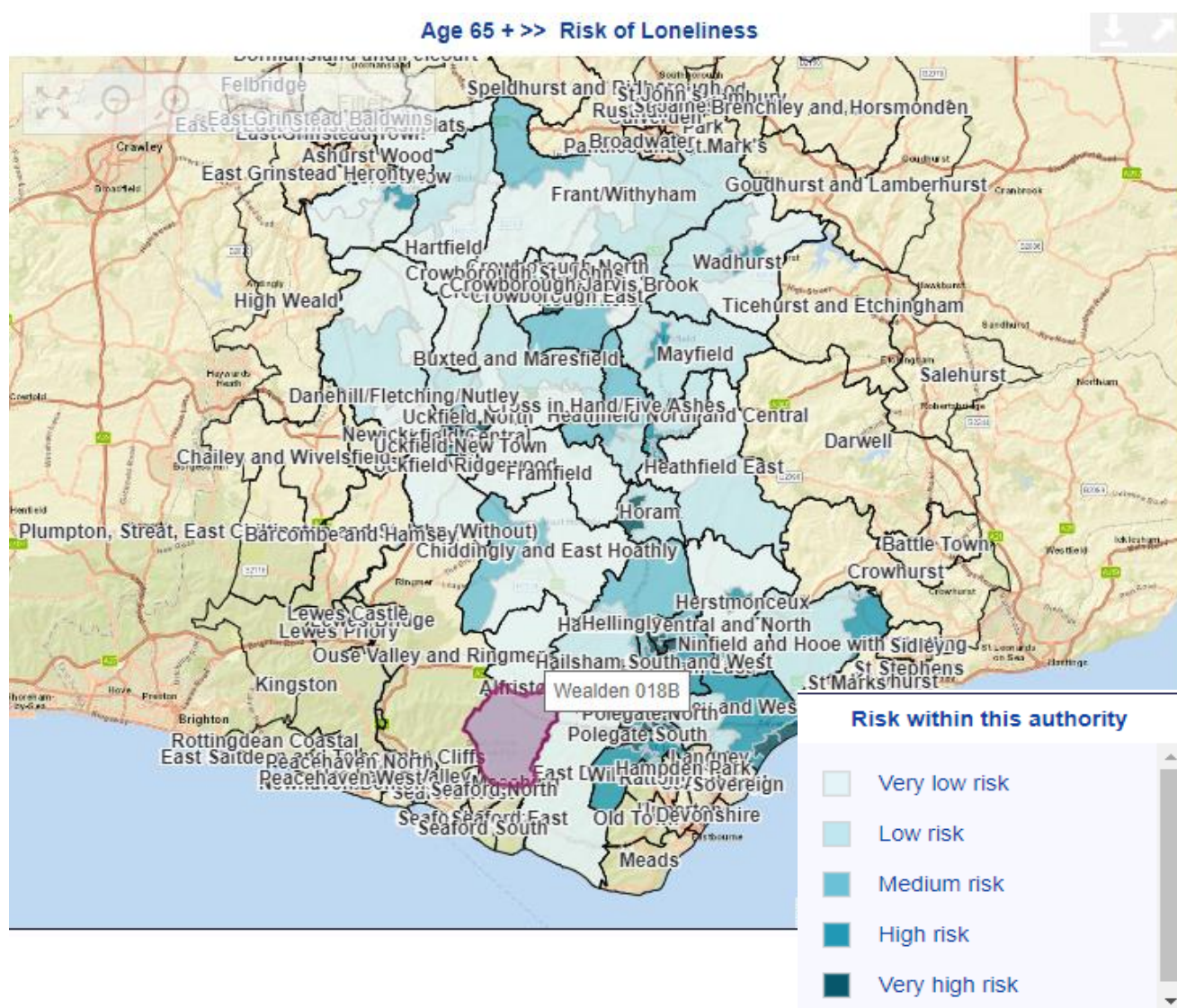
Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

2.12 The ISFA will support the aims of the Council that are outlined in its Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-25. Several priorities are identified in the strategy, as summarised below:

1. Mental Health and Resilience
2. Loneliness, Social Isolation and Connected Communities
3. Positive Health Choices
4. Active Communities, Environment and Facilities

Figure 3: Geographical illustration showing the risk of loneliness in the over 65's



2.13 The above Age UK loneliness map identifies that there are areas within the district such as areas within Hailsham, Uckfield and Crowborough where there are high levels of loneliness.

2.14 It will also contribute to the Active Sussex Strategy 2018- 2023 – “By 2023 our aim is to see 5% fewer inactive people in Sussex, and 10% fewer inactive people in the county by 2028, so that all our local authorities have activity levels better than the national average.”

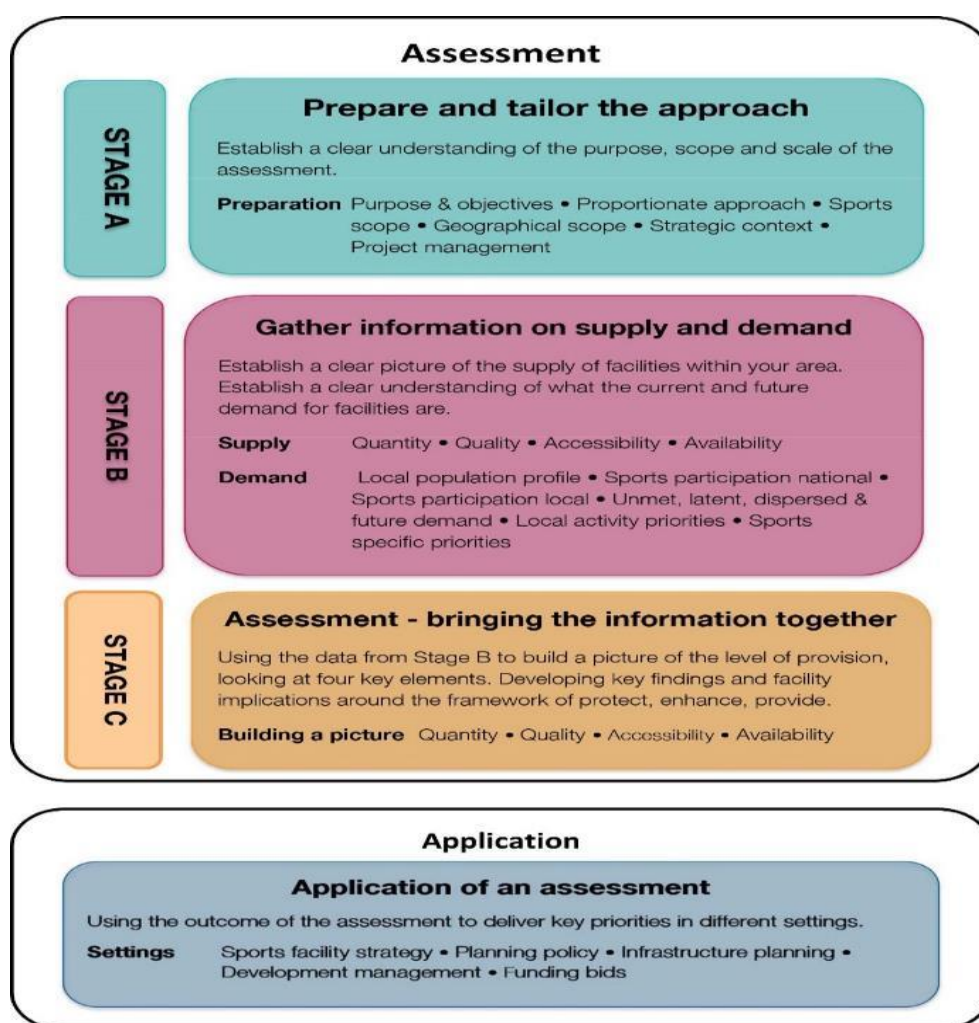
Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Assessment Structure

- 2.15 The ISFA has been developed using the Sport England Assessing Needs and Opportunities guidance (ANOG), published in 2014. The development of this Indoor Sports Facility Assessment (ISFA) and needs assessment has been undertaken to provide the current facilities and demand of indoor sports facilities within the district. It supports Sport England's Strategic Outcomes Planning Guidance (SOPG) process, as well as development of WDC's Local Plan.
- 2.16 The Evidence Base (essentially Stages A-C) – is based on the ANOG approach, as set out in Figure 3.

Figure 4: ANOG Stages



- 2.17 The assessment methodology adopted for the ISFA follows the published guidance from Sport England.
- 2.18 The subsequent Assessment (Sections 5 and 6) sets out the proposed response to the issues identified in the Evidence Base (Sections 1-4). This also follows the published guidance from Sport England.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Methodology for the assessment of Indoor sports facilities – ANOG

- 2.19 The aim of the ANOG (Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guide for indoor and outdoor sports) guidance is stated as follows: "This guide provides a recommended approach to undertaking a robust assessment of need for indoor and outdoor sports facilities. The guide has primarily been produced to help (LA's) meet the requirements of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework".
- 2.20 The ANOG guidance recommends utilising the following methodology in Figure 3 above.
- 2.21 Analysis of the specific factors relating to current provision of each facility type is summarised in Table 1.1. The key issues and impacts identified are the priorities to address, and inform the detailed actions to be taken, partnerships and stakeholders to be developed/worked with; these are detailed in the investment priorities and the subsequent Action Plan.

Sports and Geographical Scope

- 2.22 The scope of the work includes:



- 2.23 The scope of this Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment includes analysis of the following facility types across Wealden, in line with the geographical areas covered by the Local Plan and the SDNP. Facilities owned by the public (including education), private and third sectors are included.
- 2.24 The project scope includes the following type of facilities:



**Swimming pools
– indoor and
outdoor**



**Sports Halls and
appropriate
school and local
community
facilities**



**Health and
Fitness Facilities**

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

2.25 Whilst a number of sports may use indoor sports facilities, the scope of the ISFA includes analysis of provision for the following facility types across Wealden District, including the area of the District within the South Downs National Park administrative boundary.

Sport	Sport
• Swimming	• Sports Halls
• Health and Fitness (fitness suites and studios)	• Indoor Bowls
• Indoor Tennis	• Gymnastics/Trampolining
• Table Tennis	• Martial Arts
• Boxing	• Squash

2.26 The Assessment will assess and identify the provision of all strategic scale indoor recreation facilities i.e., 3 court sports halls, 20m pools or larger and will focus on key providers such as:

- **Local Authorities;**
- **Education (School and Higher Education Based); and**
- **Voluntary and Private Sectors.**

2.27 Outdoor sports facilities and pitches will be covered in Wealden District Council's Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS). This Indoor Facilities Assessment comprises:

An Assessment and Action Plan, which sets out the full range of findings supported by the evidence, which is fully NPPF compliant;

Technical evidence which sets out the results of the assessment for all built sports facilities;

Location plans of all sites using a GIS mapping system;

Identification of proposals for generic District wide issues, sport specific issues and area specific issues;

A list of priority projects for improvements needed to built sport and leisure facilities over the Local Plan period, with information on indicative costs, phasing and proposed delivery mechanisms, where possible; and

Recommendations for policy, local standards, and guidelines.

2.28 In addition to purpose-built facilities, consideration is given to the role of the following in meeting local need:

- **Community assets (community halls); and**
- **Education facilities.**

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Proportionate Approach

2.29 The brief developed by Wealden District Council identifies the key objectives of the strategy as being to:

Provide	Provide a viable and deliverable model of sports facility stock (type/mix) that meets existing and future demand;
Understanding	Provide a clear understanding of the overall over-supply and under-supply across the District and any specific geographical and/or individual facility needs;
Establish	Establish the principles to help inform where future resources should be focused and help inform the policy direction of the emerging Local Plan; and
Produce	Produce an assessment which is compliant with Sport England guidance.

2.30 In addition, the Assessment will:

- 1. Identify objectives and actions for addressing and delivering the issues and needs identified in the above preceding assessment.**
- 2. Provide recommendations, informed by the Growth Strategy, to help ensure that existing and future needs for sport and physical activity facilities are met across the District. It should identify opportunities for improving existing facilities in terms of their quality, quantity, physical and social accessibility, and current maintenance and management and recommend how shortfalls and future needs should be addressed and where new facilities, if required, should be located.**
- 3. Provide recommendations for a suitable mechanism for securing developer contributions towards the delivery of sports and recreation across Wealden (can be based on locally derived quantity, quality and accessibility standards or other appropriate mechanism). The recommendations should be suitably robust and based on the Growth Strategy; and**
- 4. Give guidance on the cost of recommended actions/proposals and an implementation plan for securing investment and delivering projects, including but not limited to the developer contribution system e.g.s106/CIL.**

3. Strategic Policy and Context

Introduction

National Level

- 3.1 There are several key National and Local strategies and policies which inform and influence the development of these ISFA's.. Most of the National documents are summarised in Appendix 1, Sport and Physical Activity National Context, but the main ones are highlighted below. These national policies inform the approach to current and future provision of sports facilities, linked to health improvement, increased participation, and the appropriate levels of provision of facilities to meet local needs. From a planning perspective, the national agenda makes the link between national planning policy, a local plan and population growth at a local level, and the need to plan for increased demands for infrastructure and provision, linked to Sport England's priorities of Protect, Enhance and Provide.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021

- 3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England. A revised version was published in July 2021 (replacing the previous February 2019 version). The NPPF provides the framework that must be considered in the preparation of local plans and is a material consideration in determining planning decisions. The NPPF highlights the purpose of the planning system in terms of contributing to the achievement of "sustainable development", and defines the three dimensions of this – economic, social and environmental – which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways.
- 3.3 The Revised NPPF retains the broad policy approach of the previous version, albeit with a stronger emphasis upon housing delivery. The policy wording for sport and recreation is largely unchanged.
- 3.4 Paragraph 98 of the NPPF states that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Paragraph 99 of the NPPF specifies that:

Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- 1. An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or**
 - 2. The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or**
 - 3. The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.**
- 3.5 The revised NPPF has increased emphasis in relation to health and wellbeing. For example, the increased importance of planning policies and decisions to aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places (para. 93 – in particular 93c) and NPPF para. 93a – planning positively for provision and use of community facilities (including sports venues) and 93b – take into account local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all sections of the community.
- 3.6 Sport England is a statutory consultee on all planning applications affecting playing fields used in the last 5 years and a consultee on other applications: it looks to improve the quality, access and management of sports facilities as well as investing in new facilities to meet unsatisfied demand.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

- 3.7 Sport England encourages local authorities to have an up-to date assessment of sports facility needs and including a recommendation that the evidence base is regularly reviewed to keep it up to date and renewed at least every five years.
- 3.8 The key drivers for the production of the assessment as advocated by Sport England are to protect, enhance and provide sports facilities, as follows:

Protect	To provide evidence to inform policy and specifically to support Site Allocations and Development Management Policies which will protect sports facilities and their use by the community, irrespective of ownership;
Enhance	To ensure that sports facilities are effectively managed and maintained and that best uses are made of existing resources - whether facilities, expertise and/or personnel to improve and enhance existing provision – particularly in the light of pressure on Local authority budgets; and
Provide	To provide evidence to help secure external funding for new facilities and enhancements. Sport England and the Local authority can then use the strategies developed and the guidance provided in making key planning decisions regarding facility developments in the area including considering a requirement for developer contributions such as CIL and S106.

Sport England Definitions

1. Protect:

- Existing provision should be protected unless an assessment has demonstrated there is an excess of the provision and the specific buildings or land are surplus to requirements, or equivalent or better provision will be provided as replacement;

2. Enhance:

- The use of existing **provision** should be optimised, for example through quality, access and management improvements supported by appropriate ancillary facilities; and

3. Provide:

- Appropriate new **provision** that meets needs and encourages people to play sport and be active should be provided by adapting existing places and through new development.

A New Strategy for Sport – Department for Culture, Media and Sport

- 3.9 The Department for Culture, Media and Sport, following a consultation paper in 2015, launched the new strategy 'Sporting Future: A new Strategy for an Active Nation' in 2016. The development of the new strategy reflects a need to re-invigorate the nation's appetite for participation in sport following what appears to be a significant reduction in participation (highest profile being swimming), following the immediate upsurge after the 2012 London Olympics.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

3.10 The sport strategy is targeting five outcomes against which each sports organisation, public or private sector, will be measured:



Physical wellbeing;



Social and community development;



Economic development;



Mental wellbeing; and



Individual development.

3.11 Government funding will go toward organisations which can best demonstrate that they will deliver some or all of the five outcomes.

3.12 The delivery of the outcomes will be through three broad outputs:



More people from every background regularly and meaningfully taking part in sport and physical activity, volunteering and experiencing live sport;



A more productive, sustainable and responsible sports sector; and



Maximising international and domestic sporting success and the impact of major sporting events.

Sport England Uniting the Movement Strategy 2021 -2031

3.13 In January 2021 Sport England launched their new strategy: “Uniting the Movement”.

Figure 5: Sport England Uniting the Movement Strategy 2021 – 2031

3.14 Uniting the Movement is Sport England’s 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity.

3.15 Sport England believe sport and physical activity has a big role to play in improving the physical and mental health of the nation, supporting the economy, reconnecting communities, and rebuilding a stronger society for all.

3.16 For too long, people with the most to gain from being active have been the least able to take part. As a result of the huge disruption the Covid 19 pandemic has caused in 2020, and the inequalities it has reinforced or even exacerbated – such as those around socio-economic status and ethnicity – our drive to do things differently and confront these inequalities head on is stronger than ever.



Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

- 3.17 This strategy is different not just because it is a vision for the next 10 years. It sets how we need to change as a sector and an ecosystem, so that we can give people the opportunities they need now and in the future.
- 3.18 More than anything, it seeks to tackle the inequalities we have long seen in sport and physical activity. Providing opportunities to people and communities that have traditionally been left behind, and helping to remove the barriers to activity, has never been more important.
- 3.19 The following link provides further information on the strategy: <https://www.sportengland.org/why-were-here/uniting-the-movement>

Local Level

- 3.20 Several current strategic policies, strategies and factors will influence the current and future supply and demand for sport and recreation facilities in Wealden. As well as providing the context for future facility provision, e.g., health improvement, improving accessibility and increasing participation, these strategies provide opportunities to link priority areas and needs, and ensure that outcomes are aligned with identified Local objectives. The relevant strategies and policies include:
- **The Council's Corporate Plan (2019-2023) and mid-term review (2021)**
 - **The Wealden District Council Core Strategy (2013-2027)**
 - **Wealden Local Strategic Partnership Vision**
 - **The Council's Adopted Commercial Strategy (2017)**
 - **Wealden Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2022-2025)**
 - **Review of Leisure Services Provision in Wealden (May 2020)**
 - **East Sussex Pride of Place Vision, Objectives and Priorities**
 - **East Sussex Health and Well-Being Strategy (2016-2019)**
 - **Wealden District Needs and Assets Profile (JSNA) (2017)**
 - **Wealden's Local Football Facility Plan, (LFFP) Football Foundation (May 2019)**
 - **Hailsham Neighbourhood Plan, Submission Version (March 2020)**
 - **Wealden District Council Assets Policy (2019)**
 - **Wealden District Council Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) - new PPS to be completed in 2022**
 - **Wealden District Open Space Assessment – new Open Space Assessment to be completed in 2022**
- 3.21 The above strategies/policies are summarised in Appendix 2. Wealden District Strategic Context – Local strategy and Policy Overview and below.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Future Development in the District

- 3.22 A key factor influencing the future provision of sports facilities in the District (what and where) is the scale and location of future housing development, which impacts on population density and levels and nature of community demand.
- 3.23 The Council is currently progressing work on a new Local Plan for Wealden District. Once adopted, this plan will replace the Core Strategy Local Plan. The new Wealden Local Plan will set out the strategy for the distribution of growth across the District to 2039. This report will provide an evidence base to support the new Local Plan policy approach to sports and recreation development within the district.

Population Profiles and Projections

- 3.24 The current and future population profile of Wealden and the locations of growth which will be set out in the emerging Local Plan are important to understand in relation to planning provision for sport and physical activity. To support this a number of growth scenarios are tested through this ISFA.

Current Population Profile – Deprivation 2019

- 3.25 The indices of Deprivation 2019 identified that in Wealden there are now four Lower Layer Super Output Area's (LSOAs) among the most deprived quintile (but none in the most deprived decile) compared to 2 in 2015. Overall Wealden is ranked 254 out of 317 local authorities on rank of average rank, compared to 276 (out of 326) in 2015.
- 3.26 The most deprived neighbourhood in 2019 was Wealden 017B in Hailsham East ward, ranking 4,812, compared to 5,325 in 2015. But the most deprived LSOA in the district in 2015, Wealden 016D in Hailsham South and West has a less deprived ranking, moving from 5,131 in 2015 to 5,856 in 2019.
- 3.27 61 of Wealden's LSOAs rank as relatively more deprived in Wealden, compared to 34 ranking as less deprived, than in 2015. Five LSOAs rank in a less deprived decile than in 2015, compared to 24 that rank in a worse decile.
- 3.28 Although the rest of Wealden does not have high levels of multiple deprivation, 17 LSOAs (18%) in Wealden are in the most deprived 10% for the Barriers to housing and services domain

Health Profile

- 3.29 Life expectancy for both men and women living in Wealden is higher than the England average.
- 3.30 About 15% of Year 6 children are classified as obese, better than the average for the region and England.
- 3.31 Levels of teenage pregnancy, GCSE attainment and breast-feeding initiation are better than the England average.
- 3.32 The smoking prevalence in adults in routine and manual occupations (27.7%) is higher than the average for the Region and England.
- 3.33 Health priorities in Wealden include circulatory diseases, cancers and respiratory diseases in order to address the life expectancy gap between the most and least deprived areas.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Physical Activity and Participation

The Intrinsic Value of Participation

- 3.34 The value of participation in sport and physical activity is significant, and its contribution to individual and community quality of life should not be underestimated. This is true for both younger and older people; participation in sport and physical activity delivers:



Opportunities for physical activity, and therefore more 'active living';



Health benefits – cardiovascular, stronger bones, mobility;



Health improvement;



Mental health benefits; and



Social benefits – socialisation, communication, inter-action, regular contact, stimulation.

- 3.35 In addition, participation in sport and physical activity can facilitate the learning of new skills, development of individual and team ability / performance, and provide a 'disciplined' environment in which participants can 'grow' and develop.
- 3.36 The benefits of regular and active participation in sport and physical activity will be important to promote in relation to future sport, leisure, and physical activity in Wealden.
- 3.37 There is an existing audience in the District, which already recognises the advantages of participation, and a latent community who are ready to take part. The sport, physical activity and leisure offer in the District can support the delivery of the desired outcomes across several District Strategic priorities and objectives.

Current Participation Rates – Physical Activity Participation

- 3.38 Sport England Active Lives Survey results May 2019 – May 2020 aged 16+ show Wealden has a higher rate of active residents (67.8%) participating in at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week than the England average (62.8%) and that Wealden's rate is higher than the Sussex average (66.8%). There are less inactive residents in Wealden (21.3%) than in Sussex (22.1%), and Wealden inactivity levels are lower than the England average of 25.5%.

Table 1: Active Lives survey Results May 2019 – May 2020

	Active at least 150 minutes per week	Fairly Active 30 mins – 149 mins per week	Inactive Less than 30 mins per week
Wealden	67.8%	10.9%	21.3%
Sussex	66.8%	11.1%	22.1%
England	62.8%	11.7%	25.5%

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

- 3.39 Active Lives Children and Young People's survey 2018 – 2019 identifies that 24% of children and young people in Wealden were less active across the week (less than 30 minutes activity per day), 23% were fairly active (an average of 30 minutes – 59 minutes per day. and 53% were active (an average of 60 minutes per day). There is no significant change to the previous survey 2017 – 2018.

Moving Communities

- 3.40 The most recent update from the Moving Communities data (March 2022) which reflects national trends in participation post Covid-19 pandemic identifies:

- **There were 5,775,585 unique known participants using 608 leisure centres in April 2021 – January 2022, compared to 8,855,446 at the same centres in the same period in 2019/20, a 35% reduction.**
- **Between April 2021 – January 2022**
 - over half (53%) of the 5.8m participants were female
 - almost a quarter (23%) were under 16
 - nearly one in six were from the 20% most deprived parts of England.
- **Recovery rates have plateaued at around 70% for leisure centre visits across 793 consistent sites.**
- **The average number of visits per month by an individual participant increased from 4.28 to 4.65 confirming that fewer people are coming more often**
- **Group workout classes continue to be 80% female**
- **Outdoor activities are attended by just over 10% more women in 2021/22 than pre pandemic**
- **93% attending swimming lessons are aged 15 or under**
- **Participation in swimming has recovered at a Faster rate than it has in terms of gym use**
- **£549 million of social value was generated in April 2021 – Jan 2022 from 5.1 million individuals at 642 leisure centres. This is 60% of the social value generated from the same centres in the same months in 2019/20.**

4. Stage B - Existing Facility Provision

Introduction

- 4.1 The current level and nature of indoor sports facility provision in Wealden, has been assessed across the district.

Supply of Indoor Sport Facilities in Wealden

- 4.2 The following table summarises the existing indoor sports facilities across Wealden.

Table 2: Existing Indoor sports facilities – Wealden

Facilities	Wealden
Sports Hall (3+ Courts)	11
Swimming Pools (Main, Learner & Leisure)	10 (Main), 6 (Learner/Teaching), 1 (Leisure)
Health and Fitness Suites	15
Studios	23
Squash Courts	10 (normal) 2 (Glass Backed)
Indoor Bowls Rinks	6
Indoor Tennis Courts	1
Activity Halls	20
Community Space (Village Halls, Community Centres, Church Halls etc.)	84

- 4.3 It is important to highlight from the outset that this assessment is not just about formal sports facility provision, but also looks at opportunities for increased use of informal places and spaces. Community Halls/Village Halls can be used for sport and physical activity even if they are not purpose designed nor marked for such use and can often provide an introductory experience of sport and physical activity, or a more accessible option for those who are older, have no access to private transport, or who have commitments which make it hard for them to travel to formal facilities.
- 4.4 Increased use of the outdoors, open spaces, parks, and recreation grounds also has significant potential to contribute to increasing levels of participation in physical activity at a very local level, and to addressing rising levels of obesity and other health inequalities.
- 4.5 Based on the Active Places database, the Sport England Facility Planning Model (FPM), the local sports profile data (Sport England) and the audit undertaken to inform this assessment, the maps used in the following facility assessments show the extent of existing built sport and leisure facility provision in Wealden.
- 4.6 Users of sport and recreation facilities do not recognise administrative boundaries and will use facilities that are convenient and/or provide a quality/value for money experience. Ownership and management are, in this context, a minor consideration for most users.
- 4.7 The availability of facilities in neighbouring Districts can and does influence sports facility usage patterns, as does access to private transport and availability of public transport.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Operational Management and Lease Arrangements for Wealden District Council Leisure Facilities

- 4.8 The operational management contract for both the WDC owned Hailsham and Crowborough Leisure Centres (leased from Crowborough Town Council) is due to expire in 2027.

Table 3: Summary of WDC Contract with Freedom Leisure

	Hailsham	Crowborough	Uckfield	Heathfield
Contract Let Date	1 st April 2012	1 st April 2012	1 st April 2012	1 st April 2012
Contract Duration	15 Years	15 Years	10 Years	10 Years
Contract End Date	31 st March 2027	31 st March 2027	31 st July 2022	31 st July 2022

- 4.9 As part of the contract award the Council invested £7m into a refurbishment of the leisure centres using funds from the capital programme. Freedom Leisure invested £600,000 at the time of award. Further investment was made to Hailsham wet side changing in 2020/21.
- 4.10 The existing WDC Leisure Services contract is of its time, and the leisure market has changed significantly. The current trend is towards operators paying local authorities, as opposed to local authorities paying operators a management fee. Operators will now take the risk for lifecycle maintenance on a new building and are also more likely to take the risk on both utility cost and consumption (at present, Freedom Leisure currently pay all utility costs at the facilities in the WDC leisure contract). In addition, on some contracts and particularly where a new facility is developed, the operator will also pay the relevant local authority a surplus share (to date this has happened once with the existing WDC contract in 2016/17).
- 4.11 Given the rural nature of the district and the rising numbers of older people, there is potential for a future WDC contract to supplement existing and important outreach work undertaken by WDC officers. This could be funded through a new contract if the requirement is written into the specification, or it could be funded as a partnership approach between WDC and a future operator, and potentially other stakeholders such as Public Health.
- 4.12 In 2020, WDC gave notice of its intention not to renew its long term leases with East Sussex County Council once they expired in July 2022 at the two dual-use sites (Heathfield and Uckfield Leisure Centres). In order for the County Council to undertake public consultation exercises around future provision at the sites, a three-month extension was agreed at Heathfield Leisure Centre until October 2022 and a 12 month extension at Uckfield Leisure Centre until July 2023.

Catchment Areas

- 4.13 Catchment areas for different types of facilities provide a means of identifying areas currently not served by existing indoor sports facilities. It is however, recognised that catchment areas vary from person to person, day to day, hour to hour, and are also quite different in rural and urban areas. This problem is overcome by accepting the concept of 'effective catchment,' defined as the distance travelled by around 75-80% of users. The maps in Section 4 demonstrate catchment areas for facility provision in Wealden based on this approach, which uses a 20-minute drive time as a catchment area for sports facilities (the industry guidance from Sport England is a 20 min drive time (car), or a 20-minute walk time).

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Demand for Indoor sports facilities

- 4.14 There are two main tools used to inform the assessment of supply and demand, as well as the facility audit (Appendix 5 taken directly from Active Places and used as the baseline data to be checked and challenged through the site visits), quality assessments, and the demand information gathered through the consultation. These tools are:
- 4.15 The Sport England Facility Planning Model (FPM) – As relevant to this assessment, this can only be used for sports halls of 3 badminton court size and above and swimming pools larger than 160 m²; FPM runs were only developed for pools and sports halls.

The Facilities Planning Model (FPM) is a computer-based supply/demand model, which has been developed by Edinburgh University in conjunction with Sport Scotland and Sport England since the 1980's.

The model is a tool to help to assess the strategic provision of community sports facilities in an area. It is currently applicable for use in assessing the provision of sports halls, swimming pools, indoor bowls centres and artificial grass pitches.

Use of FPM

Sport England uses the FPM as one of its principal tools in helping to assess the strategic need for certain community sports facilities. The FPM has been developed as a means of:

- 1. Assessing requirements for different types of community sports facilities on a local, regional or national scale.**
- 2. Helping local authorities to determine an adequate level of sports facility provision to meet their local needs.**
- 3. Helping to identify strategic gaps in the provision of sports facilities, and**
- 4. Comparing alternative options for planned provision, taking account of changes in demand and supply. This includes testing the impact of opening, relocating and closing facilities, and the likely impact of population changes on the needs for sports facilities.**

Its current use is limited to those sports' facility types for which Sport England holds substantial demand data, i.e., swimming pools, sports halls, indoor bowls and artificial grass pitches.

The report sets out the findings under seven headings and includes data tables and maps. The headings are defined at the start and include total supply; total demand; supply and demand balance; satisfied/met demand; unmet demand; used capacity (how full the pools are); and local share of pools. Each heading is followed by a commentary on the findings.

The purpose of the FPM report is to provide Wealden District Council with an updated evidence base for sports halls and swimming pools, which the Council can use to inform its strategic planning for the future provision of these facility types.

The Sports Facility Calculator (SFC)

The Sports Facility Calculator (SFC) provides a quantitative estimate of future need, but unlike the FPM the SFC model analysis does not identify specific locations for future provision.

That needs to be informed by the nature and location of future housing development (where locations are known), local geography and accessibility, and, critically, the location of existing facilities. This is because future demand may have the potential to be addressed through facility extension, or refurbishment, as well as new locations. However, in the absence of any other future demand calculator, the SFC provides an indicator of the level of future provision needed. The SFC can be applied to the same facilities as those modelled in the FPM.

- 4.16 The demand (current and future) for facilities other than sports halls and swimming pools is assessed using National Governing Body (NGB) standards if they are available, plus a combination of local factors e.g., how many existing facilities there are; what is the identified demand from schools, clubs, the community etc.; what is available immediately outside the authority boundaries to which people may find it easier to travel.

Stage B (ANOG) - Assessment of Existing Sports Facility Provision

- 4.17 This section sets out the Stage B information required by the ANOG process. It provides a detailed picture of existing facilities in Wealden:
- Quantity: how many of each type there are?
 - Quality: their age and condition
 - Accessibility: who owns and operates the facilities, facility location and catchment areas?
 - Availability: whether the facilities are available to all residents, and whether there is play and play access
- 4.18 Given the inter-related nature of these four key areas, Section 4 covers each facility type in turn, and assesses it in terms of the above, then pulls together all the data collected to provide an overall summary of each facility type, current and future provision i.e., supply and demand analysis.
- 4.19 Section 5 applies the analysis of the provision to identified needs in Wealden, and Section 6 sets out the recommendations to be implemented through the Action Plan, to address these identified needs and gaps.
- 4.20 Given the range of facilities in Wealden, each type is summarised below and assessed separately, to provide a more detailed picture of the current supply and demand, and critically future need.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

4.21 The formal indoor sport facility types assessed include:



Sports Halls (including schools and community buildings), and covering indoor sports hall sports such as, badminton, boxing, martial arts, indoor cricket, basketball, netball, table tennis and volleyball



Health & Fitness Centres (including dance/aerobic studios)



Squash Courts



Indoor Tennis Centres



Swimming Pools



Gymnastics Facilities



Indoor Bowls Halls

4.22 In addition to the above, reference is also made to the various community halls in the area, which provide informal space for a wide range of physical activity and recreational activities.

4.23 It is important to highlight that community use, and specifically pay and play access is the focus of the facility assessment. Community use applies to clubs, the public and community associations / groups; pay and play community access refers to the public.

4.24 The latter is important because those who are inactive are unlikely to join a club to use a facility; therefore, it is only by ensuring there is sufficient pay and play community access to formal and informal facilities, that participation is likely to increase, and particularly amongst those who are currently inactive. Community use provided for clubs is also particularly important, given that club members are also part of the overall community, but these individuals are more likely to be active already.

Quality Audits

4.25 The quality audits comprise an independent assessment of the quality and condition of the facilities; results are recorded within the assessment:

Table 4: Quality Audit Scoring System

Rating
Excellent
Good
Average
Poor
Very Poor

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

- 4.26 A facility scoring highly in terms of visual quality and condition (good – excellent) is likely to require less investment than one which in a poorer visual condition (average – very poor). The combination of the scores, results in the facility rating, and identification of investment need (significant, moderate etc.).
- 4.27 It is important to highlight that in undertaking the quality assessments, each element of the facility e.g., sports hall, pool etc. is given a qualitative assessment, and the overall facility is also given an overall qualitative mark. Therefore, a sports hall can be of poor quality, but the overall facility score could be good.
- 4.28 Due to the Covid 19 Pandemic and the timing of this assessment, it was not possible to quality audit all facilities. All local authority facilities have been given a quality rating, but private sites and school sites have been difficult to assess due to access and contact issues. Where possible quality scores have been allocated based on internet research and consultation. The priority has been to assess the quality of facilities providing a community use i.e. pay and play access, clubs and groups.

Consultation

- 4.29 The ANOG methodology requires consultation with clubs, schools, neighbouring Districts, National Governing Bodies (NGB's) and key stakeholders. Schools were consulted via an online survey. Clubs needs are also identified via consultation with NGB's (Appendix 3 NGB Responses) and sports clubs (Appendix 4 Sports Club Responses). Neighbouring Districts were contacted by telephone and information collected through this medium as well as SLL's own knowledge from recent work in relevant areas. NGB's were all contacted by email and asked a series of questions to identify the information required.

Schools

- 4.30 All schools including Special Educational Needs (SEN) and independent schools in Wealden were contacted and asked to complete a survey about their existing sports facilities, their plans/aspirations for future provision, and the extent and nature of community use of the facilities. 15 schools responded to the survey. Schools with community assets that did not respond to the survey were contacted by telephone and or visited as part of the facility quality audits.
- 4.31 Schools stated that whilst most of any increased community usage of school facilities would be for sports activities, wider community use would also be welcomed. Some schools believe there is no demand for their facilities; this may be true of small, or non-purpose-built sports facilities, but in general, education facilities can provide a useful resource for the local community for both sport and community activities.

Neighbouring Local Authorities

- 4.32 In determining the nature, level and location of sports facility provision required for the future in Wealden, it is also important to be aware of how neighbouring local authorities are planning for leisure. Given that communities use sports facilities in areas other than where they live, the development of new or improved provision can impact significantly on both participation levels and capacity cross-boundary.
- 4.33 Neighbouring local authorities provide sport and leisure facilities, and, given the geography of the local area in and around Wealden, it is important to recognise that facilities outside Wealden may be easily accessible to Wealden residents.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

- 4.34 Wealden District is surrounded by seven other local authority areas. Due to this proximity, it is relatively easy for those residents who own cars to travel to facilities outside the district. Given some of these offer facilities and activities not available in Wealden. Some Wealden residents use provision in Eastbourne, East Grinstead, Rother, and/or Tunbridge Wells etc because there are facility types in these areas not found in Wealden. Motcombe Pool, The Sovereign Centre (Eastbourne), Seahaven Swim and Fitness Centre, Tunbridge Wells Sports Centre and The Kings Centre are the facilities outside the District that seem to be most mentioned as ones used by residents.
- 4.35 Eastbourne is accessible to residents of Wealden and particularly those in Hailsham, due to its proximity; it currently offers a wider range of leisure provision than in Hailsham (although the Sovereign Leisure Centre is ageing), plus a visitor (economy) offer.
- 4.36 Eastbourne BC has invested heavily in a new Conference Centre and is keen to revitalise the seafront environs. Presently the Council is at RIBA Stage 4 of a proposed replacement of the present Sovereign (Leisure) Centre and looks likely to progress to the (final) construction stage in the coming months. Freedom (Hailsham) report that Eastbourne is seen as a major competitor in leisure terms and that any improvements to Eastbourne's leisure offer will impact on the present footfall at Hailsham.
- 4.37 Strategic Leisure Limited has investigated the Eastbourne proposals (originally substantial family fun water and climbing activities along with modern health related fitness facilities, although it is now understood that this provision has been scaled back) and suggest they could have a detrimental impact on the current usage numbers at Hailsham Leisure Centre. This could be evaluated as part of a sport England Facilities Planning Model Local run.
- 4.38 Rother District Council is currently considering its options for physical activity provision as part of developing its new Leisure Strategy.
- 4.39 Sevenoaks District Council has invested in a replacement for Whiteoaks Leisure Centre; the new facility opened recently.
- 4.40 There are no identified plans to extend the current leisure offer within Tandridge District Council, Lewes District Council or Mid Sussex District Council. Tunbridge Wells Borough Council have recently spent £1.7m refurbishing Tunbridge Wells Sports Centre.
- 4.41 It is clear from the above that there are a significant number of local authority facilities immediately adjacent to Wealden. It is also clear that several will be improved within the next 5 years, so addressing issues of quality in WDC facilities should be considered, to retain and grow the existing usage of the centres in the district. The Facility Planning Model (FPM) see Section 4, identifies that there are large numbers of people already accessing facilities outside the District, either because they are closer, or because they are a higher quality, and/or offer activities not available in Wealden.

Assessment of Individual Facility Types

Sports Halls and Activity Halls

Quantity

- 4.42 Strategic-size sports halls are defined as 3 court badminton halls and above and provide facilities for team sports such as netball, volleyball, indoor cricket, and basketball etc. Activity halls are smaller halls normally of 1 badminton court size but may not be marked out for badminton but can cater for some sports and physical activity.

Wealden District Council

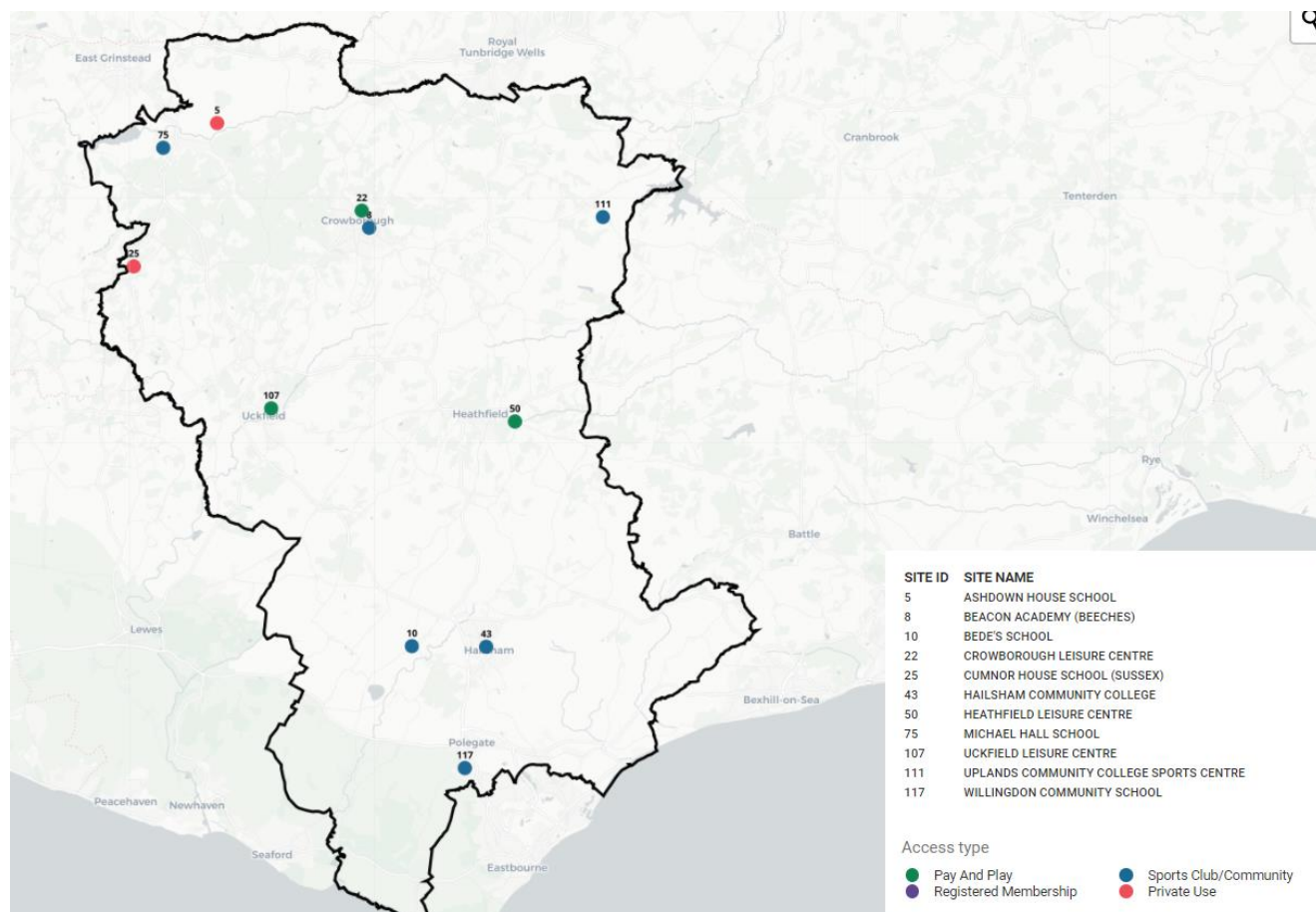
Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

- 4.43 The supply analysis identifies that Wealden has a total of 11 sports halls (refer to Map 1) and 12 activity halls (refer to Map 2). The sports halls and activity halls are provided across 12 sites. Appendix 5 details the sports hall supply and activity in Wealden taken from Active Places (Sport England) and additional research.
- 4.44 There are:
- 1. A total of 11 sports halls and 20 activity halls;**
 - 2. 11 sports halls in total (all strategic size i.e., 3 courts+) providing pay and play and sports club community organisation usage. 2 sports halls provide private school use only;**
 - 3. 3 community accessible pay and play sports hall (strategic size i.e., 3 courts+); and**
 - 4. 6 community accessible sports halls i.e., available for sports club use.**
 - 5. 11 activity halls providing sports club usage and 9 activity halls providing private use only.**
- 4.45 The 11 strategic-size sports halls are operated and managed either through Wealden's leisure operator Freedom Leisure, or by the schools themselves.
- 4.46 **Willingdon Community School, Polegate has a new 4 court sports hall with a legal agreement between the school and East Sussex County Council (dated 2018) to provide community use evenings and weekends. As this facility has only recently been built it is not in Sport England's Active Places audit of facilities and is not identified within Sport England's Facility Planning model run for sports halls.**
- 4.47 **It is included in this supply and demand assessment and the impact of an additional 4 courts taken into account in the calculation of supply. This new facility increases the level of provision available for community use – clubs.**
- 4.48 Strategic size sports halls are shown in Appendix 5 and Table 5; those available for pay and play community use are also shown in Table 5 highlighted in bold. Table 6 shows activity halls with those available for pay and play community use highlighted in bold.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Map 1: Sports Hall sites in Wealden



Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Table 5: Supply of Strategic Size Sports Halls i.e. 3 courts+ in Wealden

Site Name	Post Code	Facility Type	Facility Sub Type	Number of Badminton Courts	Access Type	Ownership Type	Management Type	Pay and Play	Year Built	Year Refurbished
Crowborough Leisure Centre	TN6 2TN	Sports Hall	Main	4	Pay and Play	Local Authority	Trust	✓	1985	No
Heathfield Leisure Centre	TN21 8RJ	Sports Hall	Main	4	Pay and Play	Local Authority	Trust	✓	1996	n/a
Uckfield Leisure Centre	TN22 1UB	Sports Hall	Main	4	Pay and Play	Local Authority	Trust	✓	1987	2006
Beacon Academy (Beeches)	TN6 2AS	Sports Hall	Main	5	Sports Club / Community Association	Voluntary Aided School	School/College/ University (in house)		1960	2007
Bede's School	BN27 3QH	Sports Hall	Main	8	Sports Club / Community Association	Independent School	School/College /University (in house)		2007	N/A
Hailsham Community College	BN27 1DT	Sports Hall	Main	4	Sports Club / Community Association	Academy School	School/College/ University (in house)		2005	N/A
Michael Hall School	RH18 5JA	Sports Hall	Main	4	Sports Club / Community Association	Voluntary Aided School	School/College/ University (in house)		2004	N/A
Uplands Community College Sports Centre	TN5 6BA	Sports Hall	Main	3	Sports Club / Community Association	Community School	School/College /University (in house)		1998	N/A
Willingdon Community School	BN20 9QX	Sports Hall	Main	4	Sports Club / Community Association	Community School	School/College/ University (in house)		2019	N/A

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

- 4.49 In addition to the above there are 2 sports halls on school sites that are only available for private use by the schools. These sports halls are a 3-court sports hall at Ashdown House School and a 4-court sports hall at Cumnor House School (Sussex). Cumnor House School has a current planning application submitted to replace its existing sports hall and provide a fit for purpose sports hall as a replacement. This is a private sports hall currently only available for school use. There may be an opportunity to agree community use through the planning process.
- 4.50 Table 5 shows the 3 sports halls which are available for pay and play community use (facilities in bold).
- 4.51 The five sports hall sites which are owned by educational institutions, schools, and colleges, represent 62.5% of the sports hall sites in the District (not including Willingdon Community School Sports Hall).
- 4.52 In addition to the formal sports halls, there are 20 activity halls (Table 6 below). Nine of the 20 activity halls offer private use only (Hailsham Primary School 1 activity hall, Laughton Community Primary School 1 activity hall, Mayfield Girl's School 1 activity hall, Maynards Green Community Primary School 1 activity hall, Polegate School 1 activity hall, Sir Henry Fermor Church of England School 1 activity hall, Uckfield College 1 activity hall, Willingdon Primary School 2 activity halls).
- 4.53 11 activity halls are available for community access sport clubs and organisations. These activity halls are shown in Table 6 below.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Table 6: Supply of Activity Halls in Wealden

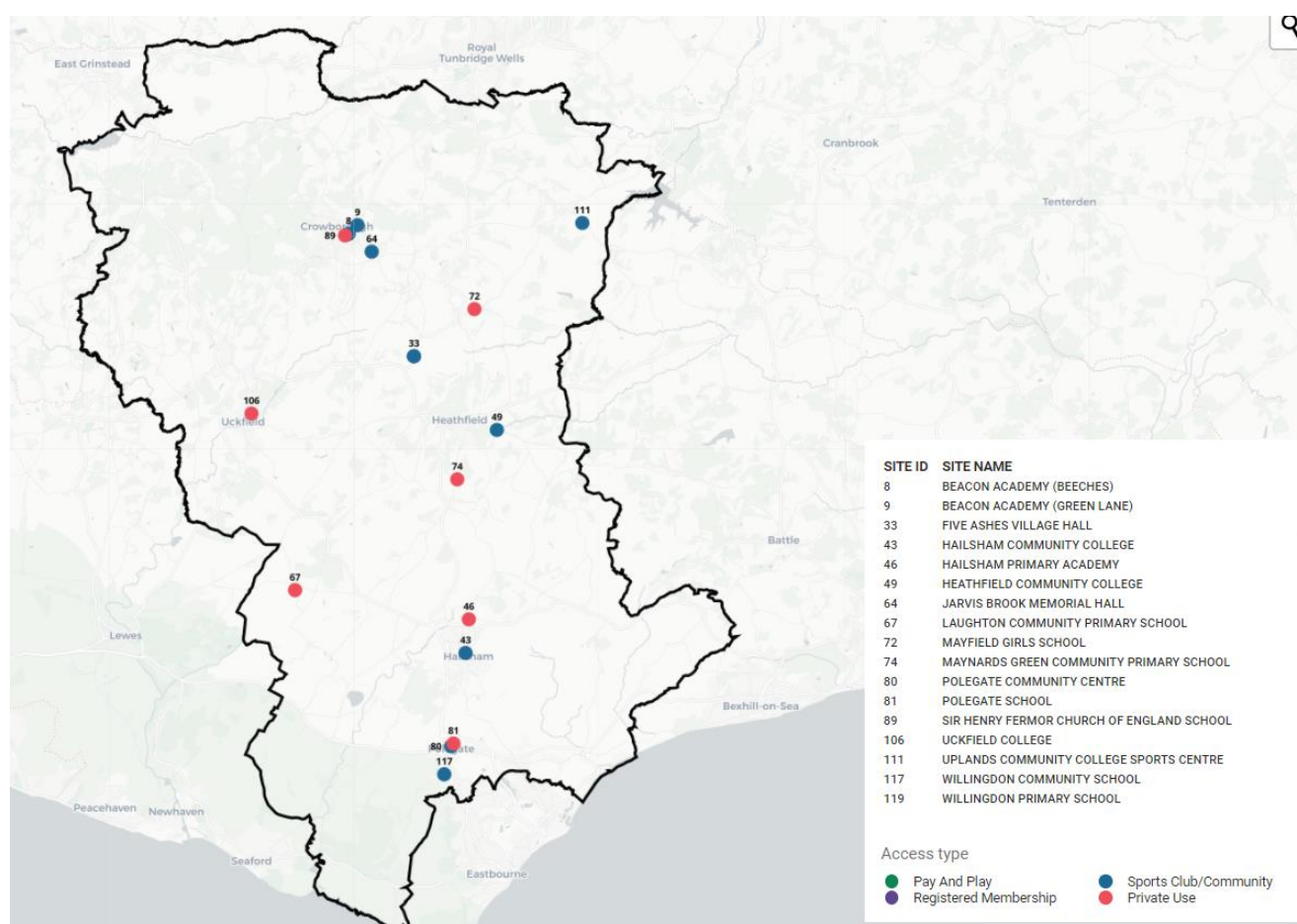
Site Name	Post Code	Facility Type	Facility Sub Type	Number Badminton Courts	Access Type	Ownership Type	Management Type	Pay and Play	Year Built	Year Refurbished
Beacon Academy (Beeches)	TN6 2AS	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	1	Sports Club / Community Association	Community school	School/College/ University (in house)	✓	1960	N/A
Beacon Academy (Beeches)	TN6 2AS	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	0	Sports Club / Community Association	Community school	School/College/ University (in house)	✓	1960	N/A
Beacon Academy (Green Lane)	TN6 2DY	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	1	Sports Club/ Community Association	Community school	School/College/ University (in house)		1960	N/A
Five Ashes Village Hall	TN20 6JA	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	1	Sports Club/ Community Association	Community Organisation	Community Organisation		1950	2014
Five Ashes Village Hall	TN20 6JA	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	0	Sports Club/ Community Association	Community Organisation	Community Organisation		2014	N/A
Hailsham Community College	BN27 1DT	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	1	Sports Club / Community Association	Academies	School/College/ University (in house)	✓	1960	N/A
Heathfield Community College	TN21 8RH	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	1	Sports Club / Community Association	Community school	School/College/ University (in house)	✓	1962	2005
Jarvis Brook Memorial Hall	TN6 2EG	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	1	Sports Club / Community Association	Other	Other		2000	N/A
Polegate Community Centre	BN26 6QF	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	1	Sports Club / Community Association	Community Organisation	Community Organisation		1969	2004
Uplands Community College Sports Centre	TN5 6BA	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	1	Sports Club / Community Association	Community school	School/College/ University (in house)	✓	1998	N/A
Willingdon Community School	BN20 9QX	Sports Hall	Activity Hall	1	Sports Club / Community Association	Community school	School/College /University (in house)		1950	N/A

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

4.54 The identified activity halls are highlighted bold because they are on a site included in the Sport England Active Places audit (behind the FPM) and are those located on a site where there is also a sports hall offering community access (typically an education site), or where the site has been identified separately as offering community access for sport/physical activity. (This can mean there is a difference in the number of halls and courts assessed through the SLL audit and those covered by the Facility Planning Model (FPM) assessment. These activity halls are part of a much larger network of community halls in Wealden.

Map 2: Activity Halls in Wealden



Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

- 4.55 There are a significant number of activity halls in Wealden. However, the majority of these (11) are on education sites and have limited/no daytime access. All 11 of the activity halls provide for sports club/community association access, as opposed to pay and play access on education sites evenings and weekends only.
- 4.56 As well as the identified activity halls, there is a range of other community halls/centres, churches, community halls and associations, etc. These are available for community use, usually groups, associations, privately run classes, sessions but provide for far more than sport and physical activity. Typically, community halls will also be hired for dance classes, arts/crafts events and programmes, events meeting and social gatherings. These facilities have been audited and are detailed in Appendix 5 under Community centres.

Quality

- 4.57 Quality assessments have been undertaken. These were off site assessment of the facilities due to the Covid -19 pandemic. These are provided in Table 7. Due to the Covid 19 pandemic it has not been possible to visit all the facilities within the district for example, education facilities and the private facilities.

Table 7: Summary of the Quality Assessment of Wealden leisure facilities: Sports Halls

	Quality Score	Commentary
Crowborough Leisure Centre	Average	Built 1985. Although the facility is in good condition due to a refurbishment in the past 8 years. The sports hall is showing signs of wear and needs installation of rebound boards and new emergency exits.
Heathfield Leisure Centre	Average	Built 1996. The facility is joint use on a school site. The sports hall is in a good condition. The sports hall floor, however, is slippery and has no runoff space for sports such as netball and basketball. The dry side changing rooms serving the sports hall lack cubicles.
Uckfield Leisure Centre	Poor	Built 1987. Sports hall is showing signs of ageing. The floor is dusty and cricket net facilities are not operational. Disability access to the sports hall is via an emergency exit in the car park. The dry changing rooms serving the sports hall require refurbishment.

- 4.58 The average age of the Wealden sports hall sites in 2021 is 28 years. This excludes a new sports hall provided at Willingdon Community School recently. The oldest sports hall is Beacon Academy (Beeches) opened in 1960, modernised in 2007 and the most recent sports hall to open is Bede's School in 2007. Of the five sports halls opened before 2000 only two have been modernised (Table 5). Willingdon Community School has a new sports hall built in 2019. There is a need to modernise or replace the 5 sports halls built pre 2000 (on cost/benefit grounds) to maintain their attractiveness to residents.
- 4.59 Heathfield Leisure Centre sports hall, built in 1996, is the youngest sports hall facility of the three pay and play sports hall facilities in Wealden. Crowborough Leisure Centre sports hall was built in 1985 and Uckfield Leisure Centre sports hall built in 1987, all require refurbishment.
- 4.60 Hailsham Leisure Centre sports hall was converted to a bowling alley and a soft play space in 2005. There is no secured community use sports hall in Hailsham. Hailsham Community College provides the only sports hall facility in the Hailsham area.

Wealden District Council

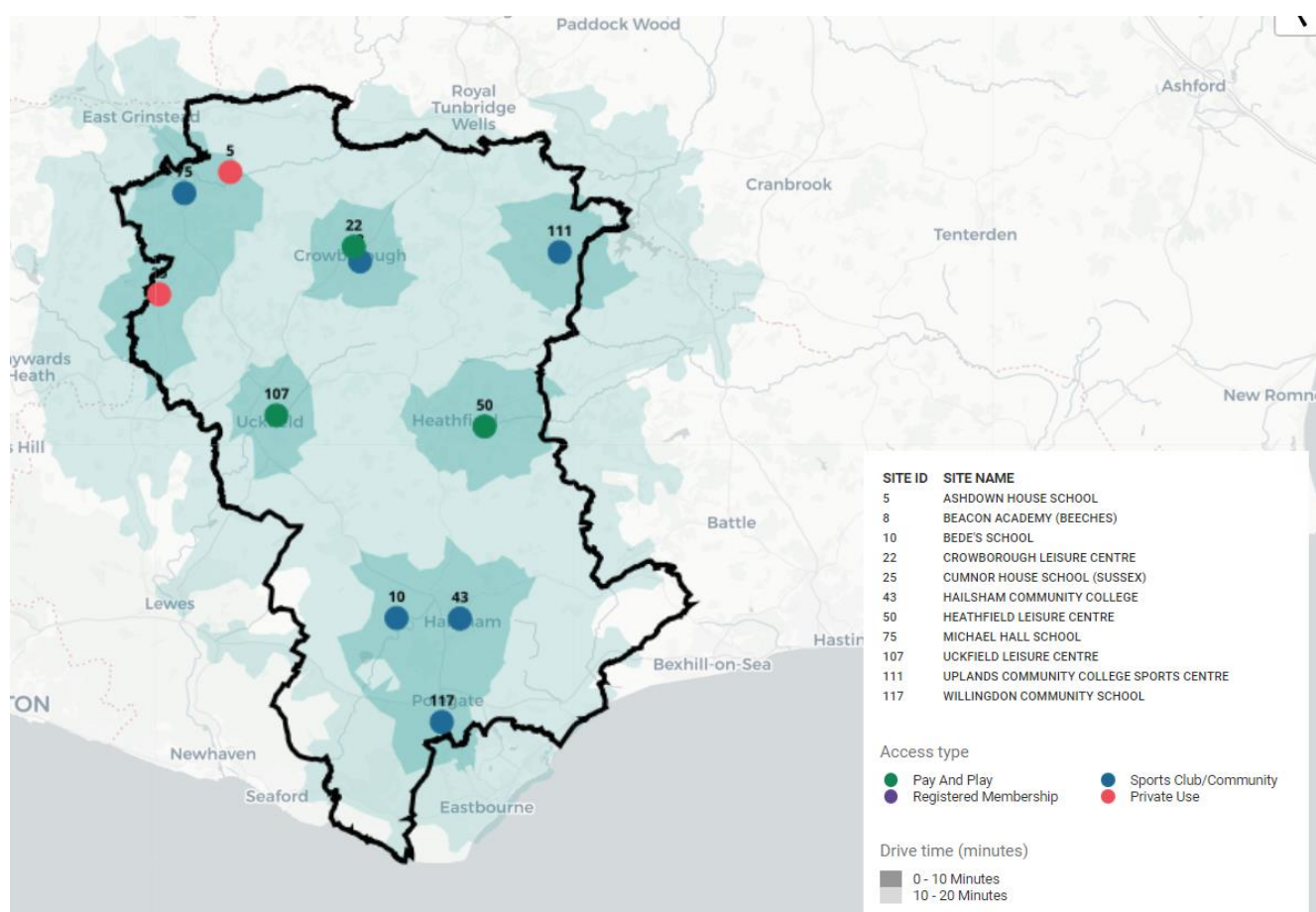
Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

- 4.61 The quality and range of the offer, along with the age and condition of a sports hall are features that are all of increasing importance to customers and impact on participation levels. The features required include a modern sports hall, with a sprung timber floor, good quality lighting and modern changing rooms, plus other facilities on site, such as a studio and/or a gym. Residents may travel further to use a sports hall with this all-round offer, rather than participate at the sports hall located closest to where they live.
- 4.62 Activity halls vary in age from Willingdon Community School and Beacon Academy (Green Lane) both built in 1950 and Five Ashes Community Centre 2014. There are a further 4 built in 1960.

Accessibility

- 4.63 Map 3 shows the geographic distribution of the strategic size sports halls in Wealden, with a catchment area for each of 10 minutes and 20 minutes' drive time. (20-minute drive time (private car)). The 20-minute drive time catchment area of the existing sports halls covers the Wealden District area and beyond into neighbouring local authority areas. The area lacking a secured community use Pay and Play sports hall is the Hailsham area plus some areas in the South of Wealden, such as Polegate and Willingdon, Wadhurst in the northeast and Forest Row in the northwest. The new Willingdon Community School sports hall will assist in providing sports hall facilities in the Polegate and Willingdon area. In addition, there are opportunities at St Bede's School and Hailsham Community College to discuss community access to existing sports halls.

Map 3: Sports Halls Catchment areas in Wealden (10 minute and 20-minute drive time)



Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

- 4.64 11.7% of the resident Wealden population does not have access to a car (Source 2011 Census). The Southeast Region average is 17.6% of the population without access to a car and for England wide it is 24.9% of the population who do not have access to a car.
- 4.65 The percentage of the population without access to a car is important, because it influences travel patterns to sports halls. If there is a high percentage of the population with access to a car, as there is in Wealden, then more visits to sports halls are by car. If the reverse is true, then a network of locally accessible sports halls is important for residents who either walk or use public transport to travel to a sports hall.
- 4.66 **The findings for Wealden from Sport England's Facility Planning Model (FPM)** are that 91% of visits to sports halls are by car (up to 20 minutes' drive time), 5% of all visits by walking (20 minutes/1-mile catchment area), and 4% of visits are by public transport (20 minutes catchment area).
- 4.67 Accessibility to activity halls varies across Wealden, given their locations, but it is good. Activity halls attract far more local use, given that many of them are used for a wide range of activities, including sport and physical activity, arts, community, meetings, lunches, playgroups, events. Many are not marked out as badminton courts so provide informal multi-purpose space which can be used for a wide range of community activities.
- 4.68 The Sport England National Run Facilities Planning Model Sports Hall Report provides mapping to understand how accessible the sports halls are by public transport, Maps 1 – 3, shows the location of the sports hall sites and the area within 0 – 5 minutes' walk of a bus stop (grey areas), and 0 – 5, 5 – 10 and 10 – 15 minutes' walk of a railway station (purple areas).
- 4.69 As the maps within the FPM illustrate there is virtually no access by rail travel to most of the centres but there is some access by bus and rail travel for the centres in Crowborough and Uckfield, and some access by bus to Hailsham. These maps are considered important from an Active Travel perspective.

Availability

- 4.70 Table 5 and 6 and Map 3 highlight that there is a high level of sports hall and activity hall provision in Wealden. However, the majority of the facilities are on education sites and only provide for sports club/association use (usually outside of school hours). Whilst a community access sports hall would typically be open from 7am – 10pm weekdays and 9am – 6pm weekends, a facility on an education site, if open for community use, will be open from 6pm – 10pm and at weekends. Opening hours for community halls vary significantly depending on how they are operated but they would typically not be open for as many hours as a community access sports hall.
- 4.71 Overall, although there are several sports halls in Wealden, access is limited because most sports halls are on education sites without formal community use arrangements.
- 4.72 Of the strategic size sports halls, two, Crowborough Leisure Centre and Uckfield Leisure Centre, provides all day accessible daytime use. Heathfield Leisure Centre opens 3.00pm – 9.00pm. Access to the remaining strategic size sports hall is limited to evening use only, because most sports halls are on education sites.
- 4.73 A further aspect of accessibility is programming, opening hours and whether facilities offer community pay and play access. Only the three sports halls providing daytime access (Crowborough Leisure Centre, Uckfield Leisure Centre, is open for pay and play community access during the day and at weekends and Heathfield Leisure Centre provides limited afternoon community pay and play access use due to college activities the remaining schools allow for sports clubs and associations only). Club Bookings are taken at Hailsham College Sports Hall.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

- 4.74 The school announced in October 2021 that it will be using its sports hall for exams as the sports hall now provides the only hall big enough to support examinations in the school.
- 4.75 The sports hall will remain open for hire at all other times of the year.
- 4.76 Not everyone is, can be, or wants to be a member of a sports club, so this type of access does not actually provide for the whole community, and is unlikely to address the needs of the most inactive, or those from the areas of highest deprivation, who are also likely to be those experiencing significant health inequalities.
- 4.77 Access to informal community centre halls is important to ensure access to physical activity opportunities when there are fewer formal facilities available.
- 4.78 There is therefore an important role for the existing community centre informal hall space across Wealden, in providing physical activity opportunities for specific ethnic/religious communities, and/or those who are inactive, who may choose not to access formal sports facilities. There is also potential to increase capacity for community access pay play usage of existing education-based facilities, which provide for sports clubs and associations.

National Governing Bodies (NGB's) and Sports Clubs

- 4.79 Consultation was undertaken with National Governing Bodies (NGB's), to identify their views on the need for sports hall provision in Wealden. The views of NGB's (representing sports hall sports) who responded are included in Appendix 3.
- 4.80 England Badminton state that the key clubs in Wealden are:
- **Chelwood Gate Badminton Club**
 - **East Sussex Junior Badminton Academy - Heathfield**
 - **Hellingly Badminton Club**
 - **South Coast Badminton Club**
 - **St Marys Badminton Club**
 - **Uckfield Gaters Junior Badminton Club**
 - **Wadhurst Badminton Club**
- 4.81 Badminton sees increased or new facility access as key due to many centres facing existing capacity challenges; if England Badminton's strategy is to be implemented there is a need for additional facility provision in the district.
- 4.82 There is a need for 109.43% of the good quality peak time court hours available each week to service current and latent demand with an additional 135 court hours predicted to be required per week by 2030. Peak time hours for badminton would be 6-10pm weekdays and weekends; on the basis of 135 court hours this equates to an additional 3.75 courts based on 36 hours of peak use per week. Available court space is therefore a challenge for the sport of Badminton in Wealden.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

- 4.83 England Basketball and England Volleyball did not respond to the consultation request. There are currently no basketball or volleyball clubs within the Wealden District. Basketball was played at Hailsham Leisure Centre before the sports hall was changed to a bowling alley and soft play area. Volleyball was once played at Crowborough and Heathfield but was not sustainable. One reason for there being no clubs would be the quality of sports hall space e.g., unable to play due to insufficient run offs and quality of floors.
- 4.84 Crowborough Beacon Badminton club use the Beacon School Sports Hall. Since the relaying of the floor only 3 of the 4 courts can be used. However, they still have to pay for the use of 4 courts.
- 4.85 England Netball did respond to the consultation but did not mention the need for indoor provision. They responded stating they wished to increase the number of outdoor courts in Wealden. Indoor facilities at Crowborough Leisure Centre and Uckfield Leisure Centre are used for Back to Netball sessions. This is in partnership with Freedom Leisure and Crowborough Netball a not-for-profit community CIC established to promote the game.
- 4.86 Heathfield Netball Club, which uses Heathfield Leisure Centre, hire the facility for 2 hours a week for junior training. To hire the hall outside of this time is difficult, and particularly to book sensible training times that can include participants at under 11 level and adult age groups. Court space outside could be hired via the college but the court surface is poor and there are not any lights for evening training in winter months.
- 4.87 Harlequins Netball Club which plays in Eastbourne believe there are insufficient indoor netball court facilities available for use in Wealden.
- 4.88 Netball and Badminton Clubs which use Heathfield Leisure Centre confirm that the flooring is slippery.
- 4.89 Foresters Short Mat Bowls Club which uses Foresters Hall, Uckfield currently would like use of a larger hall with short mat bowls facilities.
- 4.90 Friars Gate Archers, Uckfield currently use a school gym in Lindfield for £35 per hour, but their sessions are cancelled if the school requires the hall for their use. The club shoots indoors, one evening per week, during the winter months. Indoor sites are difficult to find which is why they have to travel to Lindfield, but this is not convenient for many members during the dark/wet winter evenings, so it limits their activity and involvement. Something closer to their catchment of Uckfield and Crowborough would be far more useful.
- 4.91 South Coast Inline Skating Club, Hastings aspires to have access to a purpose-built facility in Wealden district, with the correct flooring. The Club currently uses Bexhill on Sea Leisure Centre in Rother.
- 4.92 Local stoolball clubs have not been able to set up an indoor league as there are insufficient sports hall facilities. Uckfield Anderida Cricket Club is having to use Lewes Leisure Centre for indoor practice.
- 4.93 Based on the above feedback, it is clear there is demand for the following:

1. Additional sports hall space

- 2. Existing facilities need improvements** – specifically addressing challenges of slippery floors and inadequate run-offs (Beacon School and Heathfield Leisure Centre). To address these challenges there is a need to provide the correct type of flooring for multi-use and maintain it appropriately, as well as the correct size facilities to enable specific sports use at a range of participation levels.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Sport England Facility Planning Model (FPM)

- 4.94 Strategic Leisure was provided with Sport England's Facilities Planning Model National Run Report (February 2021), based on 2020 National Run data for sports hall provision in Wealden. The FPM analysis is based on 12 sports hall facilities, because the FPM includes strategic size and 1 court sports halls that are on the same site. Overall, the FPM and the supply and demand analysis within this report include the same facilities, although they are categorised differently i.e., the supply and demand analysis look at sports halls and activity halls, (including the three 1 court halls categorised as sports halls in the FPM).
- 4.95 In addition, the new sports hall at Willingdon Community School is not included in the Sport England Facilities Planning Model Run. The reason for this is the facility was not included on Sport England's Active Places Power database in January 2020 on which the Facility Planning Model national run was based.
- 4.96 The 2020 population of Wealden District is 162,447 people; this population generates a sports hall demand of 12,553 visits in the weekly peak period. The peak period is weekday evenings (up to 5 hours per day) and weekend days (up to 7 hours per weekend day), the demand in the weekly peak period equates to 43.1 badminton courts. The FPM states a current supply of 48 courts of which 41.7 are available in the weekly peak period for community use. The reason for the difference between the total supply of badminton courts and the effective supply, is because of the variable hours of access for community use at the sports halls located on education sites. This leaves a current shortfall of 1.4 badminton courts.

Sports Halls

- 4.97 The Sport England FPM report sets out an assessment of the current situation regarding sports hall supply, based on a 2020 population of 162,477.
- **Wealden District has quite an extensive supply of sports halls, with eight sports hall sites, of which three are public leisure centres (two are located at dual-use sites) and five sites are owned by schools or colleges.**
 - **The total supply of sports halls with badminton courts, is 42 courts (rounded up) available in the weekly peak period for community use (known as the effective supply). The FPM identifies a demand for 43 courts (rounded up).**
 - **The difference in supply and available supply of badminton courts is because the education sports hall sites have variable hours of access for community use. The variable policy and hours for community use at the school and college venues, is the reason why the total supply of sports halls is 48 badminton courts, and the supply available for community use, is 41.7 badminton courts, in the weekly peak period. In effect, there is an aggregate total of 6.3 badminton courts, across the education sites, which are unavailable for community use. This represents 14% of the total supply of badminton courts in Wealden District.**
 - **The average age for the sports hall sites in Wealden in 2021 is 28 years.**
 - **The oldest sports hall is Beacon Academy (Beeches) opened in 1960, modernised in 2007 and the most recent sports hall to open is Bede's School in 2007. The three Council owned facilities are amongst the oldest sports halls in the District, with the age of the facility impacting on its perceived 'attractiveness' to potential customers.**

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

- Of the five sports halls opened before 2000 two have been modernised, Beacon Academy (Beeches) in 2007, and Uckfield Leisure Centre in 2006. The unmodernised venues are Crowborough Leisure Centre (1985), Heathfield Leisure Centre (1986) and Uplands Community College Sports Centre (1998). Modernisation is defined as one or more of, the sports hall floor upgraded to a sprung timber floor, the sports hall lighting upgraded, or the changing accommodation modernised.
- Satisfied demand in 2020 is 92.3% of the total demand for sports halls, which is high. This is the Wealden total demand for sports halls located within the catchment area of sports halls, which have enough capacity to meet this level of total demand.
- Retained demand is 68.8% of the total Wealden satisfied demand for sports halls (92.3%). This finding shows the location and catchment area of the sports hall sites in the District are quite closely correlated with the location of the Wealden demand for sports halls. On the assumption that residents use the nearest sports hall to where they live, then the nearest sports hall for nearly seven out of ten visits to a sports hall by a Wealden resident, is to a venue located in the District.
- Wealden is exporting 31.2% of its satisfied demand for sports halls and which is met in neighbouring authorities. For context, the exported demand equates to 3,615 visits in the weekly peak period and the Wealden retained demand is 7,974 visits in the weekly peak period.
- Wealden unmet demand is 7.7% of total demand and this equates to 3.4 badminton courts.
- Of the total unmet demand, 86.4% is unmet demand located outside the catchment area of a sports hall and 13.6% is lack of sports halls capacity. As set out earlier, 72% of the total 86% unmet demand outside catchment is by residents who do not have access to a car. The focus is to try and increase access to the sports halls network for these residents. The intervention is to try and provide travel for residents in these areas to access the sports halls.
- There is not a cluster location of high unmet demand to warrant increasing sports hall provision through new, additional sites, to improve accessibility for residents. Ways of meeting this unmet demand is to try and increase the hours of access to the education sites in the District. As set out in the supply section, there is an aggregate total of 6.3 badminton courts at the education sites which are unavailable for community use. Increasing community use at some of the education venues would provide more supply and reduce unmet demand.
- Wealden sports halls as a District wide average are estimated to be operating at 56.9% of used capacity in the weekly peak period weekday evenings (up to 5 hours per day) and weekend days (up to 7 hours per weekend day), but that there is variance across the different sites.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

- The public leisure centres have the highest accessibility for sports club and public use, they are available for daytime use, which is not possible at education dual use venues during term time. The operators of the public leisure centres actively promote hall sports and physical activity participation and with a programme of use which reflects the activities and times that customers want to participate. For these reasons, the public leisure centres have a draw effect, and the used capacity findings are higher than the Wealden average, with an estimated 80% of sports hall capacity used at Crowborough Leisure Centre and 100% of capacity used at peak times at Heathfield Leisure Centre and Uckfield Leisure Centre.
- The estimated used capacity for the education venues is 20% at Michael Hill School, 33% at Uplands Community College Sports Centre, 38% at Bede's School, 39% at Beacon Academy (Beeches) and 83% Hailsham Community College, showing that each of these sites has significant spare capacity.

Supply and Demand Analysis

4.98 Table 8 summarises the overall current supply and demand analysis for sports halls and activity halls in Wealden.

Table 8: Summary Analysis – Sports Hall and Activity Hall Supply and Demand

Facility Type	Assessment Findings
Sports Halls	
Quantity	There are currently 11 sports halls in Wealden (+3 courts and above) and 11 activity halls providing pay and play and sports club usage. The FPM identifies demand for 43.10 badminton courts (2020 population 162,447) and a supply of 41.7 badminton courts; this means there is a current under-supply of 1.4 badminton courts. Existing supply of badminton courts is almost meeting current demand. The Facility Planning Model run does not include the new 4 court sports hall at Willingdon Community School. If Willington School (formal community use agreement in place) was available for pay and play use, not simply club use, there would be a small over-supply of 2.6 badminton courts. The FPM identifies that Heathfield Leisure Centre and Uckfield Leisure Centre sports halls are used to 100% of all available capacity but there is spare capacity at education sites. The reason we have used this calculation is that the Wealden FPM model is inaccurate for sports halls; for halls it missed out a 4 court sports hall. The unmet demand for sports halls is predominantly a result of people living outside the hall catchment area, but also capacity – the existing sports halls available for community access are very full and are operating at 100%.
	NGB's and local sports clubs highlight: • Badminton England - Increased/new facility access is key due to many centres facing capacity issues; if our strategy is to be implemented there is a need for additional facility provision. • The cricket net facilities at Uckfield Leisure Centre need refurbishing cricket clubs in the surrounding area are travelling to Lewes Leisure Centre. • There is no daytime sports hall use available in the Uckfield, Hailsham, Heathfield areas of Wealden that can cater for the older age groups in the community and those that have time during the day to participate. • Clubs identify that the floors at Heathfield and Uckfield Leisure Centre sports halls need refurbishment or replacement.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Facility Type	Assessment Findings
Sports Halls	
	- Clubs cannot expand as the existing Council facilities are at capacity and cannot provide the essential times that clubs require to increase junior participation. - Clubs have identified that the current sports halls do not provide the required run offs for play e.g., netball.
Quality	The average age of sports halls in Wealden is 28 years old (2021). The quality of current provision of the pay and play sports hall facilities at Crowborough and Heathfield is 'Standard.' Uckfield Leisure Centre sports hall is 'Poor.' There is only 1 No. 8 court sports hall at St Bede's School which can cater for sports required runoffs such as netball, basketball and volleyball. Badminton England believe that the quality of sports hall provision impacts on the quantity of available badminton courts for use. There are insufficient sports hall facilities for netball and roller skating. Stoolball has identified need for daytime access facilities in the Uckfield area.
Accessibility	Geographically, strategic size sports halls are well distributed across Wealden. Overall, there is low unmet demand across Wealden for sports halls (2.3 badminton courts). Consultation has identified the need for increased sports hall space for netball, stoolball and increases in demand for badminton courts. Existing community access at education sites needs to be maintained as a minimum and secured wherever possible with a formal Community Use Agreement (CUA), given that most sport halls facilities are on education sites.
Availability	In Wealden, there is a high level of existing sports hall and activity hall provision. However, the issue is that most sports halls are on education sites, providing for sports club/association use, not pay and play access, and therefore although the assets exist, they cannot be used by the wider community. There are no daytime access sports hall facilities in Hailsham, Uckfield or Heathfield. The limited daytime access to sports hall provision highlights the importance of community centres which are available during the day for clubs and pay and play use, particularly for the older population, or those without private transport. However, the community facilities are not always of sufficient size to cater for all sports activities.

Impact of Future Population Growth

- 4.99 The Council is developing a new Local Plan 2019-2039 in response to the Government's new national planning Framework (July 2021). Consultation with Wealden District Council has confirmed that using the government's standard methodology that the housing requirement for Wealden District is 1,225 dwellings per year. The Council is currently testing the level of housing that it may be able to deliver.
- 4.100 The following future demand scenarios for sports halls are examples and should be treated with caution. The reason for being cautious is that the scenarios have not been tested through Sport England's Facility Planning Model (FPM). It is not robust enough to just consider the amount of water space being removed or the number of badminton courts in a scenario. There are other considerations such as facility opening hours, quality of facility etc. to be considered.
- 4.101 The following scenarios and/or others will need to be tested through Sport England's Facility Planning Model (FPM). As part of the emerging local plan significant additional housing is being proposed within the District up to the time horizon of 2039. The Council is looking to provide for new

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

housing in accordance with the new Government Standard Methodology, the application of which requires new housing to be provided at a rate of 1,225 units per annum. Over the 20-year period (2013-2033) this would require provision of 24,500 new houses.

- 4.102 Taking into account units that have either been completed, or are in the pipeline, within the 20-year period means that the new Local Plan needs to provide for approximately additional 15,064 units accommodating an estimated population of 34,647.

Sports Halls Future Demand

Housing development and population growth in Wealden will increase demand for sports hall provision. Using the Sports Facility Calculator (only used for sports halls and swimming pools), it is possible to estimate overall future demand for provision of sports halls, based on this population increase. Two scenarios have been developed to identify demand from new housing developments:

In summary, there is currently (2019) an under supply of 1 badminton court (effective supply 42 – Sport England FPM demand 43 badminton courts). The scenarios below show the demand for courts up to 2039:

Scenario	(A) Current under-Supply of Badminton Courts 2020	(B) Demand Badminton Courts 2020	(C) Demand Additional Badminton Courts By 2039	(D) Total under-Supply of Badminton Courts By 2039
Scenario 1:				
ONS Population Subnational Projections 2018 Based 2019 – 2039 = 15,642 Population	1.4	3.4	4.24	9.04
Scenario 2:				
WDC housing need based on 1225 dwellings per year = 24,500 – commitments and completions of 9,436. Total to test as part of assessment is therefore 15,064 with an average household size of 2.3 persons per household. 15064 x 2.3 = 34,647 population increase	1.4	3.4	9.39	14.19

Column (D) is calculated by adding together column (A), (B) and (C). The calculations are rudimentary because they do not account for the proportion of future demand that can be met from halls within and outside the District. We do not know if sports halls outside of Wealden will or may be accessible to the future population or whether halls within Wealden will be accessible to the future population, which is why local FPM modelling is recommended to reach a robust conclusion.

Scenario 1 – Identified need in 2039 for an additional 9.04 badminton courts. N.B There are 10 existing courts which are not available for community pay and play use; if these were brought into use there would not be a requirement for additional badminton courts. However, if they are unable to be brought into use then there would be a need for 9.04 badminton courts to serve a future population.

Scenario 2 – Identified need in 2039 for an additional 14.19 badminton courts.

The possible closure of Uckfield Leisure Centre and Heathfield Sports Hall should be tested through the Sport England Facility Planning Model (FPM) to provide an assessment of the impact if these facilities were to close in the future.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

- 4.103 Please note that the scenario can be updated as required over the Local Plan period to reflect changes in housing requirements and / or growth set out in the Council's emerging local plan. Average household sizes can also be adjusted as relevant.

Wealden District Council

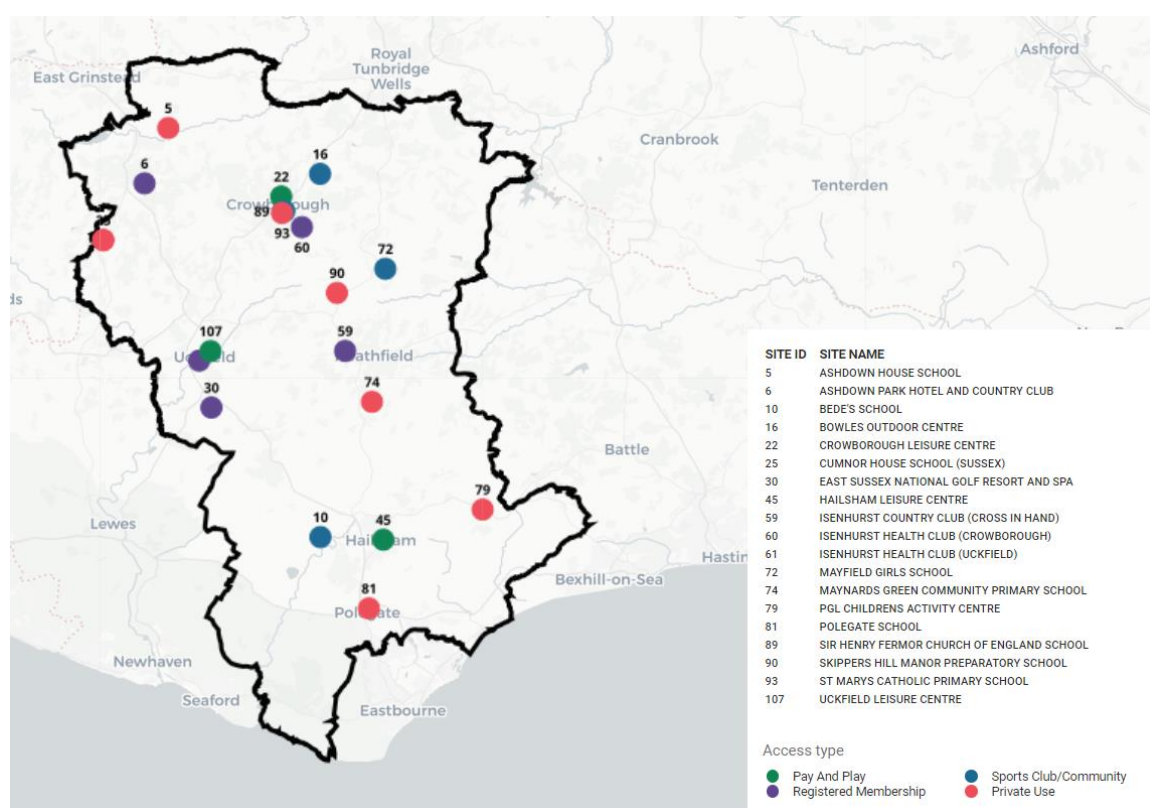
Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Swimming Pools

Quantity

- 4.104 The Sport England Facility Planning Model (FPM) identifies that there are 7 swimming pools in Wealden over 6 sites (see Map 4) that meet the criteria of being included in the FPM i.e. 160 sqm or more. There is 1,386 sq. m of publicly available water space (scaled with hours in the peak period) which equates to 11 sq. m per person; this is lower than all but two (Hastings 6 sq. m and Lewes 11 sq. m) of the local authority areas surrounding Wealden, and the average for the southeast region (13 sqm).
- 4.105 These 7 swimming pools include 4 pools offering ‘pay and play’ swimming activities which are fully open for community use. These are Hailsham Leisure Centre main pool and teaching pool, Crowborough Leisure Centre main pool and Uckfield Leisure centre a 25m x 3 lane freeform leisure pool. There are also 2 pools on independent school sites and 1 private facility at East Sussex National Golf Resort and Spa.

Map 4: Swimming Pool Sites Wealden District Council



- 4.106 Hailsham Leisure Centre is owned by Wealden District Council, Crowborough Leisure Centre is owned by Crowborough Town Council and leased by Wealden District Council. Uckfield Leisure Centre is on the site of Uckfield Community College and is leased to Wealden District Council by East Sussex County Council (ESCC). The lease will expire in July 2022. However, Wealden District Council is working with ESCC to keep the centre open for community use.
- 4.107 The 2 independent school swimming pools are located at Bede's School and Mayfield's Girls School: these offer sports club use. However, Mayfield School is currently reviewing community use.
- 4.108 The 7 identified pools are shown in Table 9.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Table 9: Swimming Pools in Wealden Including Teaching Pools on Main Pool Sites. Providing Pay and Play, Sports Club or Registered Membership Use and meet minimum requirements – (The minimum pool size for inclusion in the Sport England Facility Planning Model assessment is 160 square metres of water)

Site name	Post Code	Facility Type	Lanes	Dimensions	Access Type	Area	Ownership Type	Management Type	Pay and Play	Year Built	Year Refurbished
Bede's School	BN27 3QH	Main General	6	25x12	Sport Club	300	Independent School	Education		1997	2019
Crowborough Leisure Centre	TN6 2TN	Main General	6	25x13	Pay and Play	325	Local Authority	Trust	✓	1986	2004
East Sussex National Golf Resort and Spa	TN22 5ES	Main General	0	20x12	Registered Membership	240	Sports Club	Sports Club		2006	N/A
Hailsham Leisure Centre	BN27 1BA	Main General	3	25X9	Pay and Play	225	Local Authority	Trust	✓	1985	2007
Hailsham Leisure Centre	BN27 1BA	Learner Teaching Pool	0	5x5	Pay and Play	25	Local Authority	Trust	✓		
Mayfield Girls School	TN20 6PH	Main General	5	25x13	Sports Club	325	Independent School	Education		1960	2005
Uckfield Leisure Centres	TN22 1UB	Leisure Pool	3	25x13	Pay and Play	325	Sports Club	Trust	✓	1987	2004

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

- 4.109 Table 10 includes 13 other pools that are provided in Wealden district. 7 of the 13 other pools are unavailable for community use. 7 of these pools provide private use. 2 pools offer sports club use. These pools are too small to be recognised within the FPM. The remaining small swimming pools operate requiring registered membership for use and are part of health and fitness facilities operated by commercial organisations.

Table 10: Other pool Provision in Wealden but not recognised in the Sport England Facility Planning model as they are too small

Site name	Facility Type	Access Type
Ashdown House School	Main/General	Private Use
Ashdown Park Hotel and Country Club	Learner/Teaching/Training	Registered Membership
Bowles Outdoor Centre	Main/General	Sports Club
Cumnor House School (Sussex)	Main/General	Private Use
Isenhurst Country Club (Cross in Hand)	Main/General	Registered Membership
Isenhurst Health Club (Crowborough)	Main/General	Registered Membership
Isenhurst Health Club (Uckfield)	Main/General	Registered Membership
Maynards Green Community Primary School	Main/General	Private Use
PGL Children's Activity Centre	Lido	Private Use
Polegate School	Learner/Teaching/Training	Private Use
Sir Henry Fermor Church of England School	Learner/Teaching/Training	Sports Club
Skippers Hill Manor Preparatory School	Learner/Teaching/Training	Private Use
St Marys Catholic Primary School	Learner/Teaching/Training	Private Use

- 4.110 The analysis of the overall swimming pool supply in Wealden is as follows:

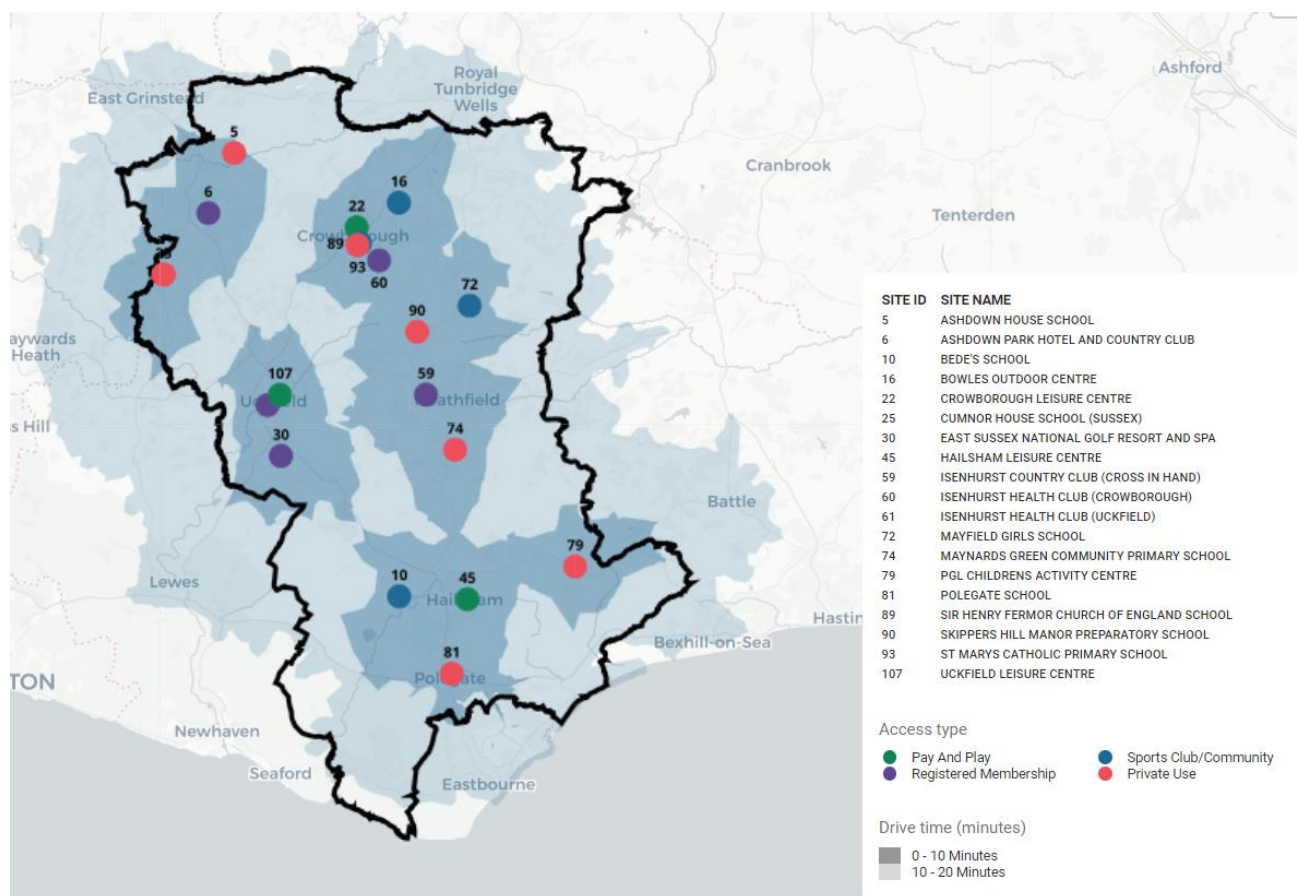
Table 11: Analysis of Swimming Pool Supply in Wealden

	No of Pools	No of sites
Total Number of Pools	20	19
Community Use Swimming Pools (pay and play)	4	3
Commercial Sector Registered Membership	5	5
Education Sector (Sports Clubs and Associations)	4	4
Private Sector/Other	7	7

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Map 5: Catchment areas for Swimming Pools Wealden District Council (20 mins and 10-minute drive time)



Quality

- 4.111 Detailed quality assessments have been undertaken on all Wealden pools in the district; these are summarised in Table 12.

Table 12: Summary Qualitative Assessments - Swimming Pools

Facility	Overall Quantitative Rating for Facility Good, Average or Poor	Qualitative Score for Swimming Pool	Need for Investment-Overall Facility
Hailsham Swimming Pool	Poor	Freeform swimming pool (inclusive 25m x 4 lane) with flume and toddler/teaching area. Reviews from the public suggest that the pool is at capacity at busy times and people must queue to gain access. The facility needs updating; specific issues are disability access, and disability provision on poolside i.e., need for a pod, as opposed to a hoist. The teaching pool is also the toddlers pool and is a free form pool area 5m x 5m.	High

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Facility	Overall Quantitative Rating for Facility Good, Average or Poor	Qualitative Score for Swimming Pool	Need for Investment-Overall Facility
		The major shortfall in provision is water teaching space because there is no dedicated teaching pool. The existing teaching water space comprises: • Combination of a small space or the shallow end of the main pool. • No stand-alone tank: it is part of the main pool and is at times a noisy and turbulent water space and people use the teaching pool to access the main pool. • Water maintained at a standard bathing temperature rather than at a baby/teaching temperature. The result is that service delivery is limited; indeed, it will be unattractive to some parents/children. It impacts on the ability of WDC to provide an appropriate service to its community and on the ability of the operator to generate maximum income. The secondary issue is that the pool hall is unattractive, the pool tank is too small to accommodate high bathing loads and the flume is in need of replacement. This impacts on visitor attraction and retention. Whilst the pool is suitable for a local community it is unlikely to enhance the economy/act as a major attraction to the town. As a swimming pool is the nucleus of a leisure centre (it is usually the first introduction to the centre for adults and children and has the greatest user capacity) it needs to be a statement feature or icon to attract and retain users. Options for external improvements are limited as any expansion would impact on the available parking area which is already at capacity.	

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Facility	Overall Quantitative Rating for Facility Good, Average or Poor	Qualitative Score for Swimming Pool	Need for Investment-Overall Facility
		The centre does not meet modern disability access requirements in terms of visitor changing facilities or centre wide signage.	
Crowborough Swimming Pool	Average	25m x 6 lane swimming pool; half movable floor; 2.6m deep end 84 seat pool Spectator seating gallery overlooking pool. There is no teaching pool. This centre is in generally good condition. A refurbishment some six years ago has helped maintain the internal building fabric, but the external landscape is in need of improvement. Directional signage from the town to the centre is adequate but information within the car park (owned by Crowborough Town Council) does not meet modern visitor expectations. The nearest bus stop is at the bottom of the main drive; some bus services are more frequent than others. Landscape and car park maintenance is poor with no foliage or interesting/ colourful planting schemes. This draws attention to the stark external appearance of the centre, which is constructed of steel work and glass, typical of the 1980's. The main entrance and reception areas are well lit and spacious. A café selling mainly pre-packed goods and fresh hot drinks is located to the rear of reception area. It contains seating for 26. The site circulation pattern is good. The lift from ground to first floor opens out into the fitness gym. However, there is no easy disability access to the 84-seat pool spectator area and no designated wheelchair viewing spaces.	Medium

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Facility	Overall Quantitative Rating for Facility Good, Average or Poor	Qualitative Score for Swimming Pool	Need for Investment-Overall Facility
		The swim change area is village style wet and dry access cubicles plus group changing space. Disability changing is adequate but does not meet modern design standards. Access to the pool hall is good. Options for internal improvements identified through the site visit and on-site discussion include. • CHP and solar power • Air conditioning for the server room • Replacement of the existing swim change cubicles. The seat lifting mechanisms cannot be repaired and the support feet are rusting • Redundant filtration equipment needs to be removed • Update disability access and changing facilities • Construction of a teaching pool (10m x 20m (minimum 15 x 10)) and changing facilities N.B The above reflect some of the potential improvements identified by AECOM in their condition survey work. Options for external improvements are; • Aesthetic landscaping and signage treatment from the main gate to the reception • Better disabled parking facilities DDA compatibility: • Does not meet modern requirements	

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Facility	Overall Quantitative Rating for Facility Good, Average or Poor	Qualitative Score for Swimming Pool	Need for Investment-Overall Facility
Uckfield Swimming Pool (Returning to County Council Ownership in 2022)	Poor	Free form pool x 3 lanes and children's fun/teaching water. 1 x flume and aqua-catch. The car park is shared with the college and is often full during term times Seen as an old and worn-out facility. External directional signage is less than adequate. The nearest bus stop is nearby with an infrequent service. The external appearance of the centre is unappealing with the 1980's style construction apparent. The main entrance and reception area good. The circulation pattern is good but access for the disabled is limited. The swim change area is village style cubicles and group with facilities for the disabled which are reasonable but do not match today's requirements. As a result of general use, the pool hall and swimming pool is showing signs of general wear and tear. The pool hall disco lighting no longer meets today's requirements. The car park capacity is insufficient for both College and Swimming Pool users. The general condition of the centre is good at entrance level. Disability access and services do not meet modern day requirements.	High

- 4.112 The need to improve the Council owned and leased swimming facilities should be a priority. Presently, due to the free form shape of the leisure pools at Hailsham and Uckfield the pool capacities are small, the teaching facilities inadequate at all three pools and the opportunities to increase throughput and income through casual swimming, swimming for health and learn to swim lessons are all limited by the design of the pools.
- 4.113 There is a current undersupply of water space within the district. (supply is 1,386 sqm; demand is 1,607 sqm; undersupply is 221 sq. m). As population increases across the district it will become more difficult for the current swimming pool facilities to be able to meet any increased demand. Both

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

the public and the leisure management operator have identified capacity issues and it is likely that this will only increase with further housing growth.

- 4.114 The lack of available car parking at Uckfield Leisure Centre seriously reduces daytime access. Effectively large sections of the community (young and old) are unable to use the centre at a time that suits their lifestyle. This in turn impacts on the financial viability of the site. This will be exacerbated when the adjacent new college building has been constructed.
- 4.115 The swimming pool at Crowborough Leisure Centre does not include a teaching pool. It relies on the use of a movable floor to create teaching space. Construction of an additional teaching pool would be of great community benefit and is likely to be self-financing over a period of years.

Accessibility

- 4.116 11.7% of the population is without access to a car which reflects the rural nature of Wealden. A higher percentage of visits to pools by car would be expected based on a drive time catchment area of 20 minutes travel time. It is also important to ensure that pools are as accessible as possible to those walking or using public transport. As a guide, Sport England recommend that catchment areas should be 10-minute walk time, and/or a 20-minute drivetime (private car). Clearly it is not possible to provide a swimming pool within 10 minutes' walk time of all residents.
- 4.117 The FPM findings for Wealden are that 87.8% of all visits to pools are by car, with 8.3% of visits by walking and 3.9% of visits by public transport (all rounded and actuals in the FPM satisfied demand table). Therefore, most visits to pools are by car, but 12.2% of visits to a swimming pool, by a combination of walking and public transport.
- 4.118 Accessibility to the existing pay and play access pools is challenging for those who live in the south of the district, i.e., around the Polegate area unless one has access to a private car. Residents in Polegate find it easier to access swimming pool facilities in Eastbourne.

Availability

- 4.119 In terms of increasing community access to pools in Wealden, there are limited options. Improved access to the Bede's and the Mayfield School Swimming Pools are dependent on these independent school opening their facilities for community use. Bede's School hires the swimming pool to Hailsham Swimming Club.
- 4.120 The Hailsham Swimming Club Programme (August 2022) below, totals 9.75 hours a week at Bedes. The Club has approx. 135 members. When required, the Club uses the school for Galas and club championships (mainly Saturday afternoons 2.00pm - 5.30pm).

Table 13: The Hailsham Swimming Club Programme Training Timetable from Saturday 20th August 2022

Days	Venue	Time	Groups					
Monday	Bedes Senior School	0600-0730	P1	P2				
Monday	Hailsham Freedom	1900-2000					ST	SK
Monday	Hailsham Freedom	2000-2100	P1		YD	M		
Tuesday	Bedes Senior School	1930-2100	P1	P2	YD			
Wednesday	Bedes Senior School	0600-0730	P1	P2		M		
Thursday	Bedes Senior School	1930-2100	P1	P2			ST	SK
Friday	Bedes Senior School	1930-2100	P1	P2	YD			

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Days	Venue	Time	Groups					
Saturday	Bedes Senior School	0700-0815	P1	P2	YD	M		
Saturday	Bedes Senior School	0815-0915					ST	SK

Groups: P1, P2 - Performance 1, 2, YD - Youth and Development, M - Masters, ST - Stamina, SK - Stroke

- 4.121 Hailsham Swimming Club's partnership with Bede's School allows Bede's pupils to take advantage of 40% off the normal membership rate at the swimming club and allows pupils to take advantage of additional evening swimming sessions.
- 4.122 Mayfield School swimming pool was closed to community access in March 2020 due to Covid-19. When lockdown measures relaxed the pool remained closed to public hire and may remain closed for the foreseeable future. This will need to be monitored as it impacts on the FPM information and pool time for Beacon Swimming Club. Prior to March 2020, Beacon Swimming Club had use of the Mayfield Swimming Pool for 11 hours per week; it now has no use.
- 4.123 Beacon Swimming Club now uses Crowborough Swimming Pool for 23 hours per week, Uckfield Leisure Centre 2 hours per week and a swimming pool at Holmewood House School outside of the Wealden district for 5 hours per week.
- 4.124 Access to the East Sussex National Golf Resort and Spas is for registered members only.
- 4.125 The peak hours of use at the public leisure centres are, 43 hours at Uckfield Leisure Centre, 50 hours a week at both Hailsham Leisure Centre and Crowborough Leisure Centre. These findings reinforce the importance of the public leisure centres in providing the most hours and access for the full range of swimming activities available throughout the District.
- 4.126 The public leisure centre swimming pools provide for all swimming activities of learn to swim; public recreational swimming; lane and fitness activities; rehabilitation and water therapy and swimming development through clubs; it is an extensive offer. The public leisure centres in Wealden provide 50% of the total swimming pool sites and 65% of the total water space available for community use. However, due to the lack of teaching pools the 'learn to swim' programme is reduced as is the lane provision at Hailsham and Uckfield because the pools are freeform.
- 4.127 Public leisure centres should have the fullest possible accessibility and capacity because they provide for all activities and they are available for use by all residents.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

National Governing Bodies

4.128 Consultation was undertaken with Swim England, to identify their views on the need for swimming pool provision in Wealden. The views of Swim England are provided in Appendix 3, and below:

- **Swim England believe there is a minimum existing under-supply of 221 sqm; this is the figure stated in the FPM. This figure is calculated by taking the available sqm of water space 1,386 (sq. m available at peak time) from the identified demand for water space 1,607 (sq. m of water space needed by the 2020 population of 162,447). This under-supply is the equivalent of a 25m x 4 lane swimming pool. Swim England identify that Wealden district only has 3 facilities providing open community swimming, which is a small percentage of the total pool stock.**
- **Swim England's view is that Community Use swimming pools provide accessible water space for a diverse range of water activities, which both the public and sports clubs can use.**
- **All three of the leisure centres in the district were built in the 1980's and had refurbishment works between 10-15yrs ago. Swim England is of the opinion that plans need to be made for future developments, with the current stock of pools ageing. Swim England suggest that a facility report be completed to assess what investments may be needed for refurbishment at all three of the Leisure Centres.**
- **The under-supply of water space could be reduced, either by adding additional learner pools to facilities with one tank, or by increasing the width of the main tank. These would be most beneficial when considering a redevelopment.**
- **Swim England's main concern would be futureproofing the water provision for the district. With many facilities only allowing limited, if any, pay and play access, talks with facility owners and operators could help to increase the hours available to the community or clubs.**

Sport England Facility Planning Model (FPM)

4.129 Strategic Leisure was provided with Sport England's Facilities Planning Model National Run Report (February 2021) for swimming pool provision in Wealden. The supply analysis is based on the swimming pools shown in Table 9.

4.130 Based on a Wealden population of 162,447, demand has been calculated at 9,686 visits in the weekly peak period of weekday lunchtimes (1 hour), weekday evenings (up to 5 hours per day) and weekend days (up to 7 hours per weekend day). This equates to a total demand for 1,607 sq. metres of water. (For context, a 25m x 4 lane pool is between 210 – 250 sq. metres of water, depending on individual lane width). The supply of water space during the peak period is 1386 sq. m, and therefore demand exceeds supply by 221 sq. m of water in 2020. ²

4.131 There is a close correlation between the Wealden swimming pool locations, catchment areas and the location of the Wealden District demand for swimming pools.

4.132 Satisfied demand represents the proportion of total demand that is met by the capacity at the swimming pools from residents who live within the car, walking or public transport catchment area of a swimming pool.

² N.B The figure of 1,386 sq. m is the supply of publicly available water space in square metres (scaled with hours in the peak period, as set out in the FPM, Appendix 5)

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

- 4.133 In 2020, some 92.1% of the total demand for swimming from Wealden District residents is satisfied/met. This is the level of total demand for swimming located inside the catchment area of a swimming pool which is accessible to Wealden district residents, based on where Wealden residents live, and the 20-minute drive time catchment area of the pool locations outside the District. 92.1% satisfied demand is high and reflects the fact that existing swimming pools are well-located to be accessible for the majority of the population. It is comparable with the southeast average.
- 4.134 Based on residents using the nearest pool to where they live the nearest pool location for over seven out of ten visits to a swimming pool by a Wealden district resident is to a pool located in the local authority area.
- 4.135 27.7% of the Wealden District satisfied demand for swimming is met outside the district. In terms of visits, the Wealden District retained demand is 6,443 visits per week in the weekly peak period; whilst the Wealden District exported demand, is 2,474 visits in the weekly peak period.
- 4.136 Local feedback suggests that residents in Polegate tend to use Eastbourne's Swimming Pool facilities as they are easier to access. This would account for some of the exported demand.
- 4.137 Unmet demand has two parts to it - demand for pools which cannot be met because (1) there is too much demand for any swimming pool within its catchment area; or (2) the demand is located outside the catchment area of any pool; it is then classified as unmet demand.
- 4.138 Unmet demand in Wealden equates to 7.9% of total demand at peak times and this equates to 128 square metres of water. Of the total unmet demand, virtually all of it is demand located outside the catchment area of a pool, at 98.6%; only 1.4% of unmet demand at peak times is from lack of swimming pool capacity. This is because of the three pools that provide for public access, both Hailsham and Crowborough are operating at 100% capacity at peak time.
- 4.139 Unmet demand from lack of access and demand outside catchment is mainly by people who do not have access to a car and live outside the walking or public transport catchment area of a pool. It represents 62% of the unmet demand outside catchment.
- 4.140 There is a need therefore to consider Active Travel and public transport options to try to make the sites more accessible for those without access to a car.
- 4.141 Unmet demand outside catchments will always exist because it is not possible to achieve complete spatial coverage whereby all areas of an authority are inside a catchment.
- 4.142 Unmet demand is highest in the area in and around Heathfield where it totals between 20 – 25 square metres of water, then Crowborough where it totals between 10 – 14 square metres of water, then in Uckfield where it totals between 8 - 12 square metres of water. The remainder of the unmet demand is distributed in low values across the District.
- 4.143 Overall, there is an insufficient cluster of unmet demand in any one location to consider increasing swimming pool provision to improve accessibility for residents.
- 4.144 The Wealden District average, for all six swimming pool sites, is estimated to be 58% of pool capacity used in the weekly peak period. The Sport England benchmark of pools being comfortably full, is set at 70% of pool capacity used in the weekly peak period. However, the public leisure centres have the highest accessibility for public use plus the centres are proactively managed to encourage and support swimming participation and physical activity.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

- 4.145 These factors contribute to there being a “draw effect” to the public leisure centres and Hailsham Leisure Centre has an estimated 91% of pool capacity used at peak times, Crowborough Leisure Centre 61% of pool capacity used at peak times and Uckfield Leisure Centre 53% of pool capacity used at peak times. The Sport England recommended weekly usage capacity of a pool is 70% in peak times.
- 4.146 Crowborough and Uckfield Leisure Centres have the most water space of all the swimming pool sites, so they can accommodate more usage. Hailsham Leisure Centre, despite having two pools, has a smaller total water space and so accommodates less usage. It has a higher used capacity percentage than the other two sites, but they can accommodate more usage.
- 4.147 The estimated used capacity does depend on the amount of demand for swimming in each area and if the catchment areas of the pools site overlap. The three public leisure centre sites are in the main settlements and do not overlap so they are retaining most of the demand in their area.
- 4.148 Of concern is the average age of the public swimming pool sites, which in 2021 is 35 years (the average age of all the swimming pool sites is 34 years). The three public leisure centres have been modernised over the 2004 – 2007 period, but the stock is ageing.
- 4.149 The age and condition of a pool will impact on its usage, all the pool sites are weighted in the model, to reflect their age and comparative attraction to swimmers. This does not appear to be a significant finding in Wealden because the three public leisure centres all opened between 1985 and 1987 and were modernised between 2004 and 2007, so they have remarkably similar weightings.
- 4.150 The FPM findings do suggest a need to consider increasing the water space at Hailsham Leisure Centre, which is already operating at 91% capacity, and provides the smallest main pool of the three public leisure centres. This centre has a 25m x 9m three lane main pool and within this, a 5m x 5m teaching area. It has 27% of the total water space at the public leisure centre pool sites. In terms of the swimming offer, the pool sizes and configurations limit the number of swimming activities which can take place and the overall offer.
- 4.151 Access for community use at the education pool sites will depend on the policy of each individual school site, plus the hours and programme of community use. The type of use is much narrower than the public leisure centre sites and is usually for use by swimming clubs, community groups and possibly a ‘learn to swim’ programme.
- 4.152 As reported, independent schools tend to provide less access for community use and provide access for extracurricular school use and use by family and friends of the school and organisations associated with the school. In the case of Wealden, the two independent school swimming pools do provide for swimming club provision.
- 4.153 Table 14 summarises the overall supply and demand analysis for swimming pools in Wealden.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Table 14: Summary Analysis – Swimming Pool Supply and Demand

Facility Type	Assessment Findings
Swimming Pools	
Quantity	There are 3 public swimming Pools in Wealden, Hailsham Swimming Pool (main pool 25m x 3 lanes and learner pool 5m x 5m), Uckfield Swimming Pool leisure pool with 3 lanes and Crowborough Swimming Pool 25m x 6 lane swimming pool. These are supported by St Bede's swimming pool where there is extensive swimming club use. A seventh pool facility is a commercial facility at East Sussex National Golf Resort and Spa. Mayfield School Pool has not been available to Wealden Swimming clubs since March 2020 and the beginning of COVID-19. Currently it is not possible to say if the pool will be used by swimming clubs in the future. Current Demand Based on a Wealden population of 162,447, demand has been calculated at 9,686 visits in the weekly peak period of weekday lunchtimes (1 hour), weekday evenings (up to 5 hours per day) and weekend days (up to 7 hours per weekend day). This equates to a total demand for 1,607 sq. metres of water. (For context, a 25m x 4 lane pool is between 210 – 250 sq. metres of water, depending on individual lane width). The supply of water space during the peak period is 1,386 sq. m, and therefore demand exceeds supply by 221 sq. m of water in 2020. This under-supply of 221 sq. m does not take into consideration satisfied and/or unmet demand. Unmet demand in Wealden equates to 7.9% of total demand and this equates to 128 square metres of water. Overall, total under-supply equates to -221+ -128 = 349 sq. m The reason we have used this calculation is that the Wealden FPM model is inaccurate for pools; it includes a pool which actually only provides for registered members and not the community as a whole. There is actually greater under-supply than stated in the FPM because of the growing population, existing demand, views of clubs and Swim England, and also the fact that a pool is included in the FPM which the community cannot access.
Quality	The average age of the public swimming pool sites is 35 years (the average age of <u>all</u> the swimming pool sites is 34 years). The three public leisure centres have been modernised over the 2004 – 2007 period, but the stock is ageing. The age and condition of a pool will impact on its usage, all the pool sites are weighted in the model, to reflect their age and comparative attraction to swimmers. This does not appear to be a significant finding in Wealden because the three public leisure centres all opened between 1985 and 1987 and were modernised between 2004 and 2007, so they have remarkably similar weightings.
Accessibility	The 2 WDC public swimming pools (Hailsham and Crowborough) and Uckfield (WDC and East Sussex County Council) provide the only pay and play community access to swimming pool provision in Wealden. These pools are available 7 days a week.
Availability	The estimated used capacity of Hailsham Swimming Pool is 91%. This is 21% over and above the Sport England benchmark of 70% of pool capacity used in the weekly peak period. Crowborough has an estimated used capacity of 61% and Uckfield 47%.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Impact of Future Population Growth

- 4.154 The Council is developing a new Local Plan 2019-2039 in response to the Government's new national planning Framework (July 2021) Consultation with Wealden District Council has confirmed that using the government's standard methodology that the housing requirement for Wealden District is 1,225 dwellings per year. The Council is currently testing the level of housing that it may be able to deliver.
- 4.155 The following future demand scenarios for swimming pools are examples and should be treated with caution. The reason for being cautious is that the scenarios have not been tested through Sport England's Facility Planning Model (FPM).
- 4.156 It is not robust enough to just consider the amount of water space being removed or the number of badminton courts in a scenario. There are other considerations such as facility opening hours, quality of facility etc. to be considered.
- 4.157 The following scenarios and or others will need to be tested through Sport England's Facility Planning Model (FPM). As part of the emerging local plan significant additional housing is being proposed within the District up to the time horizon of 2039. The Council is looking to provide for new housing in accordance with the new Government Standard Methodology, the application of which requires new housing to be provided at a rate of 1,225 units per annum. Over the 20-year period (2013-2033) this would require provision of 24,500 new houses. Taking into account units that have either been completed, or are in the pipeline, within the 20-year period means that the new Local Plan needs to provide for approximately additional 15,064 units accommodating an estimated population of 34,647.
- 1) ONS population projections to 2039;
 - 2) WDC housing need is approximately 1225 dwellings per year. Taking into account units that have already been completed or are in the pipeline within the 20 year period means that if WDC are able to meet their housing need then the new local plan will need to provide for approximately an additional = 15,064 units. This will accommodate an estimated population of 34,647 (based on 2.3 persons per household).
- 4.158 Please note that the scenario can be updated as required over the Local Plan period to reflect changes in housing requirements and / or growth set out in the Council's emerging local plan. Average household sizes can also be adjusted as relevant.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Swimming Pools – Future Demand

The following first 2 scenarios illustrate the increased demand for swimming due to population growth. The 1st Scenario looks at ONS Subnational population projections to 2039.

The 2nd scenario considers the suggested housing growth rate of 1,225 new homes per year, but is related to those new dwellings which have not yet been completed, or where there is not yet a commitment for S106.

Scenario 1: The population data has been taken from ONS subnational Population Projections 2018 Based.
Scenario 2: Considers 1,225 new homes per year at an average household size of 2.30 persons for Wealden.

WDC housing need based on 1225 dwellings per year = 24,500 – commitments and completions of 9,436. Total to test as part of assessment is therefore 15,064 with an average household size of 2.3 persons per household. $15064 \times 2.3 = 34,647$ population increase.

Population growth in Wealden will increase demand for swimming pool provision. As an indication (using the Sport England Sports Facility Calculator (SFC), it is possible to estimate overall future demand for provision of swimming pools, based on this population increase.

Scenario	Under-supply and Unmet Demand for Water Space 2019	Future Demand for Additional Water Space by 2039 (SFC) Population Growth	Total Under Supply Unmet Demand of Water Space By 2039
Scenario 1: ONS Population Subnational Projections 2018 Based 2019 – 2039 = 15,642 Population	-349 sq m (-221 +/-128 sq. m)	163.47 sq. m	-512.47 sq. m
Scenario 2: WDC housing need based on 1225 dwellings per year = 24,500 – commitments and completions of 9,436. Total to test as part of assessment is therefore <u>15,064</u> with an average household size of 2.3 persons per household. $15064 \times 2.3 = 34,647$ population increase	-349 sq m (-221 +/-128 sq. m)	362.08 sq. m	711.08 sq. m

212 sq. m is equivalent to a 4 lane x 25m pool.

Scenario 1 – Under supply in 2039 of –512.47 sq. m of water space. (Based on ONS Subnational Population Projections 2018, based 2020 – 2039) = 15,642 population

Scenario 2 – Undersupply in 2039 of approx. -711.08 sq. m of water space. (2039 Based on 1225 new houses per year for 20 years x 2.30 average population per household - uncompleted/uncommitted new homes).

Wealden District Council

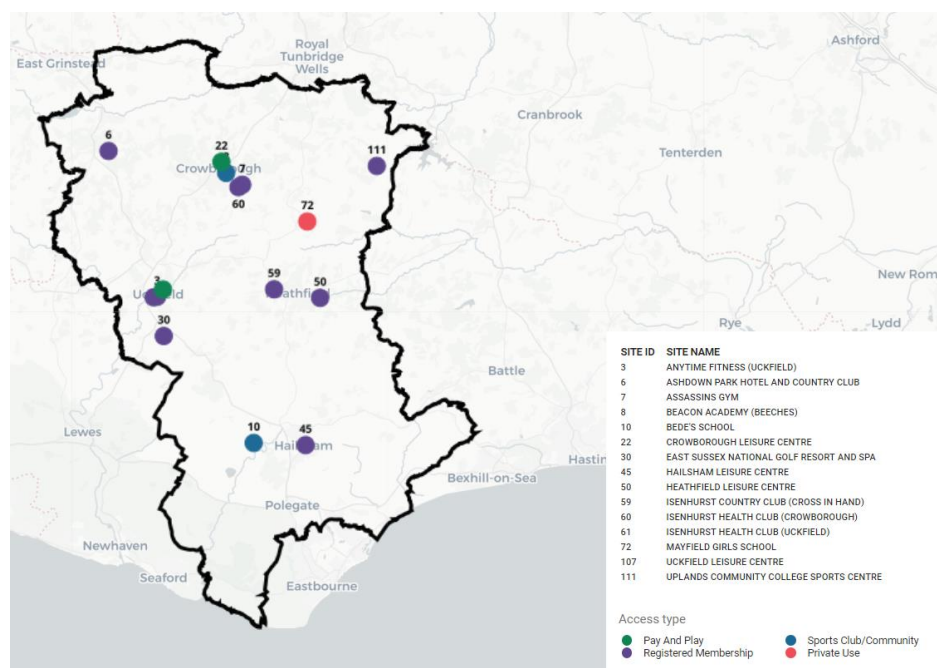
Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Health and Fitness Facilities

Quantity

- 4.159 A station is a piece of static fitness equipment; health and fitness centres, with over 20 fitness stations are generally able to make a more attractive offer to both members and pay and play users. The 2019 state of UK Industry report reveals that the membership penetration rate is 15.6%, so one in every 7 people over the age of 16 in the UK is a member of a gym.
- 4.160 The supply analysis identifies that overall, there are 15 health and fitness suites and 23 fitness studios in Wealden. Out of the 16 health and fitness suites there are 11 sites providing more than 20 fitness stations. In total, these 11 health and fitness suites provide 580 fitness stations. All fitness suite facilities require some form of payment/membership payment before use, and an induction is required.
- 4.161 Of the 11 sites providing 20 fitness stations plus - 1 is owned by WDC and managed and operated by Freedom Leisure (Hailsham Leisure Centre); Hailsham Leisure Centre has the most fitness stations (102) and Crowborough Leisure Centre (Leased to WDC) has 72 fitness stations. Heathfield Leisure Centre has a pay and play facility that has less than 20 fitness stations (14). Uckfield Leisure Centre owned by East Sussex County Council and currently leased to WDC and managed by Freedom Leisure Centre has 62 fitness stations.
- 4.162 2 of the 11 sites with 20 plus fitness stations are provided at education sites (St Bede's School and Uplands Community College). East Sussex National Golf Resort and Spa is a sports club with 73 fitness stations. There are 5 commercially operated health and fitness facilities that offer registered memberships.
- 4.163 In Wealden, the only pay and play facilities are Crowborough Leisure Centre, Hailsham Leisure Centre, and Uckfield Leisure Centre. These facilities do offer memberships.
- 4.164 All fitness suite facilities in the District are shown in Table 14 and illustrated in Map 6.

Map 6: Health and Fitness Facilities Wealden District Council



Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Table 15: Fitness Facilities (Fitness Suites) in Wealden

Site Name	Post Code	Facility Type	Number of Stations	Access Type	Ownership Type	Pay and Play Community Access facilities	Year Built	Year Refurbished
Anytime Fitness (Uckfield)	TN22 5DQ	Health and Fitness Suite	60	Registered Membership use	Commercial		2017	N/A
Ashdown Park Hotel and Country Club	RH18 5JR	Health and Fitness Suite	18	Registered Membership use	Commercial		1997	N/A
Assassins Gym	TN6 2NQ	Health and Fitness Suite	25	Registered Membership use	Commercial		2013	N/A
Beacon Academy (Beeches)	TN6 2AS	Health and Fitness Suite	18	Sports Club / Community Association	Sports Club		1996	N/A
Bede's School	BN27 3QH	Health and Fitness Suite	30	Sports Club / Community Association	Commercial		1997	N/A
Crowborough Leisure Centre	TN6 2TN	Health and Fitness Suite	70	Pay and Play	Local Authority		1986	N/A
East Sussex National Golf Resort and Spa	TN22 5ES	Health and Fitness Suite	73	Registered Membership	Sports Club		2006	N/A
Hailsham Leisure Centre	BN27 1BA	Health and Fitness Suite	102	Pay and Play	Local Authority	✓	1985	N/A
Heathfield Leisure Centre	TN21 8RJ	Health and Fitness Suite	14	Pay and Play	Local Authority	✓	1996	N/A
Isenhurst Country Club (Cross in Hand)	TN21 0UE	Health and Fitness Suite	36	Registered Membership use	Commercial		1995	N/A
Isenhurst Health Club (Crowborough)	TN6 2JD	Health and Fitness Suite	39	Registered Membership use	Commercial		2005	N/A
Isenhurst Health Club (Uckfield)	TN22 1QL	Health and Fitness Suite	35	Registered Membership use	Commercial		2001	N/A
Mayfield Girls School	TN20 6PH	Health and Fitness Suite	10	Private Use	Commercial		1960	N/A
Uckfield Leisure Centre	TN22 1UB	Health and Fitness Suite	62	Pay and Play	Local Authority	✓	1987	N/A
Uplands Community College Sports Centre	TN5 6BA	Health and Fitness Suite	48	Registered Membership use	Commercial		1998	N/A

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

- 4.165 Out of the 11 sites providing 20 or more stations Freedom Leisure operated sites provide 40% (234) of the overall supply of 580 fitness stations in the Wealden District area. Hailsham Leisure Centre has the only fitness suite with 100 stations or more.
- 4.166 The 6 registered membership facilities in Wealden comprise both small, independent fitness suites and larger commercial brands. Commercially operated fitness suites require registered membership and operate pre-registered, pre-paid/DD membership schemes. The local authority fitness facilities also operate on this basis in Wealden.
- 4.167 Analysis of the overall supply of fitness suites is summarised in Table 15:

Table 16: Analysis of overall Fitness Suite Provision in Wealden

Type of Provision	Number
Total Fitness Suites	15
Total Fitness Stations	640
Total Fitness Suites 20+ Fitness Stations	11
Total Fitness Stations on Sites with 20+ stations	580
Pay and Play Fitness Suites (4 sites Local authority)	4
Pay and Play / No. of Fitness Stations (Local authority 234 + 14 Heathfield Leisure Centre)	248
Registered Membership Fitness Suites	8
Private use Fitness Suites	1
Sports club Fitness Suites	2

Table 17: Summary of Fitness Suite Size

Number of Fitness Stations	No. Fitness Suites
150+	0
100 - 149	1
50 - 99	4
20 - 49	6
19 or less	4

- 4.168 The supply of community access fitness suites is shown in Map 7.

Quality

- 4.169 It was not possible to undertake detailed quality audits on all existing facilities other than those operated by the WDC, as commercial operators do not want these to be undertaken. Therefore, a visual check of these has been undertaken online.
- 4.170 The visual check highlights that overall, the quality of the commercial facilities is good as is generally the case. All have up to date fitness stations, are well-designed and planned facilities, with good quality changing facilities. Given some of the commercial fitness facilities are national chains, their corporate approach to provision is well-established and their offer is the same, irrespective of location. In general, they are also newer than other facilities e.g. on education sites and have predominantly been provided since the late 1990's/early 2000's.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Table 18: Summary Qualitative Assessments - Health and Fitness Facilities (fitness suites and studios)

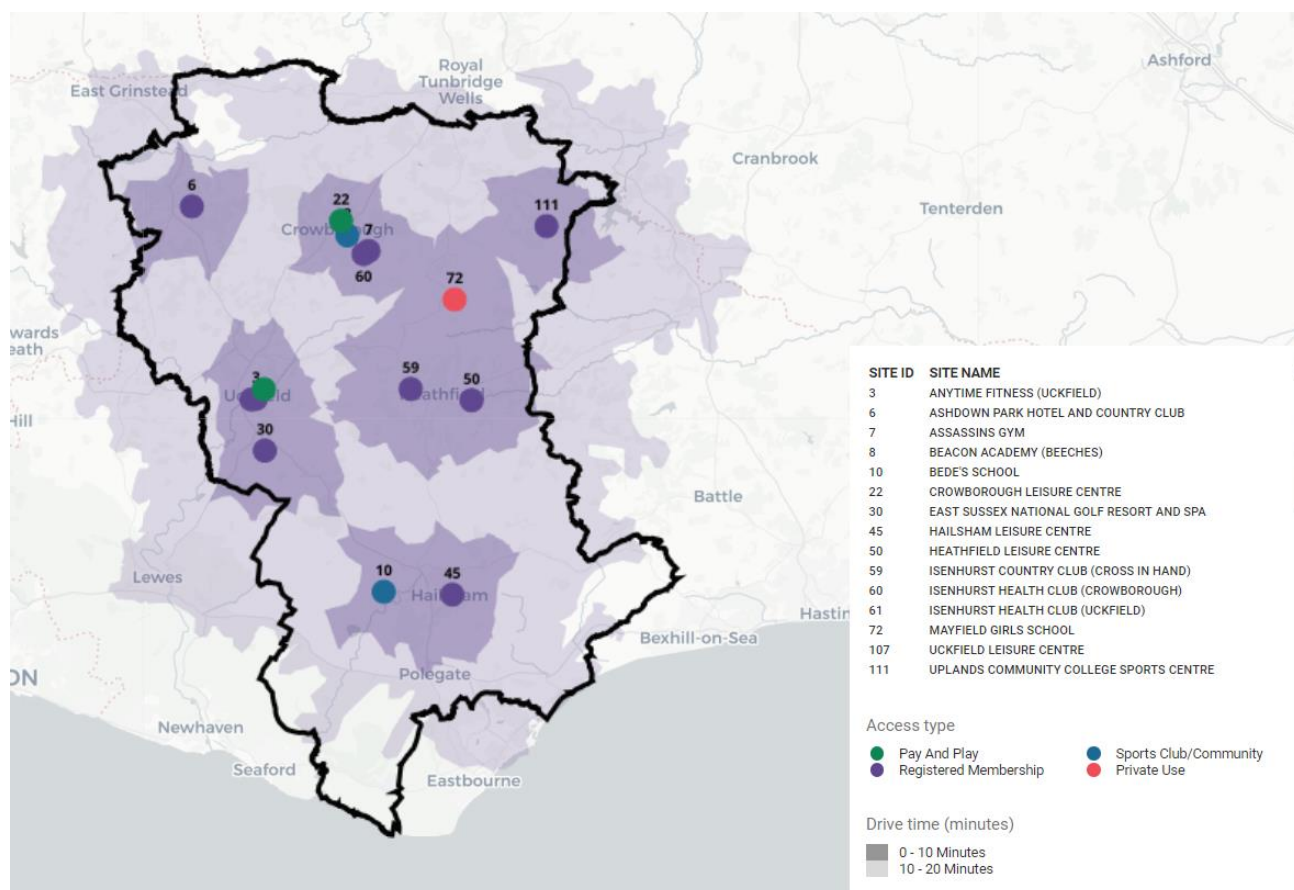
	Qualitative Score for Health and Fitness Suite
Crowborough Leisure Centre	Good
Hailsham Leisure Centre	Good
Heathfield Leisure Centre	Poor
Uckfield Leisure Centre	Average

- 4.171 The quality of the community access health and fitness facilities are generally good. The average quality fitness suites are small although the majority are well decorated and maintained. Heathfield Leisure Centre has been rated 'Poor due to its size and offer of only 14 fitness stations.'

Accessibility

- 4.172 It is clear from Map 7 that there are small areas in the southwest and southeast outside a 20-minute drive time catchment of a community accessible fitness suite.
- 4.173 11.7% of the Wealden population does not have access to a car (Source 2011 Census). It is therefore important to ensure that fitness suites are as accessible as possible to those walking or using public transport.
- 4.174 Existing community access fitness facilities are well-located in Wealden.
- 4.175 Commercial fitness facilities are driven by, and rely on, market demand.

Map 7: Fitness Suites within a 20-minute and 10-minute drive time catchment area



Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Availability

- 4.176 It is important to highlight that the existing commercial sector fitness suite provision in Wealden is used by some residents. However, there are others e.g., Anytime Fitness whose membership cost is comparable with the Wealden facilities. The commercial provision, and particularly the lower cost end of the market, therefore, presents a level of competition to the Wealden local authority facilities.
- 4.177 On this basis, the assessment of the current and future need for fitness facilities reflects the fact that many Wealden residents are likely to use those facilities which offer provision and a membership rate comparable to public sector facilities, because they are more affordable. The assessment of fitness need (See Appendix 6) therefore includes the more affordable commercial facilities, as 'community access' based on 'affordability'. Appendix 6 includes all the fitness suites in Wealden that have 20 or more fitness stations.

Fitness Studios

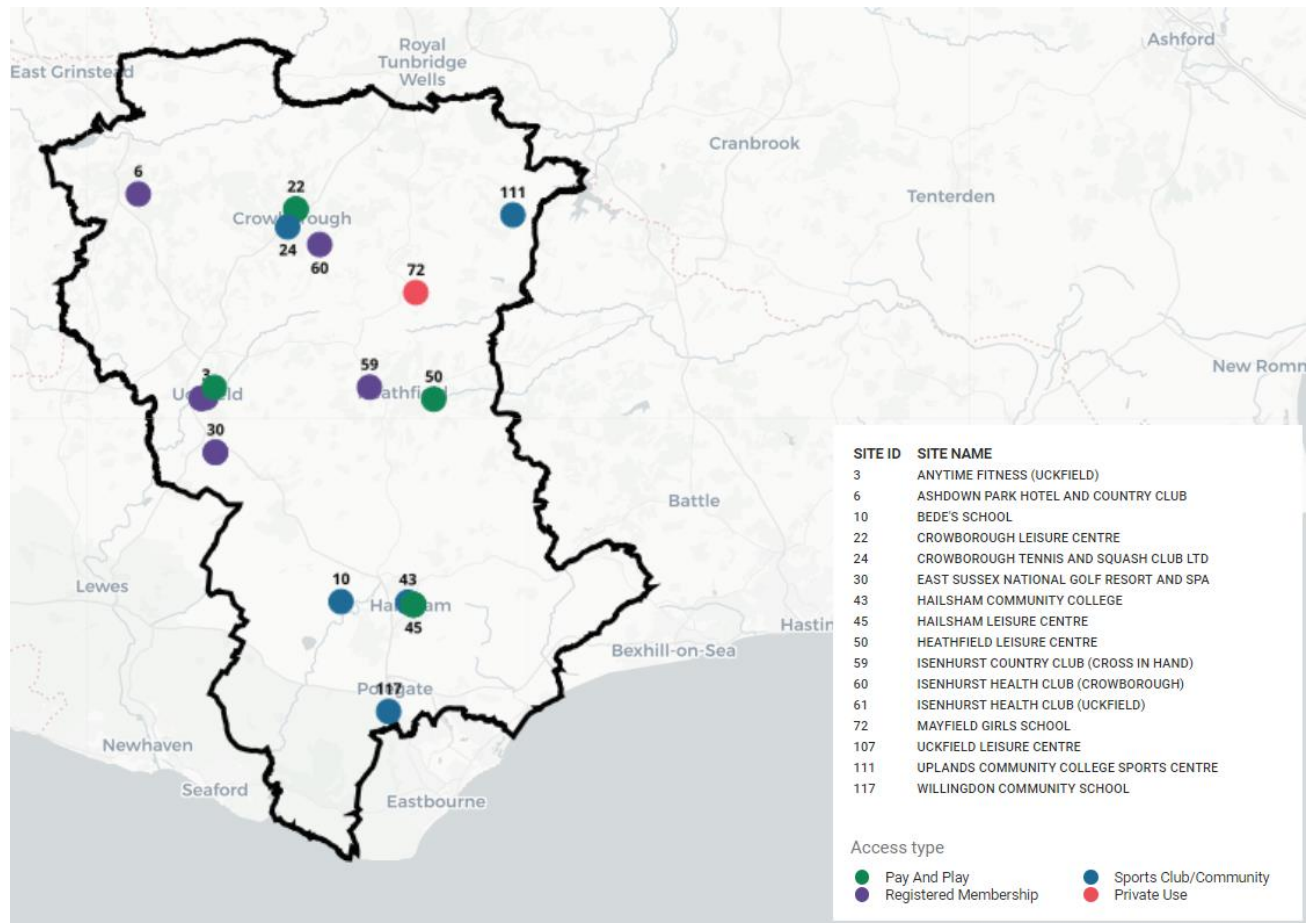
Quantity

- 4.178 There are 23 studios in Wealden across 17 sites, as identified through Sport England Active Places. There is 1 site Willingdon Community School that is not in the Active Places audit of facilities. The school dance studio was built in 2019. The majority are provided as part of a health and fitness offer within facilities. Studios provide a space in which a range of aerobic, fitness and dance classes plus activities such as yoga and Pilates, can take place as well as martial arts, and boxing. Although requiring some specialist equipment for martial arts and boxing, it is also possible to do a form of these activities in an informal space such as a community hall. Informal halls can also accommodate a range of fitness and dance classes. Informal halls are discussed in the Sports Hall and activity hall section of this assessment.
- 4.179 The studios assessed in this report are multi-purpose studios (no specific size), not those with fixed equipment, or only one use e.g. spinning.
- 4.180 Many community hall facilities are used by dance schools, and the smaller halls often available on education sites have significant potential to be used for fitness classes.
- 4.181 Map 8 shows the locations of individual community accessible studios. The overall provision of studios in Wealden is summarised in Table 18.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Map 8: Studio Facilities – Wealden District Council



Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Table 19: Fitness Facilities (Studios) in Wealden

Site Name	Post Code	Facility Type	Number of Studios	Access Type	Ownership Type	Management Type	Pay and Play	Year Built	Year Refurbished
Anytime Fitness (Uckfield)	TN22 5DQ	Studio	2	Registered Membership use	Commercial	Commercial		2018	
Ashdown Park Hotel and Country Club	RH18 5JR	Studio	1	Registered Membership use	Commercial	Commercial		1997	
Bede's School	BN27 3QH	Studio	1	Sports Club / Community Association	Independent School	School		2000	
Crowborough Leisure Centre	TN6 2TN	Studio	2	Pay and Play	Local Authority	Trust	✓	1986 & 2010	2013
Crowborough Tennis and Squash Club Ltd	TN6 1BN	Studio	1	Sports Club / Community Association	Sports Club	Sports Club		1999	
East Sussex National Golf Resort and Spa	TN22 5ES	Studio	2	Registered Membership use	Commercial	Commercial		2006 & 2018	
Hailsham Community College	BN27 1DT	Studio	1	Sports Club / Community Association	Academy Education	School		2005	
Hailsham Leisure Centre	BN27 1BA	Studio	4	Pay and Play	Local Authority	Trust	✓	1985	2005
Heathfield Leisure Centre	TN21 8RJ	Studio	1	Pay and Play	Local Authority	Trust	✓	1996	
Isenhurst Country Club (Cross in Hand)	TN21 0UE	Studio	1	Registered Membership use	Commercial	Commercial		1995	2004
Isenhurst Health Club (Crowborough)	TN6 2JD	Studio	1	Registered Membership use	Commercial	Commercial		2005	

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Site Name	Post Code	Facility Type	Number of Studios	Access Type	Ownership Type	Management Type	Pay and Play	Year Built	Year Refurbished
Isenhurst Health Club (Uckfield)	TN22 1QL	Studio	1	Registered Membership use	Commercial	Commercial		2001	2005
Isenhurst Health Club (Uckfield)	TN22 1QL	Studio	1	Registered Membership use	Commercial	Commercial		2001	
Mayfield Girls School	TN20 6PH	Studio	1	Private Use	Independent Education	School		2004	2007
Uckfield Leisure Centre	TN22 1UB	Studio	1	Pay and Play	Local Authority	Trust	✓	1987	2006
Uplands Community College Sports Centre	TN5 6BA	Studio	1	Sports Club / Community Association	Community School	School		1998	
Willingdon Community School	BN20 9QX	Studio	1	Sports Club /Community Association	Community School	School		2019	

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

4.182 There are 23 studios in total; 9 studios are provided through commercial facilities, 1 is owned and operated by a sports club, 5 are on education sites 1 is private use only for the school and 3 providing access to community sports clubs through the schools' letting policy and 8 are owned by the Local Authority but managed by Freedom Leisure. Some commercial facilities offer community access, and some require membership prior to use.

4.183 The analysis of the overall studio supply in Wealden is as follows:

Table 20: Analysis of overall Studio Supply – Wealden

Total Studios	23
Pay and Play Community Access Studios	8
Commercial Sector Studios	9
Sports Club	1
Education Sector Studios	5

Quality

4.184 Detailed quality assessments have been undertaken on all Wealden District Council sports facilities. These are summarised in Table 20.

Table 21: Summary of Quality Assessments Studios in Wealden

	Qualitative Score for Health and Fitness Studios	Need for Investment- Overall Facility
Hailsham Leisure Centre	Average – Sprung floors with a separate spinning studio	Studios could be located closer to fitness suite for ease of access between each facility.
Crowborough Leisure Centre	Average – Sprung floors spinning available.	Minimal
Heathfield Leisure Centre	Average – Sprung floors.	Minimal
Uckfield Leisure Centre	Average – Sprung floor	Minimal

4.185 The quality of studios is generally average with several facilities having been refurbished.

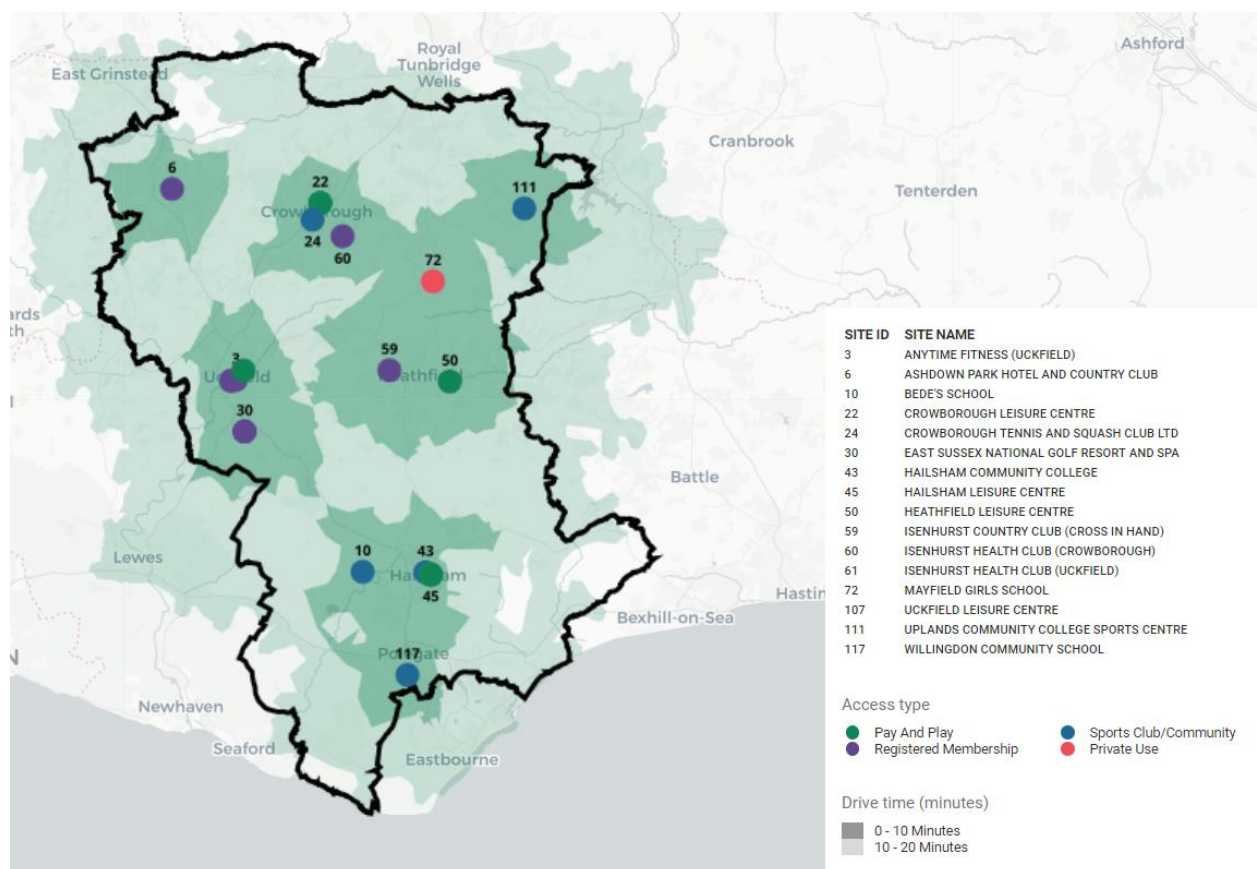
Accessibility

4.186 Health and fitness facilities are located across most areas of the District. Most studios are part of an overall fitness offer, i.e., fitness suite and studio(s) with some commercial facilities and local authority facilities offering more than one studio.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Map 9: Studios – Wealden District Council with a 20-minute and 10-minute drive time catchment



- 4.187 It is clear from Map 9 that Wealden residents have access to a studio within a 20-minute drive time catchment of the whole community. Except for the southeast of the District.
- 4.188 11.7% of the Wealden population does not have access to a car (Source 2011 Census). It is therefore important to ensure that studios are as accessible as possible to those walking or using public transport.
- 4.189 Existing community access fitness facilities are well-located in Wealden; all are on public transport routes, and their catchment areas provide access to virtually all residents. In addition to the community access studios, there are other studios (commercial/on education sites) which are also used by residents; overall there is a good stock of provision in Wealden however they are not all accessible to all residents given where they are located.
- 4.190 Recognising the commercial fitness studios in the District which are well used by residents, there is a good overall accessibility to studios in Wealden.

Availability

- 4.191 A comprehensive programme of fitness classes, and other sporting activities is offered at the community access facilities. Of the 23 studios in Wealden, 8 are accessible for pay and play community use.
- 4.192 Some commercial operators have membership rates comparable to those at the WDC owned leisure centres.
- 4.193 In addition to the purpose-built studio facilities in Wealden, there are several multi-purpose halls, in

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

community centres/halls; these are also used for activities which could also take place in a studio e.g., aerobics, dance, etc.

Supply and Demand Analysis – Health and Fitness and Studios

- 4.194 The supply and demand model Appendix 6 is based on the premise that for the supply to be sufficient, it must be large enough to cater for the maximum demand at any one time. Maximum demand is described as the demand during a peak hour session.
- 4.195 The Health and fitness model identifies the population in Wealden over the age of 15 and then applies the 2019 state of UK Health and Fitness Industry report membership penetration rate for 15.6%, to estimate the number of the population over 15 that participates in using health and fitness gyms. The estimate for Wealden is 20,895 persons participate. The model then assumes that each participant participates 1.5 times per week. This provides an overall number of visits of 31,342. These visits are then multiplied by the number of visits in peak time and the model assumes 65% of visits are in peak time. The estimate for the number of visits in peak time is 20,372. This estimate is then divided by the number of peak time hours per week 34 to give the number of fitness stations required.
- 4.196 The health and fitness model (Appendix 6) estimates there is a need for 599 fitness stations at peak time of demand in 2021. The number of fitness stations in health and fitness facilities in Wealden that provide over 20 stations equates to 580 in 2021. The health and fitness model assumes an undersupply of 19 fitness stations in 2021.
- 4.197 Wealden's population is expected to grow. The estimated undersupply of 19 fitness stations in 2021 will increase further in line with an increased population. The estimated future needs based on the two identified scenarios are set out in Appendix 6. It is important to note that the calculations behind fitness stations are different to the other facility types.

Fitness Stations – Future Demand

The following first 2 scenarios illustrate the increased demand for swimming due to population growth. The 1st Scenario looks at ONS Subnational population projections to 2039.

The 2nd scenario considers the suggested housing growth rate of 1,225 new homes per year, but is related to those new dwellings which have not yet been completed, or where there is not yet a commitment for S106.

Scenario 1: The population data has been taken from ONS subnational Population Projections 2018 Based.

Scenario 2: Considers 1,225 new homes per year at an average household size of 2.30 persons for Wealden.

WDC housing need based on 1225 dwellings per year = 24,500 – commitments and completions of 9,436. Total to test as part of assessment is therefore 15,064 with an average household size of 2.3 persons per household. $15064 \times 2.3 = \mathbf{34,647}$ **population increase.**

Population growth in Wealden will increase demand for swimming pool provision. As an indication (using the Sport England Sports Facility Calculator (SFC)), it is possible to estimate overall future demand for provision of swimming pools, based on this population increase.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Scenario	Under-supply and Unmet Demand for Fitness Stations 2019	Future Demand for Additional Fitness Stations 2039 Population Growth	Total Under Supply Unmet Demand of Fitness Stations By 2039
Scenario 1: ONS Population Subnational Projections 2018 Based 2019 – 2039 = 15,642 Population	-19	+56	Under Supply of -75 fitness stations
Scenario 2: WDC housing need based on 1225 dwellings per year = 24,500 – commitments and completions of 9,436. Total to test as part of assessment is therefore <u>15,064</u> with an average household size of 2.3 persons per household. $15064 \times 2.3 = 34,647$ population increase	-19	+124	Under Supply of -143 fitness stations

- 4.198 A business case should be provided for when new health and fitness facilities are to be provided in the future.
- 4.199 Health and fitness suites tend to focus on group exercise such as spin, aerobics, dance, tai chi and yoga. The studio experience is intimate, fun, intense and trendy.
- 4.200 There are 23 identified studios in Wealden. From consultation with sites the majority of these are well used by Wealden residents.
- 4.201 There is currently a national growing market for boutique fitness studios that are generally viewed as a small gym 800 – 3500 square feet that focuses on group exercise and specialises in one or two fitness areas. It is anticipated that Wealden will be following the national trend with boutique studios popping up across the District.

Table 22: Summary Analysis – Health and Fitness Supply and Demand

Facility Type	Assessment Findings
Health and Fitness (Fitness Suites and Studios)	
	Health and Fitness Suites Quantity There are 15 fitness suites in Wealden, with a total of 640 fitness stations. The fitness suites providing 20+ stations equate to 11 providing 580 fitness stations. 4 facilities are owned or leased by WDC and managed by Freedom Leisure on its behalf and provide 234 plus 14 at Heathfield Leisure Centre totalling 248 fitness stations in Wealden.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Facility Type	Assessment Findings
Health and Fitness (Fitness Suites and Studios)	There are 23 studios in Wealden, 8 of which have pay and play community access. Supply and Demand Analysis The existing commercial sector fitness suite provision in Wealden is used by residents. The commercial fitness suites vary in type with some being high end fitness companies such as Any Time Active, but a lot of membership costs are comparable with community facilities. On this basis, the assessment of the current and future need for fitness facilities reflects the fact that Wealden residents are likely to use those facilities which offer provision and a membership rate often comparable to public sector facilities. The assessment of need (See Appendix 76 therefore includes the commercial facilities, as 'community access 'based on 'affordability' and includes fitness facilities providing 20 fitness stations and above. Current Supply and Demand There are currently 11 fitness centres providing over 20 fitness stations; these 11 fitness centres provide 580 fitness stations in total in the District, there is a current under-supply of -288 fitness stations, given current demand is estimated to be 599 fitness stations (See Appendix 6). There is a need to retain and increase community access and affordable fitness stations. All Wealden residents have access to fitness suites within a 20-minute drive time except for those in the far south and southeast of the District. The majority of fitness suite availability is through the commercial sector during the day, as well as evenings and weekends. There is community access to pay and play fitness suites during the day, as well as evenings and weekends at Hailsham Leisure Centre and Crowborough Leisure Centre. There is currently access at Uckfield and Heathfield in the evening and during the day (with agreement of the respective Colleges). Future Demand Future demand for fitness, will need to reflect population growth. There will be a need for additional fitness stations once the future population growth has been decided through the emerging Local Plan. The current supply will be insufficient to meet this need. Any new facilities proposed should only be developed if they can demonstrate a sustainable business case and plan. Under Scenario 1 there would be a need for a further 56 fitness stations. In this scenario undersupply increases from -19 to – 75 (See Appendix 6) ie -19 stations in 2019 plus 56 stations Under Scenario 2 there would be a need for a further 56 fitness stations. In this scenario undersupply increases from -19 to – 143 (See Appendix 6) ie -19 stations in 2019 plus 124 stations Quality

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Facility Type	Assessment Findings
Health and Fitness (Fitness Suites and Studios)	The quality of studios is generally good with several facilities having been built recently (Anyone Active) or refurbished. Health and Fitness Studios There are 23 studios in Wealden, as identified through Sport England Active Places. The majority are provided as part of health and fitness offers within facilities. Studios provide a space in which a range of aerobic, fitness and dance classes plus activities such as yoga and Pilates, can take place as well as martial arts. Although requiring some specialist equipment for martial arts, it is also possible to conduct these activities in an informal space such as a community hall. Informal halls are discussed in the Sports Hall and activity hall section of this assessment. Many community hall facilities are used by dance schools, and the smaller halls often available on education sites have significant potential to be used for fitness classes. Of the 23 studios in Wealden, 8 are accessible for pay and play community use. Existing community access fitness facilities are well-located in Wealden; all are on public transport routes, and their catchment areas provide access to virtually all residents. In addition to the community access studios, there are other studios (commercial/on education sites) which are also used by residents; however, they are not all accessible to all residents given where they are located. There are gaps in the south and southeast of the district. The trend is that exercise studios will expand until the market becomes saturated, which will result in lower class fees to achieve greater market penetration and survival. The fitness gym with studio space has an added attraction to some people as it can offer more but for those that wish to just participate in group exercise then the boutique studio is ideal. Covering both fitness suites and studios: Accessibility Health and fitness facilities are located across most areas of the District. Most studios are part of an overall fitness offer, i.e., fitness suite and studio(s) with some commercial facilities and local authority facilities offering more than one studio. Availability A comprehensive programme of fitness classes, and other sporting activities is offered at the community access facilities. Of the 23 studios in Wealden, 8 are accessible for pay and play community use. Some commercial operators have membership rates comparable to those at the WDC owned leisure centres.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Squash

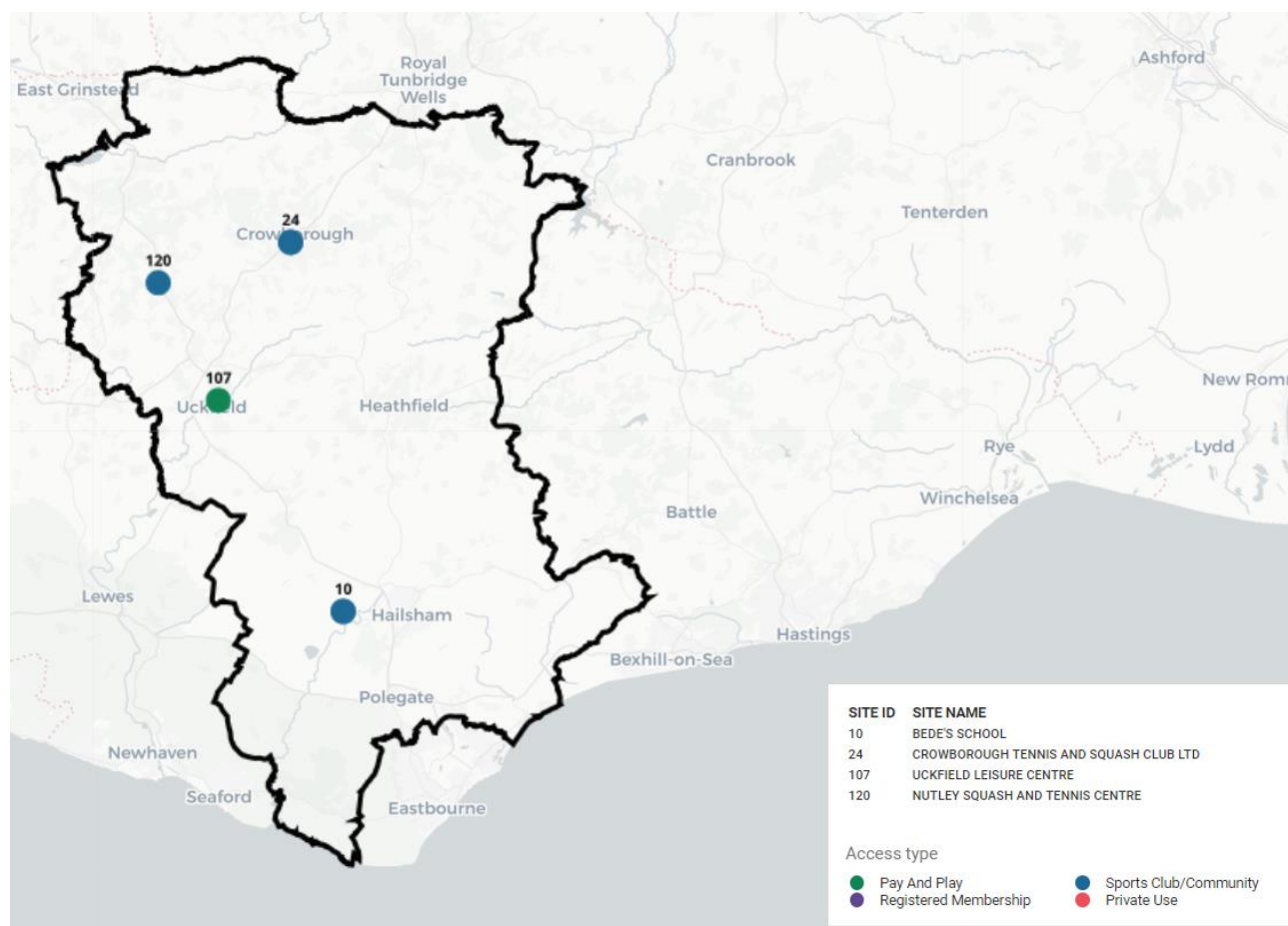
Quantity

- 4.202 There are 2 public pay and play accessible squash courts (normal) at Uckfield Leisure Centre. 1 glass back and 3 normal squash courts at St Bede's School, Crowborough Squash and Tennis Club Ltd have 3 normal and 1 glass backed squash courts and Nutley Tennis and Squash Centre have 2 normal squash courts.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Map 10: Squash Facilities – Wealden District Council



4.203 The overall supply of squash courts is summarised in Table 22.

Table 23: Squash Courts in Wealden

Site Name	Post Code	Court Type	Courts	Access Type	Ownership Type	Management Type	Pay and Play Community Access facilities	Year Built	Year Refurbished
Bede's School	BN27 3QH	Glass-backed	1	Sports Club / Community Association	Other Independent School	School/ College/ University (in house)		1997	2005
Bede's School	BN27 3QH	Normal	3	Sports Club / Community Association	Other Independent School	School/College/ University (in house)		1997	2005

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Site Name	Post Code	Court Type	Courts	Access Type	Ownership Type	Management Type	Pay and Play Community Access facilities	Year Built	Year Refurbished
Crowborough Tennis and Squash Club Ltd	TN6 1BN	Normal	3	Sports Club / Community Association	Commercial	Trust		1960	2013
Crowborough Tennis and Squash Club Ltd	TN6 1BN	Glass-backed	1	Sports Club / Community Association	Commercial	Trust		1960	2013
Nutley Tennis and Squash Club	TN22 3NA	Normal	2	Registered Membership	Sports Club	Sports Club		1989	N/A
Uckfield Leisure Centre	TN22 1UB	Normal	2	Pay and Play	Local Authority	Trust	✓	1987	2013

Quality

4.204 A quality assessment was undertaken on the following local authority facility.

Table 24: Summary of Quality Assessments Squash Courts in Wealden

	Qualitative Score for Squash Courts	Need for Investment- Overall Facility
Uckfield Leisure Centre	Average	Regular maintenance in place

4.205 The quality of existing local authority squash courts is generally of an average standard. All courts have been refurbished since they were originally built. They are all maintained. Crowborough Squash and Tennis Club have stated their squash courts are in very good condition.

4.206 The Club has stated through consultation that their squash courts are cleaned and maintained constantly. They spent £50K refurbishing changing facilities in 2018. Nutley Tennis and Squash Centre requires improvements to the changing rooms.

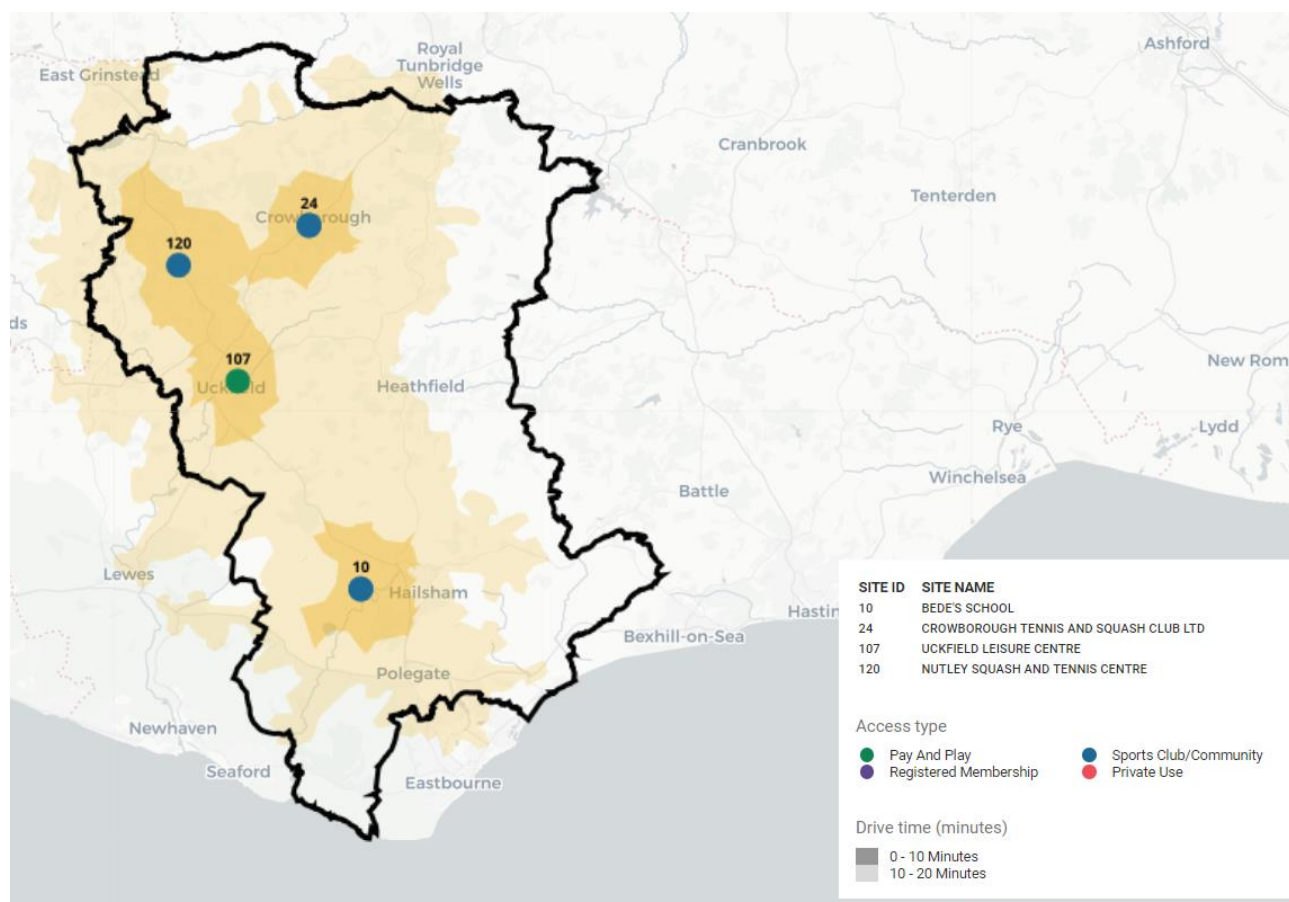
Accessibility

4.207 Squash courts are more specialist facilities, so there are generally fewer of them in any one area. Most squash courts are now provided through clubs, as opposed to leisure centres. The exception in Wealden is that Uckfield Leisure Centre provides the only courts in Wealden that are pay and play. St Bede's School is classified as a private facility. Community squash courts are available at Crowborough Squash and Tennis Club and Uckfield Leisure Centre.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Map 11: Squash Facilities – Wealden District Council 20minute and 10 minute Drive time Catchments



4.208 Map 11 shows that there is a swathe of east Wealden not covered by the 20-minute drive time.

4.209 Nutley Tennis and Squash Club had a lease for 30 years agreed in 1989. The lease is with Nutley Memorial Trust. Lease renewal terms have not been agreed and there are increasing concerns that the Nutley Memorial Trust may wish to sell the land for future housing. Protection of the outdoor tennis and squash court facilities should be sought.

Availability

4.210 Only 2 courts in Wealden have community access via pay and play. England Squash states that St Bede's School squash courts are an important facility. However, this is a private facility.

4.211 The school has a squash club and provides 1 glass back and 3 normal courts. Crowborough Squash and Tennis Club provide 3 normal and 1 glass backed squash court. The club states it has over 80 active playing members with a membership of 360+. 90 members are under 18 years. The club plans to increase membership in the future but this is estimated and is dependent on the provision of indoor tennis courts. Nutley Squash and Tennis Centre have 2 courts and 80 plus members and are seeking to increase membership.

4.212 This level of access is adequate given the current and likely future levels of participation in squash.

NGB Consultation: England Squash

4.213 England Squash was contacted to provide feedback on the provision of squash court facilities in the District. England Squash has identified that the facilities are important to England Squash.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Summary of Supply and Demand

Table 25: Summary Analysis – Squash Courts Supply and Demand

Facility Type	Assessment Findings
Squash Courts	
Quantity	There are 2 glass-backed squash courts and 10 normal squash courts in Wealden. Pay and play on 2 normal squash courts are available at Uckfield Leisure Centre. Given the majority of squash is played through squash clubs there are sufficient existing courts to cater for demand. Future Demand There is no specific methodology for assessing the current and future need for squash courts. Overall participation in squash is increasing at a national level, and this is now being seen at a local level. Competitive squash across the country is predominantly now played in clubs, from a club facility; demand for community access squash courts has reduced in recent years. Participation is still growing however, but through the club base where juniors can be supported and coached from an early age. There is a need to protect the squash and outdoor tennis facility at Nutley Squash and Tennis Centre. No demand has been identified for additional squash courts in Wealden, by clubs or the NGB. The current level of provision should be maintained in Wealden.
Quality	The quality of existing squash courts is generally of a good standard. Nutley Squash and Tennis Centre need the changing rooms refurbishing.
Accessibility	The existing pay and play squash courts are at Uckfield Leisure Centre.
Availability	There are 12 squash courts in Wealden, 2 of which are glass-back courts. 2 are available for community access. There is no identified community use of St Bede's School squash courts.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Indoor Bowls

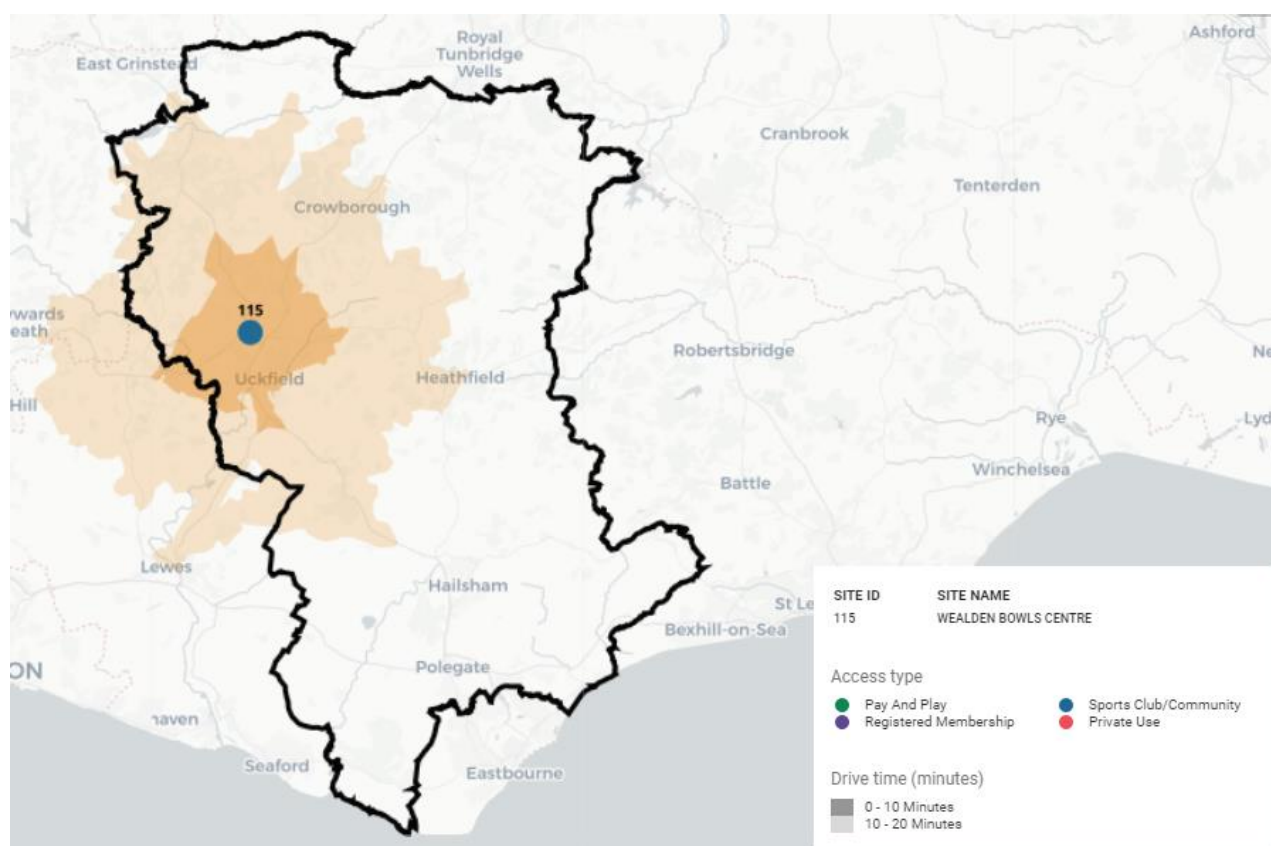
Quantity

- 4.214 An indoor bowls facility comprises several indoor rinks (usually a minimum of 3 rinks). Indoor Bowls is a more specialist sport and tends to be participated in by bowlers who play outside in the summer, to practise and compete during the winter months.
- 4.215 There is 1 indoor bowls facility in Wealden. Wealden Bowls Club, Maresfield Sports Park, Batts Bridge Road, Maresfield, East Sussex TN22 2HN which has 6 indoor rinks.
- 4.216 The next closest indoor bowls club from Wealden Bowls Club is Royal Tunbridge Wells, TN2 4TU, approximately a 29 minutes' drive time from Wealden Bowls Club.
- 4.217 Supply and demand for indoor bowls is not assessed in the same way as it is for e.g. swimming pools.
- 4.218 Consultation: England Indoor Bowls Association (EIBA) (see Appendix 3 for full details) identifies:
- 1. There is 1 indoor club in Wealden: and**
 - 2. Indoor bowls is attractive to the older population and those with disabilities (Wheelchair and Visually Impaired).**
- 4.219 As a guide, the EIBA demand is calculated as one rink per 14,000-17,000 of total population. A six-rink green, therefore, is required for a population of 85,000-100,000 although this will be dependent upon the population profile of an area. Sport England's Local Insight population data indicates that the 2019 population for Wealden is 161,475. The population for Wealden indicates that there is a need for 10 (9.5 rounded up) rinks in Wealden to meet the EIBA demand one rink per 14,000 – 17,000 of total population. The supply within Wealden is currently 6 rinks.
- 4.220 The number of rinks required can be related to the estimated number of members: EIBA suggest an assumption of 80-100 members per rink. This is 90 members on average. The membership at Wealden Bowls Club according to the Club's web site is approximately 600 members. The existing membership requires 6 rinks.
- 4.221 Although the population level in Wealden suggests the need for 10 indoor bowls rinks, there are only 600 members of Wealden Bowls Club. The existing supply of 6 rinks is meeting current membership needs.
- 4.222 Clearly there is a large area of Wealden where there may be demand for indoor bowls e.g. the south east of the district. There are two indoor bowls clubs in Bexhill on Sea, Rother, with their own facilities, which could provide for demand in the south east.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Map 12: Indoor Bowls Site location and 20 minute and 10-minute drive time catchment



Indoor Bowls: Summary of Supply and Demand

Table 26: Summary Analysis – Indoor Bowling Supply and Demand

Facility Type	Assessment Findings																																								
Quantity	There is 1 indoor bowls facility in Wealden. Wealden Bowls Club has 6 rinks and is an affiliated EIBA Club																																								
	The population for Wealden indicates that there is a current need for 10 rinks. However, the existing supply of 6 rinks is meeting current membership needs.																																								
	The EIBA advise that the nearest indoor bowls facility to Wealden Bowls Club is in Royal Tunbridge Wells and that there is no need to provide additional facilities but to protect and safeguard the existing facility. The table below shows neighbouring authority indoor bowls facilities and a travel distance from the Wealden Bowls Club.																																								
	<table><tr><th>Clubs</th><th>Rinks</th><th></th><th>Travel/Mileage TN22 2HN</th></tr><tr><td>Wey Valley IBC, Guildford GU1 1HB</td><td>6</td><td>Indoor</td><td>68 mins (51 miles)</td></tr><tr><td>Horsham RH12 3LZ</td><td>8</td><td>Indoor</td><td>55 mins (35 miles)</td></tr><tr><td>K2 Crawley RH11 9BQ</td><td>2</td><td>Indoor – Leisure Centre Not Affiliated</td><td>49 mins (28 miles)</td></tr><tr><td>Donyngs, Redhill RH1 1DP</td><td>6</td><td>Indoor</td><td>51 mins (25 miles)</td></tr><tr><td>Grattons, Crawley RH10 3AG</td><td>6</td><td>Indoor</td><td>32 mins (17 miles)</td></tr><tr><td>Angel IBC, Tonbridge TN9 1QH</td><td>6</td><td>Indoor</td><td>38 mins (19 miles)</td></tr><tr><td>Royal Tunbridge Wells TN2 4TU</td><td>6</td><td>Indoor</td><td>29 mins (16 miles)</td></tr><tr><td>Ashford TN23 4QD</td><td>6</td><td>Indoor</td><td>82 Mins (45 miles)</td></tr><tr><td>Folkestone CT19 5JU</td><td>7</td><td>Indoor/Outdoor</td><td>101 mins (70 miles)</td></tr></table>	Clubs	Rinks		Travel/Mileage TN22 2HN	Wey Valley IBC, Guildford GU1 1HB	6	Indoor	68 mins (51 miles)	Horsham RH12 3LZ	8	Indoor	55 mins (35 miles)	K2 Crawley RH11 9BQ	2	Indoor – Leisure Centre Not Affiliated	49 mins (28 miles)	Donyngs, Redhill RH1 1DP	6	Indoor	51 mins (25 miles)	Grattons, Crawley RH10 3AG	6	Indoor	32 mins (17 miles)	Angel IBC, Tonbridge TN9 1QH	6	Indoor	38 mins (19 miles)	Royal Tunbridge Wells TN2 4TU	6	Indoor	29 mins (16 miles)	Ashford TN23 4QD	6	Indoor	82 Mins (45 miles)	Folkestone CT19 5JU	7	Indoor/Outdoor	101 mins (70 miles)
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Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Facility Type	Assessment Findings			
	Clubs	Rinks		Travel/Mileage TN22 2HN
	Falaise IBC, Hastings TN34 1EU	6	Indoor	59 mins (33 miles)
	Gullivers IBC, Bexhill-on-Sea TN40 1LJ	2	Indoor/Outdoor	48 mins (28 miles)
	Egerton Park IBC, Bexhill-on-Sea TN39 3HL	6	Indoor	46 mins (28 miles)
	Langney Sports IBC, Eastbourne BN23 7QH	6	Indoor	34 mins (21 miles)
	Eastbourne BN22 9QR	6	Indoor	36 mins (21 miles)
	Denton Island IBC, Newhaven BN9 9BA	6	Indoor	34 mins (19 miles)
	Preston IBC, Brighton BN1 6SA	7	Indoor/Outdoor	35 mins (21 miles)
	King Alfred, Hove BN3 2WW	6	Indoor Leisure Centre CLOSED but Plans for new site are ongoing	41 mins (24 miles)
	Adur IBC, Southwick BN42 4NT	8	Indoor	38 mins (25 miles)
	Worthing Pavilion BN14 7EQ	6	Indoor/Outdoor	56 mins (32 miles)
	Worthing BN13 1NP	5	Indoor	60 mins (33 miles)
	Arun IBC, Bognor Regis PO21 2TT	6	Indoor	87 mins (48 miles)
Quality	Wealden Bowls Club was built in 1985 and refurbished in 2010. The Club offers excellent indoor and synthetic outdoor facilities all year round.			
Accessibility	Wealden Bowls Club operates on a registered membership basis. However, it does provide casual roll up times and rinks for new members to roll up. There is a need to check the season's opening times to obtain these details.			
Availability	Wealden Bowls Club is a registered membership Club with some opportunity for pay and play.			

Indoor Tennis

- 4.223 Indoor tennis courts are considered because they are a completely different facility from outdoor tennis courts, which, unless club courts, tend to be used for recreational tennis. Indoor courts are significantly more expensive to use, and therefore tend to provide for those who are already tennis participants, or who wish to learn to play tennis and can afford private or group coaching.
- 4.224 It is a requirement of the ANOG methodology that indoor tennis courts are covered by an Indoor Facility Assessment to complement the findings of a playing pitch assessment which assesses needs for outdoor courts.

Quantity

- 4.225 Sport England Active Places identifies that there is one site in Wealden that provides indoor tennis courts, Alfriston Tennis Centre with a total of 1 indoor court. However, this assessment has not identified a tennis club in Alfriston but there is an indoor court for use. Alfriston is in the National Park and therefore outside of the Wealden Local Plan area.
- 4.226 The location of the indoor tennis courts by access type in Wealden is shown on Map 13.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Map 13: Indoor Tennis Site Wealden District Council and 20-minute and 10-minute Drive time Catchment

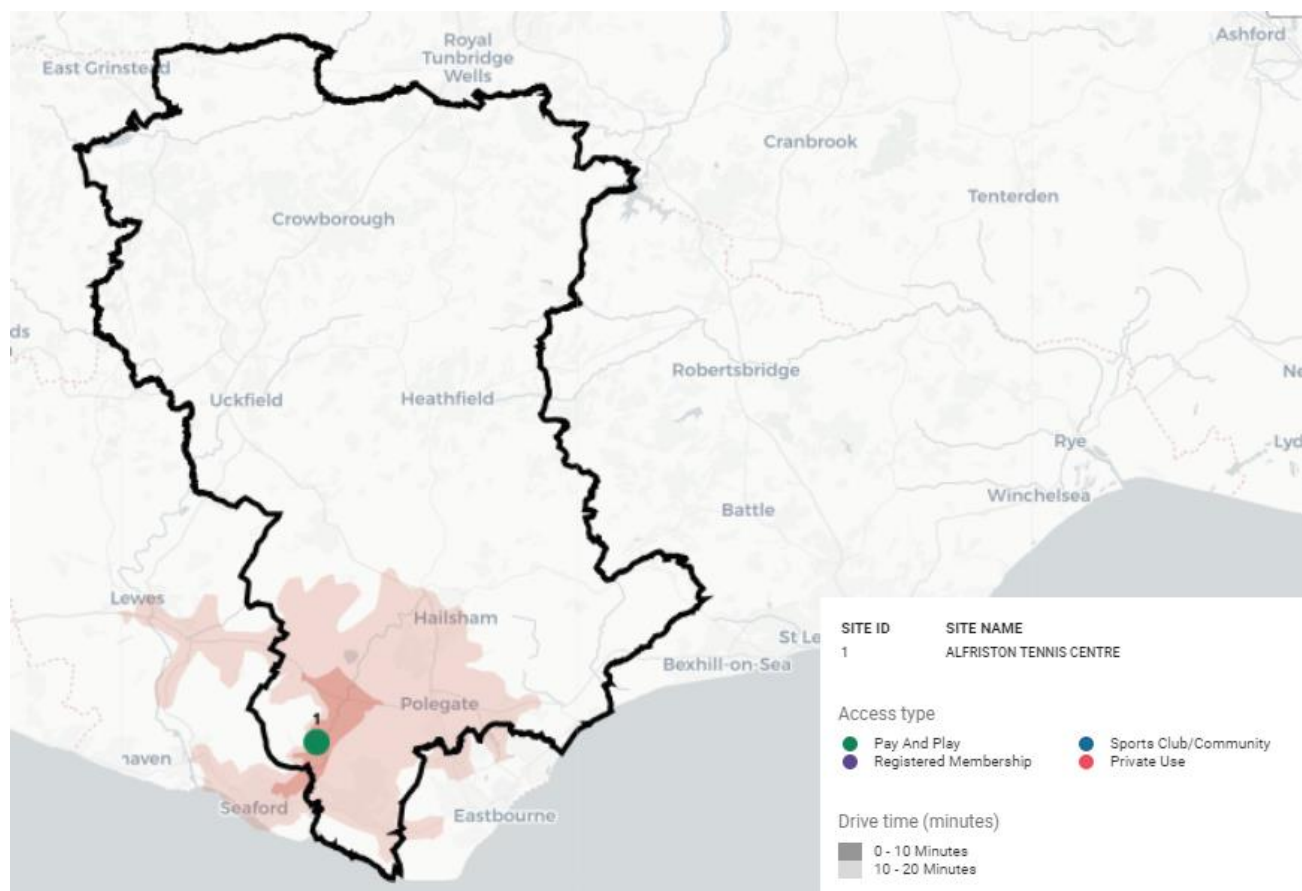


Table 27: Indoor Tennis Centres in Wealden

Site Name	Post Code	Facility Sub Type	Unit	Number	Access Type	Ownership Type	Operational Management Type	Year Built	Year Refurbished
Alfriston Tennis Centre	BN26 5TN	Indoor Tennis - Traditional	Courts	1	Sports Club / Community Association	Commercial	Sport Club	1974	2003

Quality

4.227 The 1 indoor tennis centre was built in 1974 and refurbished in 2003.

Accessibility

4.228 As shown on Map 14, the indoor tennis court is provided in the Alfriston area of Wealden.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Availability

- 4.229 There is free use of the outdoor tennis courts by campers at the Alfriston Camp Site where the indoor tennis court is located. Consultation was attempted with the owners on the telephone number provided on the Lawn Tennis Association site. However, each time consultation was attempted on four occasions we were told to contact a specific person who was always unavailable.
- 4.230 Consultation with Le Tennis who operates tennis courts in Maresfield and Crowborough Squash and Tennis Club has identified that both clubs have aspirations for indoor tennis facilities.
- 4.231 Planning permission has in the past been granted for indoor tennis courts at Uckfield Community College. However, this did not materialise.
- 4.232 Le Tennis stated they have recommenced negotiations with Uckfield Community College and have also begun a land search for other facilities in the District.

Indoor Tennis: Summary of Supply and Demand

Table 28: Summary Analysis – Indoor Tennis Supply and Demand

Facility Type	Assessment Findings
Quantity	There is 1 site providing 1 indoor tennis court at Alfriston Tennis Centre. This is understood to be a pay and play facility. Although there is a theoretical need for 13 indoor courts based on current population size, however, the level of interest in playing tennis in Wealden does not justify provision of this number of courts. In terms of future provision, it is important that there is access for pay and play tennis both now and in the future. The LTA recommends a target location must demonstrate a minimum threshold population of 70,000 within a 20-minute drive time of a target location. Of this population, at least 12,500 must identify as having an interest in playing tennis. ³ Sport England Market segmentation identifies that 2,800 persons currently participate in tennis and 2,900 would like to participate in tennis across Wealden. This is well below the 12,500 per indoor court identified above. Any provision of additional indoor tennis courts should be discussed with the LTA and be tennis club led. The LTA has identified that their priority Local Authorities for future provision of Community Indoor Tennis provision near the Wealden area in the future are Horsham, Haywards Heath and Reigate and Banstead. Any future expansion will need to consider the LTA's strategic position for provision of facilities within Wealden against those other priority local authority areas of Horsham, Haywards Heath and Reigate and Banstead.
Quality	No available quality assessment of the 1 indoor court.
Accessibility	All indoor tennis facilities are provided in the Alfriston area.
Availability	It is understood the 1 indoor court is a pay and play facility. The nearest indoor tennis facilities for Wealden residents are provided at Eastbourne Sports Park (3 courts) BN21 3UF, David Lloyd Club (Eastbourne) 6 courts BN22 9PZ and Tunbridge Wells Sports and indoor Tennis Centre (4 courts) TN4 9TX. These courts are accessible to Wealden residents who either live in the catchment area or are able to travel to the facility.

³ N.B This drive time extends to 30 minutes for rural areas. Based on 12,500 persons per indoor court (assessed completely separately to outdoor courts)

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Gymnastics Centres

Quantity

4.233 There are 3 British Gymnastics affiliated clubs operating in Wealden:

1. **Uckfield GC is based in its own dedicated facility in a former army training centre leased to the club from Wealden District Council at Maresfield. The club were awarded grants for extending the facility in 1996 including £42K from sport England.**
2. **Jump Trampoline Club originally established in 1979 and has been based at Hailsham Community College Sports Hall since 2005 and operates approximately 12.5 hours a week and provides classes for adults and children.**
3. **Sky High Trampoline and Gymnastic Academy Uckfield. The club is based in Fun Abounds, Bell Lane, Uckfield and deliver programmes in local primary schools.**

Table 29: Summary of Affiliated British Gymnastics Clubs

Club Name	Address	About the Club
Uckfield Gymnastics Club	Batts Bridge Road Maresfield Leisure Centre Maresfield, Uckfield TN22 2HN	Dedicated facility
Jump Trampoline Club	Battle Road, Hailsham BN27 1DT	School Sports Hall
Sky high Trampoline Club	21 Bell Lane Unit 21, Uckfield TN22 1QL	Dedicated Facility

4.234 In addition to the 3 clubs affiliated to British Gymnastics, Heathfield Leisure Centre provides gymnastics classes on Saturday mornings for ages 5 plus and trampoline courses on Mondays.

Quality

4.235 All 3 clubs provide good quality facilities. 2 clubs offer dedicated gymnastics facilities and specialist equipment. The Clubs are all affiliated with British Gymnastics and follow their accreditation and teaching criteria.

Accessibility

4.236 Uckfield Gymnastics Club is located in Uckfield, Sky High Trampoline club is located also in Uckfield and Jump Trampoline club is located in Hailsham.

Availability

4.237 Membership is required to use the existing gymnastic club facilities and take part in classes/coaching. The centres have varying membership costs which are decided by the clubs/facility owners. There is no standard cost set by British Gymnastics. Class fees will vary for each class. Members who train more hours will have to pay more per week than those who only train one hour per week. Recreational gymnastics fees are payable once per term.

4.238 All clubs also offer pay as you go sessions.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

NGB Consultation: British Gymnastics and Trampolining

4.239 Consultation with British Gymnastics and Trampolining is detailed in Appendix 3. Key points include:

- **British Gymnastics Facility Development Priorities (for the period 2017 - 2021) outlined are:**
 - Support increased capacity within gymnastics through clubs, leisure providers and other delivery providers;
 - Guide funding investment through the United Kingdom from British Gymnastics, Home Country Sports Councils, Local Authorities and other potential funders;
 - Maintain and improve the quality of facilities and equipment within existing delivery partners;
 - Develop insight, understanding and direction of how Facility Developments can contribute towards other BG Strategic Priorities; and
 - There is no geographic focus to the British Gymnastics Facility strategy. Focus is based on need, suitability and partners' ability to support a project to successful completion.

Gymnastics and Trampolining: Summary of Supply and Demand

Table 30: Summary Analysis – Gymnastics and Trampolining Supply and Demand

Facility Type	Assessment Findings
Gymnastics Facilities	
Quantity	3 clubs - Uckfield Gymnastics Club, Jump Trampoline Club, Sky High Trampoline and Gymnastics Academy and classes and courses at Heathfield Leisure Centre. Two of these clubs have their own facility. Existing provision currently meets demand.
Quality	All clubs provide quality facilities and are affiliated to British Gymnastics and follow British Gymnastics policies and standards.
Accessibility	All clubs are accessible for children and adults.
Availability	All clubs provide pay and play sessions or courses alongside membership.
Future Provision	The main issue for gymnastic development is having access to sufficient dedicated space – so clubs are able to grow and extend their programmes. The other key factor is the availability of coaches qualified at the right level. 2 of the 3 British Gymnastic Affiliated Clubs in Wealden have access to dedicated facilities. Jump Trampoline Club is the only club based at a school sports hall.

Other Sports

Judo

4.240 According to the National governing Body the key Judo club in Wealden is Uckfield Judo Club, based at Uckfield Community College. The NGB has no current plans or initiatives in Wealden.

Boxing

4.241 There are no boxing clubs in Wealden. England Boxing does not see Wealden as a target market for boxing.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Martial Arts, Dance, Table Tennis, Yoga

- 4.242 There are numerous sports clubs such as martial arts, dance, table tennis and yoga clubs and others that use facilities outside the formal leisure facilities. These facilities have been audited and are detailed in Appendix 5 under Community centres.
- 4.243 Consultation with martial arts clubs, table tennis clubs has identified that the majority are happy with the facilities they use in the community centres and village halls. These informal facilities provide an additional important resource in the community for the provision of sport and physical activity. Halls such as Ridgewood Village Hall have found funds to refurbish and bring the facilities into the 21st century (£90K) but they also have planning permission to extend the main hall and create other facilities but do not have the funds to start the project.
- 4.244 Hellingly – The new Hellingly Community Hub is now open and running a range of activities - www.hellingly-pc.org.uk/community-hub on the Roebuck Park housing development with meetings, sports and event facilities. There are be two meetings' rooms, large hall with fully equipped kitchen.

5. Penultimate Stage - Applying the Assessment Analysis

Facility Specific Analysis

Hailsham Aspires

- 5.1 The Hailsham Aspires project is about regenerating Hailsham town centre, and meeting the changing demand of town centres by improving the overall visitor experience. To help drive forward the shaping of the heart of Hailsham, Wealden District Council purchased Vicarage Field shopping centre in 2017. Over the lifetime of the project the regeneration scheme will consider proposals for the Vicarage Field shopping area, District Council offices, Hailsham Leisure Centre, existing GP surgeries/medical centres and the nearby car parks.
- 5.2 Public consultation has taken place. The focus at this first stage of consultation was to explore the aspirations of those that live, work in, or visit Hailsham for the next 10-15 years. A summary report of the consultation is now available (www.wealden.gov.uk/consultations/hailsham-aspires-hailsham-town-centre-regeneration-consultation/). It summarises the consultation and engagement methods used so far and analyses the responses received at the first stage of consultation. Members of the public have had an opportunity to comment on potential concept masterplans and feedback received on these concepts will be brought forward to inform future design proposals.
- 5.3 The project will be delivered in a phased approach and this is to be determined in more detail as plans develop. Current plans are fluid, but ideally Wealden District Council would like to maintain use of the existing leisure centre for as long as possible whilst a new one is being built.
- 5.4 Phase 1 of the project is likely to focus around the delivery of a new co-located leisure/medical facility and the planning submission will give thought to how the rest of the masterplan may come forward in future phases.
- 5.5 The demographic profile of Wealden, and the population growth for the District, summarised in Section 3, provides an important context for future provision of indoor sports facilities in the District, as does the research, consultation, and supply and demand analysis, undertaken to inform this Built Sports Facility Assessment. Highlighted below are the key factors and issues considered in planning for future facility provision.
- **Population Growth** - Clearly, increased population will result in increased demand for sports facilities; in Wealden, there will be a need for increased provision of sports halls and swimming pool water space, increased demand for indoor cricket, indoor tennis, gymnastics, and trampolining will also need to be carefully considered. Population increase because of new housing development will place additional demand on sports hall space (the extent depends on the specific population growth scenario that will be set out in the emerging Local Plan).
 - **Housing Development**- one of the principal justifications for provision of more community sports facilities is because additional residents increase demand for sports facilities. The population of Wealden is likely to grow. There will be a need to ensure that good quality community sport and leisure facilities are available to meet both existing and future demand. The potential for investment in additional provision of formal sports facilities and community halls, secured through developer contributions ideally on a dwelling-by-dwelling basis should be explored along with the consideration as to whether large strategic developments could and should deliver facilities to support future communities. However, linked to housing development is the potential for other infrastructure development e.g., schools, health facilities, which could also link into the future provision of sports facilities.

Calculation of future need is set out by facility type in Section 4. Future need across the district is

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

calculated based on the two potential WDC identified population growth scenarios. Calculation of the specific needs of a strategic site can be calculated using the Sport England Sports Facility Calculator (SFC). This will calculate, against a specific population growth figure relating to a known number of new dwellings on one site the amount of a facility type that needs to be provided to meet the needs of that strategic development. The SFC also provides a likely cost of the identified facility need.

- **Reduction in Health Inequalities** – more active lifestyles will continue to benefit both individual and community health; although the health of Wealden’s communities is generally better than that of the region and England as a whole, there are some extremely specific factors to which the provision of quality, affordable and accessible sports facilities can contribute:
 - **Maintenance of active lifestyles;**
 - **Improved mental health;**
 - **Reduced levels of cardiovascular disease; and**
 - **Further reductions in levels of obesity (already below national and regional levels).**
- **Maintaining and growing participation levels** in sport and physical activity to contribute to more active lifestyles; facilitating more regular activity for the most inactive 21.3% of the Wealden community (Active Lives May 2020) is a priority;
- **Assessing the current need of sports halls, swimming pools, indoor tennis, gymnastics and boxing facilities;** Boxing has been included although Wealden is not considered a priority area at this time.
- **The need to retain and grow participation in physical activity for community health benefits;**
- **The need to invest in active environments, where physical activity is the norm;**
- **The need to improve accessibility to provision at the local level, particularly for the population without access to private transport;**
- **There is already some sport and physical activity being delivered in community centres/halls across the District; there is opportunity to increase awareness of this and to extend it, particularly where there are halls available with pay and play access. This could complement the provision of indoor hall space; and**
- **The opportunity for investment in ‘active’ infrastructure to facilitate increased provision of cycling, jogging and walking routes in the District, connecting new and existing settlements, education and leisure sites.**

5.6 Analysis of the specific factors relating to current provision of each facility type is summarised in Table 30. The key issues and impacts identified are the priorities to address, and inform the detailed actions to be taken, partnerships and stakeholders to be developed/worked with; these are detailed in the investment priorities and the subsequent Action Plan.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Table 31: Key Issues, and Actions by Facility Type

Facility Type	Key Issue	Areas for Action
Sports Halls	- The FPM finding is that the 3 pay and play sports halls in the District are estimated to be operating at 100% of used capacity in the weekly peak period. This is above the Sport England 80% comfort level of capacity used at peak times. Where a facility operates above this level the time taken to change the sports hall for different activities starts to impinge on the activity time itself plus the changing and circulation areas become overcrowded and can discourage participation. - Badminton England - Increased/new facility access is key because many existing centres are operating at capacity; it is a struggle to develop daytime participation in badminton unless additional facility provision is offered. This is because the three sites offering pay and play access are already full, and two of these have limited daytime access. - The key issue for sports hall provision is that there is currently a small under-supply of badminton courts available for pay and play use. However, there are 10 courts on education sites that are only used for sports club use. In theory this means there is sufficient capacity within the existing stock of facilities and actually there is an over-supply of badminton courts. It is the accessibility of existing facilities on education sites that is the challenge. - The average age of sports halls in Wealden is 28 years old (2021). - The quality of current provision of the pay and play sports hall facilities at Crowborough and Heathfield is 'Standard.' Uckfield Leisure Centre sports hall is 'Poor.' - The quality of Beacon Academy sports hall could also be improved. - Only 3 sports halls in the District, provide pay and play community access. These are the facilities provided by WDC. Access to education facilities is not on a pay and play basis; education sites provide for club use. - There is restricted day time access at Heathfield Leisure Centre and Uckfield Leisure Centre because they are joint-use sites.	- Refurbishment of existing sports halls should be encouraged. This should ensure that sports hall changing areas, lighting and flooring are to the correct standards. - There is a need to work with Willingdon Community School to ensure community use of the new 4 court sports hall. - There is an aggregate total of 6.3 badminton courts, across the education sites, which are unavailable for community use; the new 4 courts at Willingdon Community School increases this to 10.3 badminton courts. The schools that could provide additional community use hours are: Michael Hill School, Uplands Community College Sports Centre, at Bede's School, Beacon Academy (Beeches) and Hailsham Community College (Announced October 2021 that the sports hall will be used for school examinations at exam times in future). - Any new sports hall facilities should meet Sport England and National Governing Body design guidance. - Need to ensure other informal halls provide daytime opportunities for sport and physical activity, to meet needs of e.g., older people, those not in work, parents looking after young children not in work, shift workers, those without access to a car.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Facility Type	Key Issue	Areas for Action
	- Car parking at Uckfield is difficult as parking spaces are taken by the college staff and students and customers to the Leisure Centre struggle to find parking which puts customers off using the centre. - The FPM identifies that Heathfield Leisure Centre and Uckfield Leisure Centre sports halls are used to 100% of all available capacity and Crowborough is at 80%. - There is spare capacity at education sites equating to 6 badminton courts. - The Facility Planning model run does not consider the new 4 court sports hall at Willingdon Community School. However this facility does not provide for pay and play community use so does not reduce the existing under-supply of badminton courts (-1.4 badminton courts). - There are access issues with sports clubs who wish to develop their clubs with additional space to increase participation. The space is not available. - Badminton England believe that the quality of sports hall provision impacts on the quantity of available badminton courts for use. - There are insufficient sports hall facilities for netball and roller skating. - Stoolball has identified a need for daytime access facilities in the Uckfield area because it wishes to develop the sport in this area.	
	- Stoolball representatives have stated they need a facility that is available for uninterrupted use (dedicated facility) to meet its own training and league commitments. - There is a need to identify how additional space can be provided to meet the needs of a growing population; either by securing access to facilities which are currently unavailable for pay and play community use; extending community pay and play access in facilities which currently offer some level of community access and/or developing new facilities.	- As policy, any new provision of sports halls should provide facilities for indoor cricket of which stoolball is a form. Indoor cricket facilities should meet the ECB guidance document (ECB TS3) that provides detailed information on the specific requirements on lighting, flooring and netting that are required for indoor cricket. Sports halls providing cricket should not have glass windows or surrounds so the hall can provide indoor cricket games as well as cricket nets and correct lighting that is safety covered so damage cannot be achieved by ball strike. The ECB is happy to review the detail of new or refurbished provision to provide technical support in ensuring that they meet the full extent of ECB TS3 guidance. - Existing community access at education sites needs to be maintained as a minimum and secured wherever possible with a formal Community Use Agreement (CUA), given that most sport halls facilities are on education sites.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Facility Type	Key Issue	Areas for Action
Swimming Pools	- The key issue for swimming provision in the district is that there is a current under-supply of 221 sq m of water space, equivalent to a 4 lane x 25m pool. - There is a need to improve swimming pool facilities across Wealden. Replacing the existing freeform pool with a 25m x 8 lane swimming pool and a separate learner pool would future proof swimming provision in Hailsham and provide an environment suitable for community use, club training and competition (lanes would need to be 2.5m wide for the latter). There will be a need for spectator facilities and for land training facilities for swimming clubs. - Demand for play and play access will increase as population grows. - There is opportunity to increase provision of water space at Crowborough Leisure Centre through development of a learner pool. This would help to address the under-supply in the district. - A 25m x 8 lane swimming pool would replace the current swimming pool provision at Hailsham and contribute to the current unmet demand. However, if Mayfield School remains closed for swimming club use there would be a need for additional swimming pool water space.	- There is a need to provide additional water space to meet current demand. - The total unmet demand is 7.9% of total demand this equates to 128 sq. m of water space (approximately 2 lanes of a 25m swimming pool). - The unmet demand identified in the FPM is not significant; it is predominantly due to location i.e., people living outside the catchment area of a pool in their district. This type of unmet demand is always likely to exist. - There is no need for additional swimming pool provision <u>at new locations</u> to meet demand. The pools are in the right places to meet the existing Wealden District demand for swimming. - This scenario will need to be tested by Sport England's Facility Planning model to understand the scale of any unmet demand resulting from the potential loss of the swimming pool at Mayfield School. Mayfield pool is not open for community use. - A teaching pool should be considered as an extension of the Crowborough Swimming Pool. Construction of an additional teaching pool would create additional teaching space and provide an area for young children to swim safely. This facility would be a community benefit and is likely to be self-financing over a period of years. - Complete future proofing depends on population growth identified from the emerging Local Plan. There is also a need to consider possible scenarios as identified that include the closure of Mayfield School to community use, St Bede's and East Sussex National Golf and Spa Resort swimming pools. - Sport England's Facility Planning Model should be used in the future to provide bespoke swimming pool runs that consider the different scenarios to be addressed.
Health and Fitness	- There is a current deficit (2021) of 19 fitness stations across Wealden. - There are 15 fitness suites in Wealden, with a total of 640 fitness stations. The fitness suites providing 20+ stations equate to 11 providing 580 fitness stations. - Facilities provided by WDC are the only ones providing pay and play accessible facilities; however, there is also other affordable and accessible health and fitness provision in the District provided by the commercial sector. - There is an undersupply of fitness	There is a need to retain the existing level of community access and affordable fitness stations in Wealden, to maintain and grow existing levels of participation, and cater for increased future demand.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Facility Type	Key Issue	Areas for Action
	stations in 2020 (19 stations); this level of undersupply will increase based on future population growth. - Future demand for fitness, will need to reflect any future population growth. There will be a need once the future population growth has been decided through the Local Plan to identify the future needs for fitness stations. The current supply will be insufficient to meet this need. Any new facilities proposed should only be developed if they can demonstrate a sustainable business case and plan. - The existing commercial sector fitness suite provision in Wealden is used by residents. The commercial fitness suites vary in type with some being high end fitness companies such as Any Time Active, but a lot of membership costs are comparable with community facilities. On this basis, the assessment of the current and future need for fitness facilities reflects the fact that Wealden residents are likely to use those facilities which offer provision and a membership rate often comparable to public sector facilities. - The majority of fitness suite availability is through the commercial sector during the day, as well as evenings and weekends.	
Studio Space	- No feedback has suggested there is an insufficient supply of studios to meet current demand. - The quality of studios is generally good with several facilities having been built recently, or refurbished. - Nationally there is a trend for boutique studio space. A boutique fitness studio is a small gym that offers group exercise focused on one or two types of fitness. High-intensity interval training (HIIT), functional fitness, spinning, or barre are typical staples of the boutique fitness studio.	Opportunities to provide new studio space should be taken when providing new sports hall or swimming pool facilities to ensure a rounded fitness offer can be provided, and group exercise classes can be accommodated.
Squash Courts	There are 2 glass-backed squash courts and 10 normal squash courts in Wealden. Pay and play on 2 normal squash courts are available at Uckfield Leisure Centre.	- No need for additional provision - Need to retain existing level of courts and protect these courts in the Local Plan. - There are security of tenure issues at Nutley Squash and Tennis Centre. The club is out of lease and the Lease holder may be considering selling the land for housing development. - Nutley Squash and Tennis Centre aspires to

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Facility Type	Key Issue	Areas for Action
		refurbish the changing rooms.
Indoor Bowls	One indoor bowls facility in the District, club-operated and provides 6 rinks at Wealden Bowls Centre.	- The population for Wealden indicates that there is a current need for 10 rinks. However, the current membership levels at Wealden Bowls Club suggest that 6 rinks are sufficient to meet current demand. - EIBA would wish the Wealden Bowls Club to be protected in the Local Plan.
Indoor Tennis	- There is 1 indoor tennis court in Wealden at Alfriston. - Based on the LTA figure of 12,000 population for 1 indoor court there is a need for additional indoor courts. However, levels of interest in tennis, and existing club membership would suggest there is currently sufficient provision of indoor courts. 2 clubs have stated they are interested and aspire to provide indoor tennis facilities in the future. These are Le Tennis and Crowborough Tennis and Squash Club.	LTA Community Indoor Tennis Centre Strategy does not include Wealden district as an area identified for indoor tennis court facilities. Any additional indoor tennis court provision should be led by the LTA and local tennis clubs.
Gymnastics and Trampolining	- There are 2 purpose-built facilities within Wealden District and trampolining is provided at Hailsham Community College Sports Hall. - There is sufficient facility supply to meet current demand for gymnastics.	- Future population growth may well put pressure on the existing dedicated facilities, and these may require extensions or larger premises in the future. - Council owned leisure centres should be encouraged to provide additional gymnastic classes and courses in the future.
Boxing	There are no boxing clubs in Wealden district.	N/A
Community Halls/Facilities	- Important role for informal halls in providing for daytime access to sport and physical activity opportunities particularly in rural parts of the district. Informal halls provide daytime opportunities for sport and physical activity, to meet needs of e.g., older people, those not in work, parents looking after young children not in work, shift workers, those without access to a car. - Community halls provide an important role providing venues for martial arts, table tennis, dance, exercise classes, tai chi and yoga etc. in Wealden.	- Need to optimise use of existing informal community hall/centres for physical activity, to support the delivery of health and wellbeing objectives in more rural parts of Wealden. - When new housing developments provide for community hall facilities ensure that they can accommodate sport and physical activity sessions.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

5.7 Based on the supply and demand analysis summarised above there is clearly a need for:

- **Additional improved swimming pool provision required to meet current and potential future population growth.**
- **Additional sports hall provision either using existing unused sports hall space or through the provision of new sports hall space to meet current demand and any future population growth.**
- **Retaining existing levels of community accessible (including pay and play) sports halls, swimming pools, and fitness stations as a minimum.**
- **For martial arts, table tennis, dance, exercise classes, tai chi and yoga etc it is important to retain the ability to use community halls as venues for their classes.**
- **Consideration of the future need for additional indoor tennis courts to be considered alongside Lawn Tennis Association and Tennis club needs.**
- **There is a need to protect the existing squash courts across Wealden.**

5.8 A summary of the above is set out in Table 31.

Table 32: Summary of Current and future Need Priorities

Facility Type	Current Need	Future Need	Location
Sports Halls			
Quantity	There are currently 11 sports halls in Wealden (+3 courts and above) and 11 activity halls providing pay and play and sports club usage. The Facility Planning Model (FPM) identifies demand for 43.10 badminton courts (2020 population 162,447) and a supply of 41.7 badminton courts; this means there is an existing small under-supply of 1.4 badminton courts. Existing supply of badminton courts is almost meeting current demand. The FPM run does not include the new 4 court sports hall at Willingdon Community School. If Willington School (formal community use agreement in place) was available for pay and play use, not simply club use, there would be a small over-supply of 2.6 badminton courts. There is currently a small under-supply of badminton courts available for pay and play use (1.4 badminton courts).	Scenario 1 – Identified need in 2039 for an additional 9.04 badminton courts. N.B There are 10 existing courts which are not available for community pay and play use; if these were brought into use there would not be a requirement for additional badminton courts. Scenario 2 – Identified need in 2039 for an additional 14.19 badminton courts.	Consider opening up existing education facilities so that they are used to their maximum for community use (additional 6 courts available) plus work with schools to achieve increased community access.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Facility Type	Current Need	Future Need	Location
	However, there are 10 courts on education sites that are only used for sports club use. In theory this means there is sufficient capacity within the existing stock of facilities and actually there is a current over-supply of badminton courts. It is the accessibility of existing facilities on education sites that is the challenge. This theoretical over supply reduces as a result of population growth and increased demand. There is a need to review the impact of any change in community use of Uckfield and Heathfield Leisure Centre sports halls when they are handed back to East Sussex County Council in 2022.		
Quality	There is a need to improve the quality of existing sports halls to ensure they are fit for purpose e.g. Uckfield and Heathfield Sports Centres e.g. ensuring cricket nets are in working order (Uckfield Leisure Centre), floors and lighting are fit for purpose. The quality of Beacon Academy sports hall could also be improved.	Investment in existing sports halls to improve their quality.	District- wide and specifically facilities at Uckfield, Heathfield and Beacon Academy. Any new provision of sports halls should provide facilities for indoor cricket. Indoor cricket facilities should meet the ECB guidance document (ECB TS3) that provides detailed information on the specific requirements on lighting, flooring and netting that are required for indoor cricket. Sports halls providing cricket should not have glass windows or surrounds so the hall can provide indoor cricket games as well as cricket nets and correct lighting that is safety covered so damage cannot be achieved by ball strike. Consideration should be given to working with Sussex County Cricket to find and provide suitable accommodation for current cricket clubs to access indoor cricket facilities and to accommodate future identified growth in the game

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Facility Type	Current Need	Future Need	Location
Accessibility	Only 3 sports halls in the District, provide pay and play community access. These are the facilities provided by WDC. Access to education facilities is not on a pay and play basis; education sites provide for club use. There is restricted day time access at Heathfield Leisure Centre and Uckfield Leisure Centre because they are joint-use sites. There are no daytime access sports hall facilities in Hailsham, Uckfield or Heathfield. Geographically, strategic size sports halls are well distributed across Wealden. Overall, there is low unmet demand across Wealden for sports halls (2.3 badminton courts). Consultation has identified the need for increased sports hall space for netball, stoolball and increases in demand for badminton courts. Existing community access at education sites needs to be maintained as a minimum and secured wherever possible with a formal Community Use Agreement (CUA), given that most sport halls facilities are on education sites.	Exploring opportunities to open up existing sports halls for pay and play use, including additional Community Use Agreements. If this is not possible, additional provision will be required to meet current and future demand.	It may be possible to secure additional access for community pay and play at existing education facilities through provision of Community Use Agreements. The schools that could provide additional community hours of use are: Michael Hill School, Uplands Community College Sports Centre, at Bede's School, Beacon Academy (Beeches) and Hailsham Community College (Announced October 2021 that the sports hall will be used for school examinations at exam times in the future).
Availability	The FPM identifies that Heathfield Leisure Centre and Uckfield Leisure Centre sports halls are used to 100% of all available capacity and at Crowborough 80% is used. There is spare capacity at education sites e.g. of available capacity, only 20% at Michael Hill School, 33% at Uplands Community College Sports Centre, 38% at Bede's School, 39% at Beacon Academy (Beeches) and 83% at Hailsham Community College are actually used,	Working with sports clubs to support them finding alternative playing spaces.	District wide – Consider working with local sports clubs to find and provide suitable accommodation for them to grow and increase participation.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Swimming Pools			
Quantity	There are 3 public swimming Pools in Wealden, Hailsham Swimming Pool (main pool 25m x 3 lanes and learner pool 5m x 5m), Uckfield Swimming Pool leisure pool with 3 lanes and Crowborough Swimming Pool 25m x 6 lane swimming pool. These are supported by St Bede's swimming pool where there is extensive swimming club use. A seventh pool facility is a commercial facility at East Sussex National Golf Resort and Spa. Based on a Wealden population of 162,447, demand has been calculated at 9,686 visits in the weekly peak period of weekday lunchtimes (1 hour), weekday evenings (up to 5 hours per day) and weekend days (up to 7 hours per weekend day). This equates to a total demand for 1,607 sq. metres of water. (For context, a 25m x 4 lane pool is between 210 – 250 sq. metres of water, depending on individual lane width). The supply of water space during the peak period is 1,386 sq. m, and therefore demand exceeds supply by 221 sq. m of water in 2020. This under-supply of 221 sq. m does not take into consideration satisfied and/or unmet demand. Unmet demand in Wealden equates to 7.9% of total demand and this equates to 128 square metres of water. Overall, total under-supply equates to -221+ -128 = 349 sq m	Scenario 1 – Under supply in 2039 of – 512.47 sq. m of water space. (Based on ONS Subnational Population Projections 2018 Based 2020 – 2039 = 15,642 population Scenario 2 – Undersupply in 2039 of approx. -711.08 sq. m of water space. (2039 Based on 1225 new houses per year for 20 years x 2.30 average population per household - uncompleted/uncommitted new homes).	Hailsham (as part of 'Hailsham Aspires' regeneration scheme) and extension to Crowborough Leisure Centre for a new learner pool
Quality	The average age of the public swimming pool sites is 35 years (the average age of <u>all</u> the swimming pool sites is 34 years). The three public leisure centres have been modernised over the 2004 – 2007 period, but the stock is ageing. The age and condition of a pool will impact on its usage, all the pool sites are weighted in the model, to reflect their age and comparative attraction to swimmers. This does not appear to be a significant finding in Wealden	There is a need to improve swimming pool facilities across Wealden. Replacing the existing freeform pool with a 25m x 8 lane swimming pool and a separate learner pool would future proof swimming provision in Hailsham and provide an environment suitable for community use, club training and competition (lanes would need to be 2.5m wide for the latter). There will be a need for spectator facilities and for land training facilities for swimming clubs. The FPM findings suggest a need to consider increasing	Crowborough and Hailsham

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Swimming Pools			
	because the three public leisure centres all opened between 1985 and 1987 and were modernised between 2004 and 2007, so they have remarkably similar weightings. There is also a need to consider changing the nature of swimming pool provision to facilitate increased capacity for swimming lessons and facilitate improved access to lane swimming i.e. more laned water space as opposed to leisure water	the water space at Hailsham Leisure Centre, which is already operating at 91% capacity, and provides the smallest main pool of the three public leisure centres. This centre has a 25m x 9m three lane main pool and within this, a 5m x 5m teaching area. It has 27% of the total water space at the public leisure centre pool sites. In terms of the swimming offer, the pool sizes and configurations limit the number of swimming activities which can take place and the overall offer.	
Accessibility	The 2 WDC public swimming pools and Uckfield (WDC and East Sussex County Council) provide the only pay and play community access to swimming pool provision in Wealden. These pools are available 7 days a week. There is a need to review the impact of any change in community use of Uckfield Leisure Centre Swimming Pool when it is handed back to East Sussex County Council in 2022.	Retention of existing levels of community access to swimming pools as a minimum.	Uckfield
Availability	The estimated used capacity of Hailsham Swimming Pool is 91%. This is 21% over and above the Sport England benchmark of 70% of pool capacity used in the weekly peak period.	Additional water space in Hailsham to increase capacity.	Hailsham
Health and Fitness			
Quantity	There are 15 fitness suites in Wealden, with a total of 640 fitness stations. The fitness suites providing 20+ stations equate to 11 providing 580 fitness stations. 4 facilities are owned or leased by WDC and managed by Freedom Leisure on its behalf and provide 234 plus 14 at Heathfield Leisure Centre totalling 248 fitness stations in Wealden. There are 15 fitness suites in Wealden, with a total of 640 fitness stations. The fitness suites providing 20+ stations equate to 11 providing	Future demand for fitness, will need to reflect population growth. There will be a need for additional fitness stations once the future population growth has been decided through the emerging Local Plan. The current supply will be insufficient to meet this need. Scenario 1 - ONS Population Subnational Projections 2018 Based 2019 – 2039 = 15,642 Population Need for 81 additional fitness stations	Hailsham Aspires development and in other areas of significant population growth All new health and fitness facilities should provide a business case to demonstrate sustainability.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Swimming Pools			
	580 fitness stations. 4 facilities are owned or leased by WDC and managed by Freedom Leisure on its behalf and provide 234 plus 14 at Heathfield Leisure Centre totalling 248 fitness stations in Wealden. There is a current under-supply (2021) of 19 fitness stations across Wealden.	Scenario 2 WDC housing need based on 1225 dwellings per year = 24,500 – commitments and completions of 9,436. Total to test as part of assessment is therefore 15,064 with an average household size of 2.3 persons per household. $15064 \times 2.3 = 34,647$ population increase Need for 180 additional fitness stations	
Quality	The quality of studios is generally average with several facilities having been refurbished.	Ensure the quality of fitness facilities is maintained.	District-wide but particularly south and southeast areas.
Accessibility	All Wealden residents have access to fitness suites within a 20-minute drive time except for those in the far south and southeast of the District. There is community access to pay and play fitness suites during the day, as well as evenings and weekends at Hailsham Leisure Centre and Crowborough Leisure Centre. There is currently access at Uckfield and Heathfield in the evening and during the day (with agreement of the respective Colleges).	Maintain the provision of existing pay and play accessible health and fitness provision space as a minimum, but increase provision where possible to address the current under-supply and future need.	District-wide but particularly south and southeast areas.
Availability	The majority of fitness suite availability is through the commercial sector during the day, as well as evenings and weekends.	Maintain existing availability of affordable access fitness provision as a minimum.	District-wide but particularly south and southeast areas.
Studio Space			
Quantity	There is sufficient provision of studio space to meet existing demand.	As population grows there will be additional demand for studio space. There is no mechanism for assessing supply and demand for studios, other than more people = more demand. Opportunities to provide studio space alongside new sports halls, fitness suites and swimming pools should be explored to ensure levels of provision continue to meet the needs of a growing population.	District-wide Opportunities to provide studio space alongside new future sports halls and swimming pools.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Swimming Pools			
Quality	The quality of studios is generally good with several facilities having been built recently (Anyone Active) or refurbished.	Ensure quality of accessible studio provision is maintained and developed.	District-wide but particularly south and southeast areas of the district.
Accessibility	Of the 23 studios in Wealden, 8 are accessible for pay and play community use. Existing community access fitness facilities are well-located in Wealden; all are on public transport routes, and their catchment areas provide access to virtually all residents. In addition to the community access studios, there are other studios (commercial/on education sites) which are also used by residents; however, they are not all accessible to all residents given where they are located. There are gaps in the south and southeast of the district.	Retain existing levels of accessible pay and play community use as a minimum. Ensure new studios offer accessible pay and play community use.	District-wide but particularly south and southeast areas of the district.
Availability	Many community hall facilities are used by dance schools, and the smaller halls often available on education sites have significant potential to be used for fitness classes.	Retain existing levels of accessible pay and play community use as a minimum. Ensure new studios offer accessible pay and play community use.	District-wide but particularly south and southeast areas.
Gymnastics and Trampolining			
Quantity	There is sufficient specialist provision to meet the existing needs of clubs.	Need to collaborate with existing clubs to ensure current demand continues to be met.	Uckfield Gymnastics Club Jump Trampoline Club – Hailsham community College sports Hall Sky High Trampoline club
Quality	All clubs provide quality facilities and are affiliated to British Gymnastics and follow British Gymnastics policies and standards.	Continued club provision	Districtwide
Accessibility	All clubs are accessible for children and adults.	Continued inclusive accessibility to gymnastics.	Districtwide
Availability	All clubs provide pay and play sessions or courses alongside membership.	British Gymnastics identify a current need for operators of leisure centres to provide gymnastic and trampoline classes.	Encourage Leisure Centre operators to provide gymnastic and trampolining classes and courses.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Swimming Pools			
Indoor Bowls			
Quantity	There is 1 indoor bowls facility in Wealden. Wealden Bowls Club has 6 rinks and is an affiliated EIBA Club The population for Wealden indicates that there is a current need for 10 rinks. However, the existing supply of 6 rinks is meeting current membership needs. The EIBA advise that the nearest indoor bowls facility to Wealden Bowls Club is in Royal Tunbridge Wells and that there is no need to provide additional facilities but to protect and safeguard the existing facility.	No additional need identified	Wealden Bowls Centre Monitoring of demand and facility need should take place between Wealden District Council and EIBA but there is no need for additional provision identified at this stage.
Quality	Funding would assist in upgrading and refurbishing existing facilities.	Funding would assist in upgrading and refurbishing existing facilities.	Wealden
Accessibility	Wealden Bowls Club operates on a registered membership basis. However, it does provide casual roll up times and rinks for new members to roll up. There is a need to check the season's opening times to obtain these details.	Retain current arrangements at Wealden Indoor Bowling Club	Wealden
Availability	Wealden Bowls Club is a registered membership Club with some opportunity for pay and play.	Retain current arrangements at Wealden Indoor Bowling Club	Wealden
Indoor Tennis			
Quantity	There is 1 site providing 1 indoor tennis court at Alfriston Tennis Centre. Although there is a theoretical need for 13 indoor courts based on current population size, however, the level of interest in playing tennis in Wealden does not justify provision of this number of courts. In terms of future provision, it is important that there is access for pay and play tennis both now and in the future. The LTA recommends a target location must demonstrate a minimum threshold population of 70,000 within a 20-minute drive time of a target location.	Discussions should take place between the authority, LTA and tennis clubs to monitor levels of demand and participation before any further investment in indoor tennis.	District-wide Based on the LTA figure of 12,000 population for 1 indoor court there could be a need for additional indoor courts in the future, but only if participation levels in indoor tennis increase. However, membership levels should inform this as interest in participating in tennis is relatively low. Any additional indoor tennis court provision should be led by the LTA and Tennis Club.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Swimming Pools			
	Of this population, at least 12,500 must identify as having an interest in playing tennis.⁴ Sport England Market segmentation identifies that 2,800 persons currently participate in tennis and 2,900 would like to participate in tennis across Wealden. This is well below the 12,500 per indoor court identified above. There is sufficient provision of indoor tennis courts given the current scale of participation and interest in tennis in Wealden.		LTA has not currently identified Wealden as a priority need for Community Indoor Tennis facilities. Discussions should take place between the authority, LTA and tennis clubs.
Quality	No available quality assessment of the 1 indoor court. The indoor tennis centre was built in 1974 and refurbished in 2003.	No future need identified	N/A
Accessibility	All indoor tennis facilities are provided in the Alfriston area.	No accessibility issues identified	N/A
Availability	It is understood the 1 indoor court is a pay and play facility. The nearest indoor tennis facilities for Wealden residents are provided at Eastbourne Sports Park (3 courts) BN21 3UF, David Lloyd Club (Eastbourne) 6 courts BN22 9PZ and Tunbridge Wells Sports and indoor Tennis Centre (4 courts) TN4 9TX. These courts are accessible to Wealden residents who either live in the catchment area or are able to travel to the facility.	No availability issues identified	N/A
Community Centres			
Quantity	Need to increase access to community centres that can be used for informal sport and physical activity.	Need to optimise use of existing informal community hall/centres for physical activity, to support the delivery of health and wellbeing objectives particularly in more rural parts of Wealden.	District-wide. Need to optimise use of existing informal community hall/centres for physical activity, to support the delivery of health and wellbeing objectives particularly in more rural parts of Wealden. When new housing developments provide for community hall facilities ensure that they can accommodate
Quality			

⁴ N.B This drive time extends to 30 minutes for rural areas. Based on 12,500 persons per indoor court (assessed completely separately to outdoor courts)

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Swimming Pools			
Accessibility	These halls have an important role in providing daytime access to sport and physical activity opportunities particularly in rural parts of the district. A comprehensive programme of fitness classes, and other sporting activities is offered at the community access facilities.	Retain access to multi-activity and multi-functional community halls, particularly for daytime use.	Rural Areas
Availability	Informal halls provide daytime opportunities for sport and physical activity, to meet needs of e.g., older people, those not in work, parents looking after young children not in work, shift workers, those without access to a car.	Retain access to multi-activity and multi-functional community halls, particularly for daytime use.	Rural Areas
Active Environment			
Provision of an Active Environment	Overall, and specifically through the housing growth agenda, provision of more active environments to enable residents to easily build physical activity into daily life e.g. Active travel, safe cycle routes to school, the need to link existing and new communities with walking/cycling /jogging routes.	Overall, and specifically through the housing growth agenda, provision of more active environments, reflecting active travel, safe cycle routes to school, the need to link existing and new communities with walking/ cycling/jogging routes.	In the context of indoor built facilities, Active environments and travel (safe cycle, walking, jogging routes etc.) should be considered and where possible improved when developing access routes to new and existing indoor facilities. Where possible, routes linking to existing infrastructure routes such as the Cuckoo Trail should be considered.

- 5.9 A separate but linked Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy (PPSOS) is being developed for the District. The PPSOS Assessment report identifies that there is a clear need for AGP football pitches throughout the district. The report, published April 2022, indicates a need for 6 x 3g pitches throughout the district. The Community Sports Hub priority is to help address this deficit and indicative plans suggest two full size AGP's will be included. Alongside the football pitches a range of other sports and community facilities will be provided.
- 5.10 Retaining and improving the quality of provision is important in Wealden to ensure that participation levels are retained and wherever possible increased. Active Lives highlights that 21.3% of the Wealden community is inactive enough to have any health benefit.
- 5.11 The provision of good quality, local community facilities, accessible and affordable to meet identified need, is key to facilitating participation growth, and contributing to a reduction in the health inequalities in the District. This reflects Public Health and Wealden District Council's health and well-being priorities, to facilitate sustained behaviour change to reduce obesity, improve health, contribute to addressing mental health issues and increase participation.

6. Recommendations and Action Plan

Overview

- 6.1 Wealden's population is likely to grow significantly over the coming years, so there is a particular need to ensure sufficient provision of accessible, quality, and affordable facilities – formal and informal, and multi-purpose spaces to meet local need.
- 6.2 More, and better, access to physical activity at local level is important for residents, particularly those who are currently inactive, and those without access to private transport, to participate, and become physically active. Many of these inactive people will live in the few, but significantly more deprived areas of the District; ensuring those who lead challenging lives are able to be more active for health benefits is critical, linking facility provision, informal and formal, to opportunities for active travel, and informal places will help to facilitate more active lifestyles for more people.
- 6.3 This is particularly important given the need to retain and continue to grow existing levels of physical activity in the District and address the existing health inequalities across the District.
- 6.4 Overall, Wealden has a good range of existing sport and leisure facilities across the area. In Wealden, there is a need to increase the use of existing education sports halls available for community use particularly pay and play use and the need to address the demand for swimming pool water space. There will also be a need to address future population demand for health and fitness and studio space.
- 6.5 It is particularly important that the potential to utilise community centres/halls, and other informal places and spaces for sport and physical activity continues. These spaces provide at a more local level, and therefore facilitate participation by those who are elderly, do not have access to a car, have young children, or have a disability. Without these facilities there will be further pressure on sports hall space. This is particularly important given the rural nature of much of the district.

Vision

- 6.6 As a minimum, WDC wishes to have good quality, fit for purpose facilities that are attractive to users, well maintained and sustainable. This includes community sport and leisure facilities, places and spaces for swimming, fitness, and sports hall sports/activities available for all residents. This includes both formal and informal multi-purpose spaces e.g., community halls in which to play sport and be physically active.
- 6.7 Facilitating opportunities to be more physically active, more often is also important, to contribute to a reduction in the health inequalities in and across Wealden, to help people to live and age better.
- 6.8 The provision of high quality and accessible facilities, and where appropriate the opening of other informal places, and spaces, as well as the development of new provision, will contribute to the future overall priority for the development of healthier lifestyles in Wealden, across all age groups.
- 6.9 The Vision for future provision of sport and leisure in Wealden is:

“A more active population living longer, healthier, more independent and happier lives”

- 6.10 Sustainable, high quality, and critically, accessible facility provision has a critical role to play in delivering these opportunities; Wealden District Council needs to plan for the investment requirements of its existing facilities, and work in partnership with other providers and stakeholders to address the other priorities identified through this Strategy.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Aims

6.11 The aim of providing sufficient high quality, fit for purpose and accessible provision, places and spaces is to:

- Increase the proportion of the population that is physically active every day; the level of activity undertaken will support efforts to further reduce health inequalities;
- Develop additional facility provision where need is evidenced e.g. as a result of population growth;
- Design in flexibility; future facility provision may need to be more multi-purpose in nature, reflecting changing participation trends and opportunities;
- Encourage new participants to start taking part in regular physical activity;
- Enable opportunities for participation to be provided in a wider range of places and spaces, and particularly at a very local level, using facilities such as community centres/halls;
- Facilitate the continued development of healthier lifestyles across Wealden's communities;
- Contribute to a reduction in health inequalities, and specifically obesity, and reduced inactivity, across Wealden; and
- Create and sustain active environments where the opportunity to be more physically active is an integral part of everyday life.

Principles for Future Provision

6.12 The principles that should guide all future sport and leisure facility development in Wealden are:

- Ensure residents in all areas of Wealden have pay and play access to good quality, local, accessible and affordable provision, whether it is a formal sports space, or other informal provision;
- Aim to ensure that any new, sports facilities on education sites provide a balance of opportunities (through a formal agreement) for community access – both pay and play and club use;
- Replace / refurbish ageing facilities where new provision is needed; it is recommended all new and refurbished provision should be designed and developed based on Sport England and (National Governing Body) NGB guidance, and be fully inclusive;
- Rationalise existing provision where new fit for purpose facilities can replace/improve existing buildings (but existing levels of provision need to be maintained as a minimum, given some existing facility under-supply going forward);
- Invest in existing formal and informal provision to improve quality; and
- Invest strategically to ensure economic viability and sustainability of provision.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Priority Investment Needs

- 6.13 Although Wealden has good sports facilities there is a need to maintain current facilities as a minimum and to seek use of additional education sports hall use – there is currently equivalent of 6 courts on education sites unavailable for use by the community. There is also a need to work with Willingdon Community School to maximise use of its new sports hall for community use. There would be an increase in supply of sports hall space if identified schools were to allow access for both the community (pay and play) and clubs.
- 6.14 In the context of indoor built facilities, there should be consideration of active environments and travel (safe cycle, walking, jogging routes etc.) and where possible improvements when developing access routes to new and existing indoor facilities. Where possible, routes linking to existing infrastructure routes such as the Cuckoo Trail should be considered.
- 6.15 The demand for water space for the current population, and demand increases in the future means there is a need to invest in more community accessible swimming pools that are designed in a way that provides a full range of swimming offers.
- 6.16 There is also a need to consider future need for the provision of gymnastics and trampolining, indoor bowls and indoor tennis.
- 6.17 There is a need to recognise the importance of other community space that is used to provide informal sport and physical activity. Community Centres, village halls, church halls etc. can provide daytime access across Wealden and particularly rural areas and provide opportunities for older people, those not in work, parents looking after young children, shift workers and those without access to a car.

Other Priorities and Needs

Capital Investment

- 6.18 It is clear from the assessment analysis that there is a need for some capital investment in Wealden, to address future needs. Whilst some of this investment relates to additional facility provision, there is also a need to start planning now for the refurbishment of Crowborough Leisure Centre swimming provision and sports hall provision and the redevelopment of Hailsham Leisure Centre.
- 6.19 It is also clear that delivery of the levels of investment required will only result from a local partnership approach. The development of improved sports facilities, and physical activity environments, will facilitate increased participation, which in turn will benefit individual and community health. The challenge is that the greatest health benefit will be gained by encouraging the inactive, to become active.

Continued Local Partnership Working with Education Sites and Other Partners

- 6.20 To deliver the identified Assessment needs, and the key outcome of increased participation to address health inequalities, plus meet demands from any future population growth, there is an opportunity to consider changes in approach to delivery i.e. the development of new/replacement facilities, increasing and optimising the available capacity in existing education facilities, provides a mechanism to deliver these outcomes.
- 6.21 The key issue to address initially is that of future partnership with education sites, to retain community access for clubs and groups as a minimum, and where possible agree CUAs which provide balanced access for the community on a pay and play basis. Increasing capacity to offer and deliver increased participative opportunities, particularly for those who are currently inactive, could contribute significantly to a reduction in health inequalities in the District.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

- 6.22 There is a need for partnership arrangements to be in place with Town and Parish council's, local Trusts, churches and other organisations that can provide access to community centres, village halls, church halls etc. regarding the use of these halls for physical activity and informal sport.

Planning Policy, Securing Developer Contributions, Planning Obligations, S106 Obligations, and the Community Infrastructure Levy – An overview

- 6.23 To implement the Assessment recommendations and address identified needs for improved and additional facility provision, Wealden District Council will need to identify and secure capital funding from a range of sources. Developer contributions through CIL/S106 have the potential to form part of this funding moving forward.
- 6.24 The facility investment needs identified in the Assessment and set out in Table 32 provide the definitive investment priorities and locations for this investment to 2039. This should inform Local Plan policy, and specifically the priorities against which to secure developer contributions moving forward.
- 6.25 In some cases, new residential developments will not generate the need for a new sports facility. However, where developments are located in areas where additional pressure will be placed on existing sports facilities by the development, Wealden District Council should seek contributions, for the enhancement and extension of existing sports facilities in the vicinity of the development.
- 6.26 If larger developments generate a need for new facilities and/or are located adjacent to existing suitable community provision i.e., a new or improved community hall, then these will be considered on a site-by-site basis having regard to the development proposal, the characteristics of the site and the capacity and condition of existing infrastructure. Off-site contributions may be sought to support nearby existing or contribute to new sites, and/or for identified, more strategic sites (such as larger, high quality, leisure facilities serving more than the local need) then provision may be required on-site.
- 6.27 It is also important to highlight that the National planning guidance allows for cross boundary and pooled Developers' Contributions. New CIL regulations have removed restrictions on pooled contributions. The September 2019 amendments to the regulations removed the previous restriction on pooling more than 5 planning obligations towards a single piece of infrastructure.
- 6.28 This means that subject to meeting the 3 tests set out in CIL [Regulation 122](#), charging authorities can use funds from both the levy and section 106 planning obligations to pay for the same piece of infrastructure regardless of how many planning obligations have already contributed towards an item of infrastructure. Authorities should set out in an infrastructure funding statement which infrastructure they intend to fund and detail the different sources of funding (see [regulation 121A](#)).

Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 1 (R1) (PROTECT)

To protect the existing sport and physical activity facilities in the District; invest in and develop facilities and the activities they provide to increase capacity to address need as a result of population growth or an increase in participation levels.

RECOMMENDATION 2 (R2) (PROVIDE)

Improve Hailsham Leisure Centre and swimming pool and also swimming pool at Crowborough Leisure Centre (provision of learner pool) to address deficits in provision, meet local health and wellbeing priorities and deliver increased opportunities for participation in physical activity and sport for clubs and the community.

RECOMMENDATION 3 (R3) (PROVIDE)

Wealden District Council to work with funding and delivery partners to identify short and medium to longer term investment opportunities for additional sports hall and swimming pool provision to meet identified current and future demand.

The recommendations for halls and pools should go beyond just identifying the future demand for facilities. Once future demand for sports halls and swimming pools has been confirmed, options for meeting future needs should be identified and feasibility work should be undertaken. Such feasibility work should include the use of Sport England's Facilities Planning Model (FPM) to undertake **bespoke local modelling** of the impact of the options on meeting needs e.g., if applicable an option of siting a new leisure centre or dual use secondary school facility in a major residential development.

Sport England's Facility Planning model should be used to identify the impact of facilities closing or remaining closed and new facilities opening.

RECOMMENDATION 4 (R4) (PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

It is recommended for any new education provision involving new or enhanced sports facilities to have a Community Use Agreement (CUA) as part of the planning consent so as to secure pay and play opportunities for individuals, clubs and groups in the future.

RECOMMENDATION 5 (R5) (PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Consider the opportunity for increased community access to existing education sports facilities where community access is currently provided, and where it is not; where possible, seek enhanced provision through a Community Use Agreement (CUA). This is to ensure the equivalent of 6 badminton courts are brought into community use (at least 1.4 courts are needed to meet existing demand) on existing education sites. These schools are:

Michael Hill School, Uplands Community College Sports Centre, Bede's School, Beacon Academy (Beeches) and Hailsham Community College (announced October 2021 that the sports hall will be prioritised for school examinations during exam times).

Working with Willingdon Community School to develop community use of its new four court sports hall as part of the formal Community Use Agreement is also recommended to address the current undersupply of badminton courts / sports hall availability.

RECOMMENDATION 6 (R6) (PROVIDE AND PROTECT)

Existing levels of community accessible and affordable fitness suite provision in the District should be retained as a minimum, and where appropriate, opportunities for investment in additional health and fitness provision where there is an identified need/business case justification should be considered by all providers.

RECOMMENDATION 7 (R7) (PROTECT AND ENHANCE)

It is very important that the potential to utilise community centres/halls, and other informal places and spaces for sport and physical activity continues and is considered when providing new community centres and halls.

Wealden District Council and its partners should prioritise investment in the development of high-quality community sports facilities/spaces, with local partners. Increasing available capacity and therefore opportunities to take part in regular physical activity, in the local community, will contribute to reduced health inequalities, increased participation better community cohesion.

RECOMMENDATION 8 (R8) (PROVIDE)

Regular dialogues should be maintained with gymnastic and trampoline clubs to ensure future population demands / participation rates can be met. Encouragement should be given to leisure facility operators to provide additional gymnastic and trampoline classes and courses

RECOMMENDATION 9 (R9) (PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

Dialogue continues with the Lawn Tennis Association and local tennis clubs about provision of additional Community Indoor Tennis facilities before any new indoor tennis facilities are developed in Wealden.

RECOMMENDATION 10 (R10) (PROVIDE AND ENHANCE)

The existing indoor bowls facilities at Wealden Bowls Club should be protected and maintained. Funding opportunities should also be sought to upgrade / refurbish the facility to meet both current and future demands arising from an increase in population and / or participation.

RECOMMENDATION 11 (R11) (PROTECT)

There should be on-going monitoring of this Assessment through its implementation, but as a minimum, progress should be reviewed and refreshed every five years. On-going monitoring should include partnership collaboration with neighbouring local authorities to keep aware of facility changes and developments.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Action Plan

- 6.29 In order to realise the above Vision and Aims for sport and leisure facility provision in Wealden there are key priorities that need to be addressed and implemented. These are set out below in the Action Plan, based on the recommendations for future provision. The investment costs quoted are based on a combination of our knowledge of new build schemes, industry norms, and Sport England cost guidelines. These are based on sq. m construction costs

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Table 33: Assessment Action Plan

Recommendation	Action	Partner(s)	Timescale Short 1–5 years Medium 5 – 10 years Long 10+ years.	Resources
RECOMMENDATION 1 (R1) (PROTECT) To protect the existing sport and physical activity facilities in the District;; invest in and develop facilities and the activities they provide to increase capacity to address need as a result of population growth or an increase in participation levels.	The existing facility mix across the district should be included and protected within the local plan, with flexibility to adapt to support any growth of the district over the coming years.	Wealden District Council Officers.	Short Term.	Officer time.
RECOMMENDATION 2 (R2) (PROVIDE) Improve Hailsham Leisure Centre and swimming pool and also swimming pool at Crowborough Leisure Centre (provision of learner pool) to address deficits in provision, meet local health and wellbeing priorities and deliver increased opportunities for participation in physical activity and sport for clubs and the community.	There is a need to plan the improvement of Hailsham Leisure Centre and Swimming Pool. Within the improvement project planning process there is a need to consider additional water space for swimming and meet local health and wellbeing priorities and deliver increased opportunities for participation in physical activity and sport for clubs and the community. Identify the refurbishment requirements and costs of refurbishments for Crowborough Leisure Centre, so that local health and wellbeing priorities and delivery of increased opportunities for participation in physical activity and sport for clubs and the community can continue and improve.	Wealden District Council; operator partner; local aquatic clubs, sports clubs and residents.	Medium Term.	Wealden District Council Officer time; External funding organisations; Developer Contributions. Capital costs for refurbishment will be dependent on works required. Separate feasibility and costing studies will be required at the appropriate time (indicative feasibility study cost £20k).
RECOMMENDATION 3 (R3) (PROVIDE) Wealden District Council to work with funding and delivery partners to identify short and medium to longer-term investment opportunities for additional sports hall and swimming pool provision to meet identified current and future demand. The recommendations for halls and pools should go beyond just identifying the future demand for facilities. Once future demand for sports halls and swimming pools has been confirmed, options for meeting future needs should be identified and feasibility work should be undertaken.	Need to provide new sports hall and swimming pool facilities to meet current population demand and future population growth. Once population growth has been identified there will be a need to carry out feasibility work on the provision of any proposed new facilities. As part of any feasibility work liaise with Sport England once new provision has been identified and undertake bespoke local modelling using Sport England's Planning Model (FPM).	Wealden District Council, East Sussex Education and Local Schools and Sport England	Medium –Term.	Wealden District Council Planning and Leisure Officers, East Sussex Education Officers Time – Funding from Developer Contributions identified through Sport England Sports Facility Calculator.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Recommendation	Action	Partner(s)	Timescale Short 1–5 years Medium 5 – 10 years Long 10+ years.	Resources
Such feasibility work should include the use of Sport England's Facilities Planning Model (FPM) to undertake bespoke local modelling of the impact of the options on meeting needs e.g., if applicable an option of siting a new leisure centre or dual use secondary school facility, or a community hall in a major residential development. Sport England's Facility Planning model should be used to identify the impact of facilities closing or remaining closed and new facilities opening.	The model should identify the impact of facilities closing or remaining closed and new facilities opening. Use Sport England's Sports Facility Calculator to identify capital costs and developer contributions from new housing. Wealden Council to work with NGBs and local clubs to ensure that any new sports facilities are suitable for a range of sporting uses including indoor cricket, badminton, basketball, volleyball etc	Wealden District Council. Wealden District relevant NGBs, relevant local sports clubs	Short – Term	Wealden District Council and Leisure officers.
RECOMMENDATION 4 (R4) (PROVIDE AND ENHANCE) It is recommended for any new education provision involving new or enhanced sports facilities to have a Community Use Agreement (CUA) as part of the planning consent so as to secure pay and play opportunities for individuals, clubs and groups in the future.	Wealden District Council and its partners should work with local schools, and Sport England to develop formal community use agreements in existing schools as part of Planning Conditions. The aim should be to develop Community Use Agreements and to find ways of increasing usage capacity, to enable provision of better-balanced accessibility and to include community pay and play use.	Wealden District Council, East Sussex Education, Sport England.	Short – Medium Term.	Wealden District Council Leisure and Planning Officers; Sport England, East Sussex Education. Time costs for developing Community Use Agreements /exploring alternative provision and operational arrangements.
RECOMMENDATION 5 (R5) (PROVIDE AND ENHANCE) Consider the opportunity for increased community access to existing education sports facilities where community access is currently provided, and where it is not; where possible, seek enhanced provision through a Community Use Agreement (CUA). This is to ensure the equivalent of 6 badminton courts are brought into community use (at least 1.4 courts are needed to meet existing demand) on existing education sites. These schools are: Michael Hill School, Uplands Community College Sports Centre, Bede's School, Beacon Academy (Beeches) and Hailsham Community College (announced October 2021 that the sports hall will be prioritised for school examinations during exam times). Working with Willingdon Community School to develop	Wealden District Council and its partners work with relevant educational organisations to review, revise and or implement Community Use Agreements, which provide an improved balance of pay and play and club use. There is a need for six badminton courts to be brought into use (at least 1.4 courts are needed to meet existing demand). Consultation should be undertaken with the following schools to identify if there were schools willing to open up sports hall provision for community use. The schools to be consulted are: Michael Hill School, Uplands Community College Sports Centre, at Bede's School, Beacon Academy (Beeches)	Wealden District Council and existing relevant education establishments, Sport England. East Sussex Education.	Short Term.	Wealden District Council Leisure and Planning Officers; Sport England, East Sussex Education. Time costs for developing Community Use Agreements.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Recommendation	Action	Partner(s)	Timescale Short 1–5 years Medium 5 – 10 years Long 10+ years.	Resources
community use of its new four court sports hall as part of the formal Community Use Agreement is also recommended to address the current undersupply of badminton courts / sports hall availability.				
RECOMMENDATION 6 (R6) (PROVIDE AND PROTECT) Existing levels of community accessible and affordable fitness suite provision in the District should be retained as a minimum, and where appropriate, opportunities for investment in additional health and fitness provision where there is an identified need/business case justification should be considered by all providers.	Ensure Wealden District Council fitness facilities are maintained at current levels as a minimum. The current supply will be insufficient to meet the need of the new population from housing growth. Any new facilities proposed should only be developed if they can demonstrate a sustainable business case and plan. The supply of fitness facilities should be monitored annually to ensure supply continues to meet demand. Consider provision of fitness space alongside new leisure facility provision only when a business case supports additional fitness facilities	Wealden District Council in partnership with site operators.	Short Term - Long Term.	Wealden District Council Officers time. Local providers Separate feasibility and costing studies will be required at the appropriate time (indicative feasibility study cost £6k).
RECOMMENDATION 7 (R7) (PROTECT AND ENHANCE) It is very important that the potential to utilise existing community centres/halls, and other informal places and spaces for sport and physical activity continues and is considered when providing new community centres and halls. This will mean eg thinking about flooring type from the outset. Wealden District Council and its partners should prioritise investment in the development of high-quality community sports facilities/spaces, with local partners. Increasing available capacity and therefore opportunities to take part in regular physical activity, in the local community, will contribute to reduced health inequalities, increased participation better community cohesion.	Ensure identified facility needs for sport and physical activity are reflected in any future facility requirements for community centres/halls which would help to facilitate increased play and sport and physical activity in community centres/halls in the district. Community space should be large enough to offer activities such as short mat bowls, exercise classes, martial arts/judo, yoga, table tennis and if possible, height for a badminton court.	Wealden District Council; East Sussex and Wealden Voluntary Sector.	Short Term- Longer term.	Wealden District Council Officer Time – Wealden District Council Planning, Leisure and Community Officers and Voluntary Sector Organisations.
RECOMMENDATION 8 (R8) (PROVIDE)	Wealden District Council to work with British Gymnastics, and Wealden District wide gymnastic clubs to maintain	Wealden District Council, British Gymnastics, Uckfield	Short – Medium Term	Wealden District Council Planning and Leisure Officers. Meeting time

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

Recommendation	Action	Partner(s)	Timescale Short 1–5 years Medium 5 – 10 years Long 10+ years.	Resources
Regular dialogues should be maintained with gymnastic and trampoline clubs to ensure future population demands / participation rates can be met. Encouragement should be given to leisure facility operators to provide additional gymnastic and trampoline classes and courses	regular dialogue to review facility needs once future growth programme is known short to medium term. Wealden District Council should work with leisure facility operators and encourage them to provide additional gymnastic and trampoline classes and courses.	Gymnastics Club, Jump Trampoline Club and Sky-High Trampoline and Gymnastics Academy Uckfield. Leisure facility operators.		and possible use of developer contributions.
RECOMMENDATION 9 (R9) (PROVIDE AND ENHANCE) Dialogue continues with the Lawn Tennis Association and local tennis clubs about provision of additional Community Indoor Tennis facilities before any new indoor tennis facilities are developed in Wealden.	Wealden District Council to discuss future provision of Indoor Tennis facilities with the Lawn Tennis Association and local tennis clubs before any new indoor tennis centres are developed in Wealden. This should include need and sustainability of facility provision if agreed to take forward any indoor tennis facilities in the district,	Wealden District Council, Lawn Tennis Association. Local Wealden Tennis clubs.	Short –Term.	Wealden District Council Officer time.
RECOMMENDATION 10 (R10) (PROVIDE AND ENHANCE) The existing indoor bowls facilities at Wealden Bowls Club should be protected and maintained. Funding opportunities should also be sought to upgrade / refurbish the facility to meet both current and future demands arising from an increase in population and / or participation.	There is a need to protect and maintain Wealden Indoor Bowls Club. Consider developer contributions and other alternative funding to improve and maintain the indoor bowls facilities at Wealden Bowls Club for residents of new housing and to encourage increased participation from the current Wealden district population.	Wealden District Council Planners and Developers, Wealden Indoor Bowls Club.	Short – Long Term.	Identify developer funding contributions via Sport England's Sports Facility Calculator.
RECOMMENDATION 11 (R11) (PROTECT) There should be on-going monitoring of this Assessment through its implementation, but as a minimum, progress should be reviewed and refreshed every five years. On-going monitoring should include partnership collaboration with neighbouring local authorities to keep aware of facility changes and developments.	Ensure a monitoring process is in place to refresh the assessment and strategy and action plan every 5 years. Ensure ongoing dialogue with neighbouring authorities to be aware of facility changes and developments that may impact on Wealden residents and facility plans for the future. Establish a steering group made up of key stakeholders to take forward the actions in the action plan. Set up a monitoring system through the steering group to monitor the action plan and if feasible to be factored into the Corporate Plan.	Wealden District Council and all partners.	Ongoing.	Wealden District Council Leisure Officer time; partner time; external consultants.

Wealden District Council

Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment (parts 1 – 6)

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